

**SPECIAL EDITION!***For Your
Eyes Only*Looking to the Future
Information Technology Division | **Bulletin**
vol.5 no.3 | October 2008**Message from the CIO**

With Halloween just around the corner, Internet criminals are likely preparing some ghastly “tricks” for your computer! In fact, the holiday season, beginning with Halloween, is “prime-time” to focus on safe computing practices and IT security awareness. In conjunction with the *National Cyber Security Awareness Month* of IT Security, the TTU Office of the CIO has designated **October 20-24th as TTU IT Security Awareness Week**. We have a week of educational materials and events planned to raise awareness and to promote safe computing practices. In this special edition issue, we focus on issues raised by the TTU Community as common security concerns: **email scams, online purchasing, downloading files, and securing new systems**. Each article offers tips and resources for combating the IT security threat. We are also working on operating policies to address data security for confidential and sensitive data. Speaking of sensitive data, be sure to attend our roundtable event on the topic (October 22nd, 2-4pm) and to bring items for shredding at our Shred Day (October 24th 10am-2pm). Taking advantage of the information provided this week, you will be prepared to ward off those cyber-goblins!

-Sam Segran

Associate Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer

**TTU IT Security Awareness Week
October 20-24, 2008**

As part of National Cyber Security Awareness Month, the TTU Office of the CIO is sponsoring TTU IT Security Awareness Week, October 20-24, 2008. During this week, we will be providing educational announcements and will be hosting two events:

- **Data Security Roundtable**

Wednesday, October 22nd, 2-4pm
Matador Room, 2nd floor Student Union Building

A panel will present information regarding data classification, protection, retention, and security.

- **Our Biannual Shred Day - Mobile Shredding Units**

Friday, October 24th, 10am-2pm
United Spirit Arena Parking Lot

In partnership with the TTU Office of the CIO, area businesses will shred documents at no charge for faculty, staff, and students.

The purpose of this special week is to raise IT security awareness and empower the TTU Community with prevention tips and tools. For additional information about National Cyber Security Awareness Month, please visit <http://www.staysafeonline.org>. The National Cyber Security Alliance provides free IT security and safety information to the public. We also encourage you to visit the TTU Office of the CIO Safe Computing Practices website at <http://safecomputing.ttu.edu> for TTU IT security information and resources.

Beware of Email Scams

Electronic mail continues to be a choice method for Internet criminals to steal your confidential and private information for commercial gain. Criminals find e-mail to be an affordable and easy means of luring consumers into providing personal information. As long as people continue to respond and provide information, the scams will continue to be profitable for criminals. Most scams have one or more of the following:

- **Requests for financial information**

Many of these schemes appear to be from a reputable bank, mortgage brokerage, or financial consulting firm. The message will request your personal banking information, typically under the guise of verifying your account or confirming a transaction.

- **Promises of financial gain**

Claims such as “Make money in your spare time,” “Earn thousands per week!” or “Guaranteed income” are almost always sure signs of a scam. The sender usually requests that you make a small investment with your credit card in order to earn your fortune.

- **High pressure tactics**

For example, “Sign up now or the price will increase.” Again, a legitimate deal with such a restricted timeline will probably not be conducted over electronic mail.

- **Prize notifications**

Countless scams require that you pay a small fee to claim your prize. The fee is often allegedly for transaction costs, shipping, handling, or pre-award taxes.

- **“FREE” goods, services, and opportunities**

Offering free items is used to lure people into additional purchases, such as other products and fees associated with the “free” items.

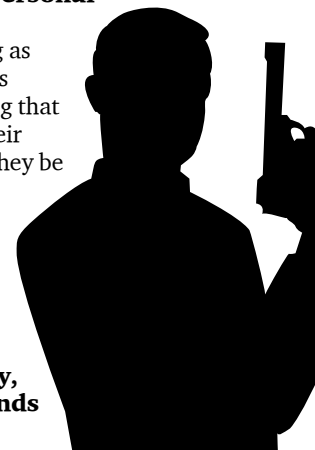
- **Internet auctions that require prepayment**

In a world comfortable with online stock trading and eBay purchasing, illegitimate Internet auctions have become a popular venue for criminals.

