



"As a business owner, I know you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we *shine*! Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"

David Downs, Owner

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Broken Hearts and Stolen Data

While many people buy their significant other a box of decadent chocolates, a dozen red roses or an oversized teddy bear for Valentine's Day, there are a few people who are going to go home with a broken heart as their personal information is stolen right from under them. It's a harsh reality, but both individuals and businesses are constantly targeted by fraudsters and hackers who want to steal any bit of data that will make them money.

You may have taken all the precautions to protect yourself and your business – but what do you do if it does happen? Just as when a lover breaks your heart, you have to move on, get back on your feet and work your way through this unfortunate circumstance.



Once your data is stolen, it's gone. Credit cards can be canceled, but other information, such as your name, address, social security number and more, can be more difficult to control.

In 2014, social media accounts such as Twitter became more valuable to hackers than credit cards. These types of accounts are hot commodities on black markets.

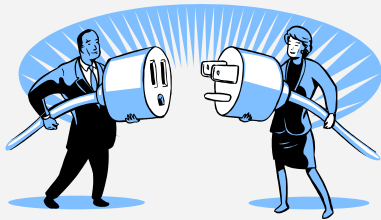
Does that mean you should be worried with all the information you have stored online? Absolutely not!

If you do fall victim to a data breach, you can still protect yourself!

Contact your credit card companies. Let them know you suspect your credit card info has been compromised. They will work with you to ensure you don't face financial losses.

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Refer Us And Receive Up To \$75!



Connect Us With A Friend In Need And Reap Rewards For Yourself!

- Send in your referral information by either calling our office at **816-229-2290**, emailing us at **referral@pcsiweb.com**, or visiting our page, **www.pcsiweb.com/referral**.
- We will pay you \$25 for anyone that you refer to us with whom we get an appointment.
- If your referral becomes a client, we will pay you an additional \$50 AND we will give your referral \$100 off their purchase.
- So, if you have a friend or an associate in need, please contact us and we will reach out to them.

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Keep a close eye on all your accounts. Watch for suspicious activity and report it when you see it.

Change your passwords. This is particularly critical if you used a single password for multiple services.

Use a credit-monitoring service. They aren't designed to prevent data from being stolen, but in the event of a breach, you'll be notified immediately so you can take action.

Give us a call at 816-229-2290 and we'll put together a plan to keep your company's data secure.

A Success Story For Business Leaders

I got to meet Michael Oher (of *The Blind Side* fame) at a marketing conference in Nashville last week. Amazing story –

Mike spoke with us about what it has taken to overcome a childhood of extreme poverty and neglect and go on to become a Super Bowl-winning football star. He said it comes down to daily practice and performance – you



MUST get the fundamentals down every day, because it's "the little things" that get you ahead in the game – and in life. When things get stressful – go to the gym. And when you experience success – give something back. Mike's autobiography *I Beat The Odds: From Homelessness, to The Blind Side, and Beyond* is aimed at helping children in poor circumstances (and the adults who desire to help them) to understand how it is possible to change your circumstances and live a happy life. Proceeds from the book go to support St. Jude's Children's Hospitals.

– David

Shiny New Gadget Of The Month



Prizm

This month's gadget is so new, it isn't even off the assembly line. Meet Prizm — a small, pyramid-shaped device designed to make your home-audio experience as hands-off as humanly possible. The device was recently backed on Kickstarter this past November. The French company behind the audio device wanted to create an intuitive music experience that brings users new music, while learning what they really love to listen to.

The device streams music from cloud services such as Deezer, Spotify and SoundCloud, with more services planned in the future. It works by accessing your WiFi network. It doesn't contain any speakers, so you'll have to supply your own (it connects via Bluetooth, 3.5 mm stereo jack and optical audio). And despite being called hands-off, the device sports buttons to let you like or skip songs to customize your listening experience.

It can currently be pre-ordered from www.meetprizm.com for \$139.

