Software Training Scotland

Cyber Essentials

Top 3 Tips

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Your business could be under threat!

Cyber crime is very much like any form of crime where attackers are looking for a favourable scenario before proceeding. For example, one that provides maximum gain with minimum effort.

Unfortunately, as larger organisations improve their security measures and defences, private individuals and small companies have now become the preferred target due to their lower levels of security.

What can you do about it?

Read on for 3 of our top tips that will help to prevent a potential attack on your company and keep your information and devices safe.

The following security measures and more are implemented through our Cyber Essentials Certification service, with **all costs fully funded** through the Scottish Enterprise Voucher Scheme.

Tip 1: Improve the strength and resilience of your passwords.

Passwords can be a real minefield when it comes to the security of your online accounts and digital devices. The vulnerability begins with the initial strength and resilience of the passwords you have created, then with how often the same password is used, and finally with how securely they are managed and stored.

01475 603797 info@softwaretrainingscotland.co.uk

Below are some steps you can take immediately to dramatically improve the security of your passwords:

- To begin, visit this website and test the robustness of your most used passwords, the results might surprise you. **https://howsecureismypassword.net/**
- Ensure your passwords are more than 8 characters long.
- Avoid choosing obvious or common passwords that are easily discoverable from your personal information.
- A valuable tip for password generation is to pick 3 random words and string them together with no spaces.
- Consider using a password manager to store and manage your online identities and passwords. It will allow unique and complex passwords to be used as well as storing them securely and efficiently for every account. This can all be controlled and accessed by you with one master password.

Tip 2: Use an isolated admin account for installations and setting configurations.

All user accounts have a certain level of access privileges and permissions.

This specifies exactly what the user is authorised to do in terms of software installation, accessing certain files or changing settings and configurations.

If you restrict these rights (usually referred to as “administrative permissions”) you instantly improve the security of your device as malware cannot be installed by mistaken clicks, downloads or malicious websites visited.

Unfortunately, these rights are not normally restricted. Most people by default make the mistake of allowing their day to day user account have full authority over the device to carry out any of the dangerous actions mentioned above.

To protect against this vulnerability:

- Create a new user account called ‘admin” with its own unique password.
- Isolate it from the internet and any browsing or network activity.
- Give it full authority and admin privileges to your device while giving all other user accounts minimal permissions.

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Tip 3: Have firewalls in place on both your network router and device.

By activating the firewall on your network router, or on your device, you essentially create a data "traffic warden" who monitors all data coming in and out of your network or any network you happen to have joined. By following a set of rules that we control, traffic will be either allowed or blocked to our device by this data enforcer.

Now communication between you and the big, bad internet is monitored and controlled, and a security barrier has been put in place.

Firewalls are improving all the time and becoming even more effective at inspecting, blocking and reacting to the ever increasing security threats being generated and let loose every day.

For more information get in touch with us at:

info@softwaretrainingscotland.co.uk

Or visit our Cyber Essentials page:

www.softwaretrainingscotland.co.uk/cyberessentials

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