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TECH AND TAXES 2015

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DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY & INFORMATION

DTI eSecurity News — Tech Threats and Taxes

Threat Forecast for 2015

The Internet of Things (IoT), is a term used to describe when everyday objects are connected to the Internet and to each other. Everything from cars to household appliances to thermostats to lamps to medical devices and more.

According to McAfee Security Labs, IoT is filled with hacking potential and is high on the worry list for those concerned about security risks. The desire for convenience and interconnectivity has retailers rushing products to the market at the cost of safety and security.

Mobile Malware

Unfortunately malware for mobile devices will boom in 2015 as hackers become smarter about this method of attack. This is largely due to the increasing availability of tools that lower the barrier to entry for many would-be mobile hackers.

This prediction is also exacerbated by "malvertising," that drives unsuspecting users to untrusted app stores promoting alternative apps, many of which are malicious. It's VERY risky to download apps from unknown or unfamiliar sources.

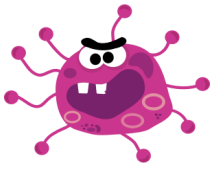
Other Types of Malware

Malware designed for non-Windows computers is predicted to explode in 2015 thanks to major vulnerabilities like Shellshock. Routers, TVs, industrial controllers and many other control systems and appliances will be exposed to the Shellshock vulnerability for years to come. This is because the vulnerability, revealed in 2014, is pervasive and sometimes hard to patch, especially on IoT devices.

Another worry is an increase in healthcare-related attacks. As hospitals adopt more Internet-connected devices, the likelihood of an attack on patient data goes up. **Health data is more valuable to cyber criminals than stolen credit card numbers.**

What Can I Do to Protect Myself?

- **Create unique passwords for every device and service.**
  Every device you own should have its own unique password. Passwords should be at least 10 characters in length, include numbers and symbols, and should contain both uppercase and lowercase letters.
- **Check your accounts for fraudulent charges.**
  Hackers who steal financial information usually test out their ill-gotten data for usability before making large purchases. Monitor your accounts for any unusual charges, and report them immediately.
- **Install and update anti-virus software.**
  Finally, secure your laptops, computers, mobile phones and tablets with trusted anti-malware software. Free versions for State employees (not K12) are available on DTI's Extranet site. For K12 we recommend AVG or Avast (both free).



Tax Time Tips

It's Tax Time Again - Everyone knows this, but did you know that the IRS has many helpful tips for avoiding tax scams and fraud?

Tax scams come in many different forms such as emails, phishing links and phone calls. Think before you click or answer emails or phone calls.

For updates and information visit: irs.gov

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Questions or comments?
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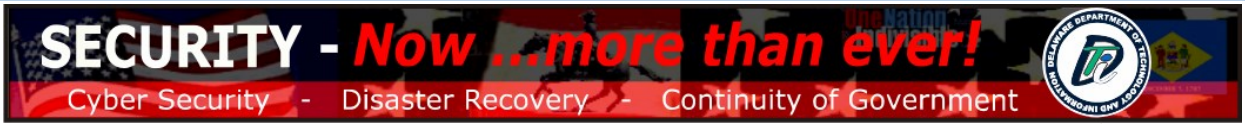
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