

CYBER SECURITY – PROTECTING YOUR PERSONAL IDENTITY ONLINE

On September 21st, the Barrie-Simcoe County Branch kicked off the Fall hosting a free community-based information night on Cyber Security. Barrie City Hall Rotunda was the backdrop for a highly educational and interactive evening. Guest speakers from the Ontario Provincial Police – Cyber Task Force; Barrie City Police Internet Child Exploitation Unit and Base Borden's Cyber Task Force spoke about the importance of vigilance and taking appropriate steps to protect your personal identification. Law Enforcement alone cannot protect you. Security is a collaborative community effort and it starts with us.



The OPP shared a very informative video highlighting some staggering data on the escalating number of internet security issues at home and abroad. More than 156 million scam and spam emails are

sent to Canadians Daily. In 2016 there were over 1200 major data breaches, resulting in more than 1.1 billion identities being exposed. This resulted in an estimated 98.6 million compromised devices making up various botnets. A botnet is many Internet-connected devices, each of which is running one or more bots. Botnets can be used to perform distributed denial-of-service attack (DDoS attack), steal data, send spam, and allow the attacker access to the device and its connection. In 2016, 357 million new variants of malware were discovered.

The annual cost to the global economy from cybercrime is estimated to be between \$375 and \$575 billion, which represents 15% to 20% of the total internet generated economy. In 2016, online scams accounted for more than \$40 million in losses for Canadians.

The OPP wrapped up by highlighting the following four key preventive measures.

PASS-PHRASE - Passwords are not enough. Instead, try a Pass-Phrase as they are harder to crack. They suggested changing your passphrase twice a year or with each time change.

BACK UP - Assess what would impact you the most (e.g. financial information, family pictures) and set up appropriate protection measures by backing up the most at-risk items on your computer with an external storage device.

DIGITAL WILL- Another very important tip was to create a Digital Will, which is a list of your accounts and passwords for your executor. They should be stored in a secure place.

REPORT IT – If you feel you have fallen victim to identity theft, contact the police immediately. They are committed to investigating online/digital crimes and preventing harm and victimization to the fullest extent possible, within the bounds of the law.

Members from Base Borden's team of Cyber Professionals led a live demonstration highlighting some of the many threats we face in today's world. They showed how quickly a virus can be created and sent, allowing access to passwords and personal information. A second demonstration showed how easy it is to capture and track personal information from cell phones, that have wifi activated that may not be secure. It was recommended to limit your use of FREE public wi-fi and it's better to source out public wifi that requires a password and close the wifi account when done.

The key message was to reinforce the importance of vigilance and being aware of your surroundings or an LLP – Life Long Practitioner.

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A detective from the Barrie Police - Internet Child Exploitation Unit wrapped up the evening with some sobering facts about the dangers of social media. The focus was on the importance of

practicing safety through the various social media applications and remembering that whatever you put out there is there forever, and can have consequences down the road. We need to educate ourselves and our children to set the appropriate boundaries for safety.

It is important to check privacy settings frequently, especially after performing an upgrade, as settings will reset to the factory default. Make sure all your social media accounts are set to Private, Not Public. When it comes to our children, familiarize yourself with what they are doing online, and educate them

Below is some feedback from our evening.

“Thank you so much for being instrumental in facilitating the presentation tonight. It was informative, and the venue was comfortable. I loved the variety of perspectives that were offered and the good guy screen - bad guy screen; visuals made those concepts simple to understand. The technical assists were appreciated. Please continue to make the topic available to the general public.”

“I can’t say enough how much I enjoyed the session last night! Wow, I learned so much! I am going to recommend this presentation for one of our staff days. Thanks to the Association for putting this together.”

“I very much enjoyed the seminar this evening. Very informative and well organized.”

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about the dangers. Be aware of posting pictures and restrict the use of pictures for young children.

Another tip is not to share too much information. It’s important to remember that no information is truly private online as it can be forwarded or shared with anyone you share with online. Oversharing gives ammunition to strangers with bad intentions.

The evening ended with a lively round of questions from the audience.

Overall our evening was a huge success and would not have been possible without the extremely generous support of Multi-Tech Audio Visual Media who provided setup and manned the AV equipment for the evening. We would also like to thank Donaleigh’s Irish Pub who provided a generous selection of tasty treats; The City of Barrie for providing free space for our evening and the various local media outlets for assisting with the promotion of our evening.