Message From the CIO

Season’s Greetings! The festive holiday season is once again upon us after another successful, productive, innovative, and hectic year. In addition to warm wishes for a restful holiday, we also provide a few Safe Computing Tips particularly relevant this time of year. As we reflect back on the projects and initiatives of 2009, we appreciate the partnerships and collaborative efforts we share with the TTU Community.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Best Wishes for a bright, prosperous New Year!

-Sam Segran
Associate Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer

The holiday photo above includes the TTU Office of the CIO staff and senior management team.

Back Row L to R: Mike Simmons, Associate Managing Director, Application Development and Support; Sam Segran, Associate Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer; Darrell Bateman, Assistant Vice President, TTU Office of the CIO; Katherine Austin, Ph.D. (seated), Assistant Vice President, TTU Office of the CIO; J Stalcup, Managing Director, Telecommunications; Allen Young, Managing Director, Technology Support; Yung Ng (seated), Assistant Managing Director, IT Policy & Planning, TTU Office of the CIO; Vicki West, Managing Director, Institutional Research & Information Management; Mary Scott, Senior Administrative Assistant, Office of the CIO; and Becky Yeates, Administrative Business Assistant, Office of the CIO.

Front Row L to R: Paco Diaz, Director for IT Compliance, TTU Office of the CIO; Shelly Walraven, Senior Analyst, TTU Office of the CIO; Phil Smith, Ph.D., Senior Director, High Performance Computing Center; Shannon Cepica, Managing Director, IT Help Central; Britta Tye, Events Manager, Office of the CIO; and Chyrel Mitchell, Administrative Assistant, TTU Office of the CIO.

Warmest Wishes for the Season

Happy Holidays
‘Tis the Season . . . Safe Computing
Tips for Online Transactions

The holiday season is a prime time for hackers to attack computer systems and prey on Internet shoppers. Hacking tools have become mainstream and sophisticated, allowing anyone with an interest to build and deploy various malicious tools. Also beware that December is a target time for identity theft ploys - don't become a statistic! While online shopping can be convenient and affordable, we recommend that you shop smart and take precautions. To help ensure a safer online shopping experience, the TTU IT Division offers the following tips:

• Guard the security of your transaction. When submitting your purchase, look for the lock icon on the browser's status bar and make sure that "https" appears in the address (https:// . . .);

• Don't e-mail confidential data to any person, organization, or business. Unless encrypted, e-mail is not a secure method for transmitting confidential and sensitive information such as credit card, checking account, or Social Security numbers;

• Keep a paper trail; check your credit card and bank statements regularly. Print and save records of your online transactions, including the product description, price, online receipt, and any electronic correspondence you had with the seller. Read your credit card and bank statements as you receive them and immediately report unauthorized charges;

• Opt to pay with a credit card instead of a debit card. Credit card transactions are protected by the Fair Credit Billing Act. Debit cards are covered under the Electronic Funds Transfer Act, but the protections provided depend upon when you report the error or unauthorized use. Under the Fair Credit Billing Act, you generally would be held liable for the first $50 in charges for any unauthorized use of your credit or charge card. One of the things to consider in a credit card transaction is that you have a period of time before money is transferred; debit transactions are immediately withdrawn from your account; and

• Be on alert for phishing schemes. There are only a few real reasons anyone needs your personal information and no credible bank, financial institution, or organization will ever request confidential information via electronic mail. E-mail messages requesting personal information (password, credit card, Social Security number, etc.) are usually fraud attempts.

We strongly recommend that you be vigilant about protecting your personal information, especially when purchasing online. For more safe computing information please visit http://safecomputing.ttu.edu or contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357). Don't let the Hacker Grinch ruin your holiday!

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