- **Requests to be added to your personal web space “contacts” list**

Recently, criminals have been posing as social networking companies, such as FaceBook and MySpace, by indicating that “someone” has invited you to join their “contacts” list or by requesting that they be added to your “contacts” list.

Please remember that no reputable financial organization, corporation, or organization will request sensitive information from you via email. Your best defense is the delete button and effective utilization of spam filters. **Finally, remember the old saying, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.”**



Be a Safe and Smart Online Shopper

The holiday season is just around the corner! With gasoline prices at record levels, many consumers will choose to shop online. While shopping online can be a convenient alternative to traditional storefronts, we encourage you to be careful as you shop online this season.

• Know the seller

Before buying online, investigate the company! We suggest that you obtain a physical address and phone number. For large purchases, check with the Better Business Bureau for information concerning any prior complaints.

• Know the terms and conditions

Carefully review the product return information and read the fine print. Evaluate the process for damaged or unwanted merchandise. Obtain all product details and purchase arrangements before ordering. For instance, know the total price, tax, delivery time, shipping charges, and order tracking procedures.

• Use a credit card

The Federal Trade Commission suggests that, "if you pay by credit or charge card online, your transaction will be protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act." In the event of unauthorized use of your credit or charge card, you generally would be held liable only for the first \$50 in charges.

• Shop at secure e-commerce sites

Look for company security and privacy statements and guarantees; read them carefully. When you are in your shopping cart, review the Internet address and make sure that it begins with "**https://**" or "**shttp://**", which indicates that transaction information is encrypted or scrambled.

• Use secure passwords

Most online retailers require you to create an account with their company and provide your own password to access your account and order information. Use the recommended tips for password creation: use an alpha-numeric combination, avoid words contained in the dictionary, and use at least nine characters. We strongly suggest that you avoid using personal information (birthday, social security number, TTU eRaider account passwords, pet names, etc.).

• Keep records

Print the order confirmation and purchase order; file with your financial records for future reference. Most online companies guarantee delivery within thirty days; mark your calendar and check on your order periodically.

Forewarned is Forearmed: Downloading Files Legally

The TTU IT Division encourages the University community to practice safe computing and to be aware of copyright laws when downloading music, videos, and other files from the Internet. We offer the following reminders:

- It is illegal to make, use, or pass along unauthorized copies of software, graphics, music or any other creative art or intellectual property. This includes software programs required in a class and multimedia projects;
- It is illegal to share copyrighted materials over the Texas Tech University Network, unless proper permissions from the author/owner has been obtained; and
- It is illegal for anyone to upload or download full-length sound recordings or DVDs without permission of the copyright owners.

As a service to the TTU community, the TTU Office of the CIO, the Division of Student Affairs, and the Student Government Association collaborated to create a TTU legal music site, <http://www.ttu.edu/legalmusic>. Downloading files is simple and convenient, but make sure you practice safe (and legal) computing when doing so!

Securing New Systems

With the explosion of viruses and worms on the Internet, a new computer system can be attacked within seconds of first connecting to the Internet. Without proper protection, your system can become infected before you can download operating system patches and antivirus software. Viruses and worms can cause a range of damages from application malfunctions to operating system failure.

- Before placing a new computer on the TTU network, install the most up-to-date patches to the operating system. To aid in this task, a patch CD is maintained at IT Help Central and is available free of charge. Contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357).
- Once connected, immediately install Symantec Antivirus on your computer. The IT Division provides the software at no charge to the University community at <http://eraider.ttu.edu>.

Those living in residence halls or connecting to the Internet in public areas are protected by the TTU Information Technology System Registration system that requires a new computer in these locations to pass a security screening prior to connecting. For additional information, please contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357).

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