



CYBER CRIME PREVENTION TIPS

COVID-19 has certainly changed the way we work and live. One of the most positive outcomes is improved productivity. Evidence can be found all over social media as friends and family share posts of de-cluttered spaces, learn a new language and grow the ever-elusive sour dough yeast. While most of us are sharing our positive productivity achievements, we need to remain diligent given that cybercrime is also on an upward trend. According to a recent update by the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre, Canadians have been defrauded out of \$1.8 million as of May 25th, 2020 in coronavirus-related scams. Cyber criminals are taking advantage of people's heightened levels of concern and fear regarding the pandemic. As a result, now is the time to lock down your digital privacy.

There are some easy wins to maintain your diligence and limit your exposure to cybercrime. Setting up complex passwords, securing email accounts and applying software updates to computers are easy and basic fixes. But what about the more complex cases such as malware, a phishing scam or ransomware? What should the average user be aware of?

Malware is any software intentionally designed to cause damage. A cybercriminal may use malware to steal information or carry out malicious activities. How do you get malware? You download it. Yes, you read that correctly, you actually install it yourself. Cyber criminals are experts at making malware look like a legitimate file or software program. Be sure your anti-malware software is up to date.

Phishing is a cybercriminal attempting to get sensitive information by pretending to be a legitimate sender. Cyber criminals can use the information that they gather to steal your financial information, open accounts in your name or steal your identity. Avanan Research indicates that 4% of all emails are phishing emails. So how do you sort the good from the bad? Read and re-read your emails; do not click on links within an email. If the email says it is from Apple, for example, and you need to reset your password, go to Apple's website directly instead of using the quick link contained in the email. Hovering over links prior to clicking them will tell you where you will be directed. Never share your passwords over email or text. If you are still unsure, call the sender to verify its legitimacy.

Ransomware is a type of malware that threatens to publish the victim's data or makes data inaccessible unless a ransom is paid. When ransomware infects a device, it will either lock the screen or encrypt all files. The attacker will then demand the ransom and promise to release your system once payment is received.

Cybersecurity is top of mind for Matco and its employees. We all belong to our IT partner's Security Training Academy. Membership includes additional training for employees to recognize malicious links, emails and websites. Our software updates, firewall, antivirus/antispam and protocols are in place and reviewed constantly to protect what matters to us most, our clients.



The best way you can protect yourself is by educating yourself, so that you can spot the scam before it happens. Like the time old saying goes, if it seems too good to be true, it most likely is.

Stay healthy and diligent.

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For more information:

<https://www.debianit.com/2020/05/16/emails-saying-your-antivirus-is-expired-are-likely-a-scam/>

<https://cyber.gc.ca/en/guidance/cybercrime-0>

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