How To Keep Your Laptop Secure When Using Public WiFi Hotspots

They are everywhere these days. WiFi hotspots for checking e-mail and hopping on the Internet can be found in airports, coffee shops and even most fast-food joints. But have you ever wondered, just how safe is it to connect? With the proliferation of hackers, viruses and identity theft at an all-time high, you are smart to be concerned. Unfortunately, it is easy for a hacker to set up a WiFi spot to access your laptop, called an "evil twin." An evil twin is a wireless hotspot that is used to lure people from a nearby, legitimate hotspot. For example, when logging in at your favorite coffee shop, you may have inadvertently logged in to an evil twin Internet connection set up by the person working on a laptop at the next table.

Just like legitimate sites, evil twins allow you access to the Internet, but in the background they record everything you are typing. Log on to your e-mail, investment web site or bank account, or buy something online, and they are recording your keystrokes.



Tip: Do you want an easy way to securely access your network and the Internet from anywhere? Call us today at 816-229-2290 about setting up a VPN for your office!

You may be asking, "How do I protect myself at WiFi hotspots?" First you need to make sure the hotspot is legitimate. You can do this by asking someone who works at the WiFi location; in fact, some businesses will give you printed instructions that include the hotspot name. Even here you need to be careful. Many times, in an attempt to make you feel comfortable, the hacker will use an evil twin name that mimics the legitimate hotspot and, on some occasions, the fake site may even show up at the top of your network list by having a stronger signal than the legitimate site.

The best protection you can have is connecting via your company's VPN (virtual private network).

A VPN protects your online information by encrypting your data and activity even if you're connected through an evil twin. If you don't have a VPN, the best protection is to surf the net, but never type in password, credit card, social security, bank account or other sensitive information when connected to a public WiFi hotspot.

The Lighter Side: Punch a Painting, Go to Jail



In 2012, Andrew Shannon punched a Monet painting valued at \$10 million. The incident occurred at the National Gallery of Ireland, located in Dublin. The painting, entitled *Argenteuil Basin with a Single Sailboat*, painted in 1874, apparently represented something much greater to the man who decided to attack it.

Right after his initial arrest, Shannon said the attack represented his way of “getting back at the state.” Later on, when he appeared in court, he changed his tune. Instead of an “attack against the state,” he said the whole thing was just a big misunderstanding. He said he didn’t punch the painting, he “fell into it.” He told the court he had felt faint and fell. The painting just happened to be in his way.

Fortunately, the National Gallery has plenty of CCTV cameras and the whole thing was recorded. What did those cameras see? Andrew Shannon very deliberately thrusting his fist through the Monet painting. In December of 2014, he was sentenced to five years in prison, and *Argenteuil Basin with a Single Sailboat* is back on display after being fully restored.

New Employee Spotlight: Chris Farnsworth

We are excited to welcome Chris Farnsworth as the newest member of the Pro Computer Solutions team! As a technician, Chris is the first level of support for walk-in and call-in clients. In this role, Chris is able to show off his primary area of expertise: virus troubleshooting and networking.

Chris has been tinkering with computers since he watched his mom build their family’s first computer when he was about 6 years old. Chris says, “I’ve always loved computers. I like solving puzzles and IT has always been a great place to work on unique and ever-changing puzzles.”

Outside of work, Chris plays with his pet dog and enjoys video games, board games, and table top role playing games. His other interests include music, science and the cosmos, and books (he is even working on writing his first book!). The latest big news from Chris is that he just got married on January 3rd and is loving married life.



***Join us in welcoming Chris to the
Pro Computer Solutions team!***

Who Wants To Win A \$25 Gift Card?

Last month’s quiz question was, “This astronaut, born January 20, 1930, was the 2nd man to walk on the moon.”

The correct answer was B) Buzz Aldrin. Here’s this month’s trivia question. The first person to respond correctly will receive a gift card to Scooter’s Coffee and Yogurt:

Complete this Beatles song title: “All You Need Is ____.”

A) Money B) Shelter C) Music D) Love

Call us right now with your answer!

816-229-2290

