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Turn your technology lemons into lemonade

Shocking New CBS News Report Reveals Why Your Office Copy Machine Is Actually A Security Time Bomb

This just in: According to a recent CBS news report, copy and multi-function machines in offices contain a huge, unknown security risk that all businesses must address immediately or face the legal, financial, and PR repercussions of a security breach.

A Surprising Fact About Your Office Copier

Nearly every printer, copier and multi-function machine manufactured after 2002 contains a hard drive that stores the images of every document you've ever copied, faxed, or scanned. These document images stay on that machine's hard drive forever and can quickly and easily be reproduced with a little know-how. Surprisingly, this little fact has not received any press – until now.

A CBS Undercover Investigation

In April of this year, a reporter went undercover to a New Jersey copier warehouse that had over 6,000 used copy machines in stock for resale. This investigation reveals a shocking fact – it's incredibly easy for a person to retrieve and reproduce every single document ever scanned, copied, or faxed through the machines available for resale.

As part of the investigation, the CBS reporter pulled 4 random machines that were available for sale and purchased them for approximately \$300 each. These machines were immediately loaded onto a truck and delivered within 2 hours to this reporter's office. Using a free application available online, he was able to access the hard drive of each machine and reproduce the documents within 30 minutes. What he uncovered was unbelievable.

Disturbing Facts Revealed By The Investigation

They discovered that one of the machines was formerly owned by the City of Buffalo, New York, Sex Crimes Division. In no time at all they were able to access over 249,000 documents that passed through that machine, including lists of sex offenders and crime data. Another machine from the Buffalo PD Narcotics Division contained a list of drug raid targets. The third machine was from a construction company. It contained blueprints of buildings, over \$40,000 in check copies, as well as pages



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of paystubs, names, and the social security numbers of employees.

But the fourth machine was the most disturbing. It was previously owned by a New York health insurance firm and contained over 300 pages of detailed medical records including drug prescriptions, blood tests, and even a cancer diagnosis – all which blatantly violate the new HIPAA laws.

Know What Your Responsibility Is

Before you trade in, resell or dispose of any office copier, scanner or multifunction machine you **MUST** make sure the hard drive is wiped clean of

all information as you would any computer in your office. Failure to do so could result in damaging security breaches and identity theft for your company, staff, and customers. This goes **DOUBLE** if you use your office machines to scan, fax, or copy social security numbers, credit cards, or medical records of any kind.

As always, we are here to assist you with all things digital. If you are getting ready to dispose of or trade in a copier, scanner, fax, or multi-function machine, give us a call. We can make sure your data is forever erased and inaccessible to criminals looking for an easy hit.

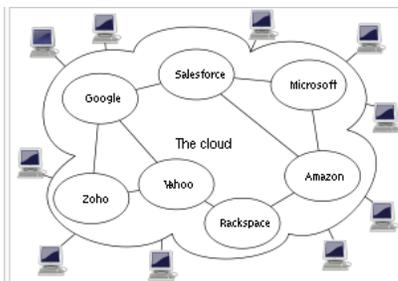
508-992-2541

Techie Terms Made Simple: What Is Cloud Computing?

Cloud computing is simply a term used to describe internet-based applications that are stored and accessed via a web browser instead of a server or computer at your location. Over the last couple of years there has been a **HUGE** movement towards companies using “cloud-based” applications because lost data is more easily recovered and remote workers can conveniently access information. As a result, costs for hardware and support are drastically lowered.

One “cloud” application we encourage our clients to consider is Hosted Exchange. Not only does this give you a tremendous amount of flexibility in accessing your e-mail, but it also lowers the costs of hardware, software, installation, and support **DRASTICALLY**.

While there are still some fears around hosting critical apps and data offsite, those fears will become a thing of the past as business owners see the bottom-line cost savings of cloud-based computing.



Shiny New Gadget Of The Month



Snagit By TechSmith

This month's pick is not really a gadget. It's a cool, inexpensive software program you'll easily get addicted to. Snagit is easy to use screen capture software that allows you to copy, edit, share and organize images captured off of your computer screen. The more you use Snagit, the more ways you'll find to use it.

For example, if you are working with a designer or programmer to develop a web application or web site, Snagit will allow you to capture a screen shot of the web page and add comments, cut and paste sections, add instructions, edit the design, and much more, making your communication much more precise and clear.

