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**DTI eSecurity News — What Are Thieves Stealing from Your Old Computer?****Before You Retire That Old Computer...**

We all store many types of sensitive information on our computers, including financial data, contacts, and other confidential information.



Before you retire an old computer, either at work or at home, it is crucial that the data is properly removed before disposal. Otherwise, you may be unwittingly distributing sensitive data to the next owner or to an identify thief.

Merely deleting files is not enough. It may look like they are gone, but they can be easily recovered with simple utilities.

This newsletter will discuss methods that you can use to protect data, on your State and your home computer, from falling into the wrong hands.

A Scary Real World Example

Hank Gerbus had his hard drive replaced at a Best Buy store in Cincinnati. He received a phone call several months later from someone in Chicago who had bought that same drive at a flea market. The old drive contained Hank's Social Security number, account numbers, and details of his retirement investments.

The person that bought the hard drive found Hank's phone number on the drive. He made arrangements to return the drive, but Hank does not know who else may have seen the information.

Tools and Tips to Protect Your Old Data

The following tools and tips can be used to help protect the sensitive data on your computer:

- Electronic information on storage devices (hard drives, tapes, compact disks, USB etc.) must be disposed of in a manner corresponding to the classification of the stored information, up to and including physical destruction.
- HandyBits File Shredder is free software that can be used to securely delete files from your computer's hard drive and external media, such as thumb drives. It can be downloaded by visiting <http://www.handybits.com/shredder.htm>
- One way to make sure your old computer is empty is to Nuke it. Darik's Boot and Nuke is free software that will wipe your computer's entire hard drive. This utility can be downloaded at: <http://dban.sourceforge.net>.
- If the computer is damaged and software will not accomplish the job, the most certain way to protect any data from theft is to drill several holes through the computer's hard drive.

**Questions or comments?**

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