THE M&H MONITOR

Forward

PC & Mobile Security

By Timothy Harrington

"Lock Before You Leave" is the motto. Some offices require you to lock your workstation before you leave it to take care of a different task. The reasoning behind it is to ensure a level of security. Locking your PC is one of the easiest and most comprehensive ways to secure data. Unfortunately, those days are drawing to a close.

The office is no longer the place where all business is conducted. Employees are issued company laptops that may include trade secrets, or other sensitive materials on the hard disk. If these devices become compromised, it may end up costing much more than the price of a lost laptop. However it doesn't stop there.

Smartphones, as well as tablets are becoming more and more integral to business every day. The smartphone today is just as important as the rolodex was only a few decades ago. It is arguably the quickest way to reach out to any of your contacts at any given moment. If the wrong employee loses their smartphone, it could cost a business dearly.

A couple of things to keep in mind to secure your devices, whether it's a laptop, smartphone, tablet, or even a desktop workstation:

- Use a password, a PIN lock, or a pattern. If you lose your phone, at least your data has that layer of security

- Some devices nowadays have the capacity for biometric (fingerprint, facial recognition) device unlocking. If these options are available to you, they can provide an excellent layer of security.

- If security is a very high concern, then there are options to encrypt your device. This option is much more complex, however it is still a means to secure your device.

- Make sure your device is synced and backed up. If in the unfortunate circumstance you do lose your device, you can rest assured that your data is not lost with it.

We all have some kind of security software on our personal computers. Years ago it was optional, but today it is practically a requirement. Smartphones and tablets also have an assortment of security software available to you. The good news is that you may already have it on your phone as you read this. Mobile carriers, such as T-Mobile, or AT&T has preinstalled on their Android smartphones (and tablets) a mobile security app called "Lookout." Lookout is an extremely powerful tool to keep your phone secure, especially when properly configured. For those on Verizon, they have a security offering developed by McAfee which offers similar modes of protection, when properly configured.

Apple's iPhone has a security app preinstalled on their devices as well called Find My iPhone. If a user loses their iPhone, they can track its location, sound an alarm to say that it has been lost or stolen, and as a last line of defense, a remote wipe to prevent unauthorized access.

Smartphones have made computing even more personal. With all of the precautions we take to protect the data on our personal computers, shouldn't we treat our smartphones with the same level of security?

If you have any questions about security on your mobile devices, or would like assistance installing or configuring this security, please call us at 866-964-8324 or email us at support@mhconsults.net
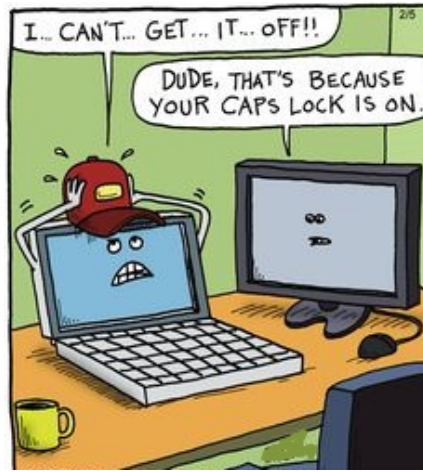
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