Creating a user guide or instruction manual? You'll love Snagit because you can capture segments of a computer screen and add comments and instructions right over the area (or document) you are explaining, making even the most complicated processes and software easy to follow.

Best of all, you can store these images in various image files (jpeg, png, gif, etc.) and cut and paste them into an e-mail, Word document, web site, etc. Snagit costs \$49.95 for a single user license and can be purchased at www.techsmith.com. If you want to try before you buy, you can download a 30-day free trial at the above web site as well.

Business Owner Beware: You Can Now Be Held Liable For Accidents Caused By Employees Who Are Talking On Their Cell Phones Or Texting While Driving



Over the past several years, states have been instituting laws to limit the use of cell phones while driving – so how does this affect companies who have employees using company vehicles? Quite a bit, actually.

Several lawsuits have cropped up in which a company was sued for an employee causing an accident while talking on a cell phone. In Virginia, an attorney driving home from work ran over a teenage girl, killing her. The family of the girl filed a \$30 million lawsuit against the employer because the attorney was talking to a client when the incident happened.

In the state of Arkansas, a jury found a lumber company liable after one of their employees struck another car, gravely injuring the passenger. At the time of the accident the employee driving the vehicle was using a cell phone for a sales call. That particular case ended up being settled for \$16 million.

Many states have defined hands-free

laws and produced legislation that bans cell-phone use completely. Although employer responsibility isn't specifically defined in the cell phone legislation, there have been an increasing number of lawsuits relating to employer responsibility regarding mobile cell-phone use for employees. Hands-free laws have done little to protect employers from liability, and as the trend of cell-phone legislation increases, employers should be prepared to address their mobile workforce and advise them of the cellular phone laws that are in effect in your state or locality.

We recommend you talk to your attorney about implementing a mobile phone and vehicle use policy that all employees must sign. While this may not completely remove your risk of being held responsible for accidents or injuries caused by employees driving a company-owned vehicle, it does show some forethought and responsibility on your behalf.

Meet Our New Client Of The Month!

Every month I choose one very special company to be my Client Of The Month. It's my way of acknowledging clients and thanking those who support me and my business with referrals and repeat business.

This month's Client Of The Month is **CMS, Inc.** Congratulations! You have won a \$50 Gift Certificate to your favorite restaurant. ***You might be my next Client Of The Month...watch for your name and picture here!***



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CMS, Inc.

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- Storage Solutions
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Are Extended Warranties Worth The Money?

Seems like you can't purchase any electronic device without being offered an extended warranty - but is it a good investment? According to a recent poll of over 2,000 readers of PC World magazine, 63% said they always go for the extended warranty plan; and of those who had to use it, 80% were satisfied with the service. Does that mean they are a good investment?

In our opinion, extended warranties are not necessary since most bugs will reveal themselves within the first 90 days of purchasing a technical gadget, which is well within the normal warranty of the product. But if you feel better buying an extended warranty, here are 5 tips to follow:

- 1. Read the terms before you buy:** You don't have to read the warranty in the checkout line - take it home. You can usually buy it later.
- 2. Beware shipping charges:** If the product needs to be sent in for service, you could get stuck with the tab.
- 3. Look for accidental damage coverage:** Most policies do not cover products that are damaged from falls or spilled coffee. If that option is available, you might have to pay more for it (a good idea, particularly for mobile devices that get abused).
- 4. Look for extras:** Many extended warranties cover replaceable items, such as bulbs in projectors which are expensive and can wear out.
- 5. Check for the product's reliability online first.** If you are buying a quality product, an extended warranty might not be necessary. Obviously doing a little research and spending a bit more on a better built product will save you a lot of time and aggravation in the long run anyway. You can find some good information in PC World's annual Reliability and Service survey and Consumer Reports' reliability ratings.

Of course, you can always call us for our opinion since we have to fix the PCs, servers, and other gadgets for multiple clients!

I'd Love To Hear From YOU!

Is there an article you would like to comment on? Is there a topic you want me to research? Have a funny story or a resource you want to share with the other subscribers? Send it to me! We are always looking for new and useful content to add to Tech-ade.

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“Say you want to huff and puff and blow a house in...there's an app for that.”