



Safety

Safety starts with best practices that have been around since, if not dawn of personal computing, at least from soon after. Critical are updates, antimalware, and backup. Although install-and-forget utilities can go a long way toward satisfying this need, safety may take more than just accepting the settings and programs that come with a new computer. The software solutions need to be combined with policies and procedures to ensure they are allowed to perform their jobs. Sometimes a computer just fails and needs to be restored with nothing to blame.



Security

Security assumes you've already protected your computer and its data from physical destruction. After ransomware that flat out asks for money, the most valuable thing to an outsider is the *information* that you store and transmit electronically. We may have

once believed in “security through obscurity” or “no one wants to search through hundreds of pieces of information about thousands of customers to find my carelessly emailed credit card number.” Unfortunately, wholesale data collection and high-speed automated pattern matching mean your credit card number *will* be found if it was protected merely by sticking it in a haystack.

The two core technologies that protect data security are encryption and the passwords that drive the encryption. Like any technology, they need to be properly implemented to actually be effective. If you have sloppy encryption or weak passwords you actually have no protection.



Privacy

While security protects your data that may be valuable, **privacy** means protecting your identity, what you say, and who your associates are. As you wander the digital world you leave footprints of where you've gone and snippets of what you've done. It may be difficult to cover the tracks, but you can attempt to ensure they are anonymous and not easily connected to you.

Unfortunately most privacy leaks are the result of actions you explicitly take. They

can't be totally removed with technology but require a change of your voluntary actions. Predominately privacy is given away whenever you browse the internet or sign into a service that purports to give you a benefit.



Ransomware

Although not a category by itself, **ransomware** is in the news this week and is a particularly vicious attack should you be targeted by it. Like Safety, Security, and Privacy; the best protection is built into users' best practices to avoid getting infected.

Often the first indication that you have succumbed to ransomware is the inability to open any of your data files. If you look at your disc index, they are still there exactly where they've always been. But if you try to open them the program says “not valid.” If you do look at their contents with a plain text editor, all you see is gibberish.

There is always one text file you can read in every folder. It tells you to make a payment within a short time and they will give you instructions to get your data back. Like any kidnapping, they have to make good on releasing the hostage or no one will ever pay up. Your only other alternative is to restore the computer and your data from a current backup.

Resources

Links to useful reading on this topic.
These links are also posted at
<http://t.zaitech.com/Rotary17.html>

Article: *Is this a legitimate email:*
<https://goo.gl/8gfvEc>

Article: *Safely open an email:*
<https://goo.gl/Yu0Ktq>

Article: *Update for safety:*
<http://s.zaitech.com/Update-Update>

Reading: Brian Krebs' 3 rules:
<https://goo.gl/ftS5jU>

More on Krebs' 3 rules:
<https://goo.gl/JvS7gu>

Wow! Anyone knows this much about me?
<https://panopticlick.eff.org/>

Track everything you've done (on Google)
<https://goo.gl/xc97Bu>

Draft of the first chapter of *Safety, Security, Privacy* book
<https://goo.gl/nPwXIA>

Personal Computer Club of Charlotte
<http://pc3.org>

Charlotte Apple Computer Club
www.charlotteappleclub.org

Other Services

These are some products Bill recommends – and yes, he makes a little money when you purchase them.

Carbonite cloud backup continuously saves your documents in case of computer failure or corruption.

For a single computer:
<http://s.zaitech.com/CarboniteHome>

For a business or multiple computers:
<http://s.zaitech.com/1GGtBa3>

LastPass is a vetted secure and private password manager synchronized across all your devices and online.
<http://s.zaitech.com/SignupForLastPass>

Bill's blog
<http://TechnologyInterpreter.info>

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in the digital environment

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