



Subject: Simple Tips for Physical Security

July 20, 2006

Dear Real Estate Executive,

Look around your desk for a minute. Do you see any information that, if inappropriately disclosed, could place your organization at risk? Stop and think for a moment. Do you ever handle any of the following?

- Policies and/or standards
- Member or customer information
- Employee records
- Salary, research or new product data
- Sales forecast data
- Network diagrams

The way you protect this information has a direct impact on your organization's exposure to risk and ultimately its business success.

Our workstations, laptops and PDAs also provide ready access to information, networks and systems. As a result, they must be protected from illicit use. It's remarkably easy to sit down at an unattended computer and access whatever you left up on the screen, left stored on your hard drive or is accessible on the network. And if this illicit access takes place under your user account, you could be responsible.

The single best thing you can do to prevent someone from using your computer when you aren't there is to press the "Control, Alt and Delete" keys to lock your computer before you leave. Just remember to "Control Alt Delete before you leave your seat!"

Those of us who use laptops, PDAs, memory sticks and other portable devices have a special set of concerns regarding security. The very trait that makes these systems so useful – their portability – makes them a prime target for thieves.

These systems often contain a wealth of information, and in the wrong hands, this can be devastating. In fact, the data within these portable devices can be many times more valuable than the hardware itself. Here are some simple tips to remember:

- Use a cable lock to secure your laptop to a desk or other solid object.
- Keep a close eye on all of your portable devices while in public places like airports or restaurants.
- Never leave your portable devices in plain sight in your car. Lock them in the trunk or take them with you.
- Keep your PDA or memory stick in your possession or in a locked drawer rather than on top of your desk.
- Don't store sensitive information on your PDA or memory stick.

What should you do if your laptop is lost or stolen?

- Report the loss or theft to your organization immediately, so that they can act quickly. This is particularly important if your device contains sensitive corporate or customer information.
- Report the loss or theft to the appropriate authorities. These parties may include representatives from law enforcement agencies, as well as hotel or conference staff.
- Call your local help desk or network authority so that remote access can be temporarily disabled until your account can be properly secured.

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REALTOR Secure program resources
<http://www.realtor.org/crtsecure.nsf/pages/resources?OpenDocument>

Prevent compromise in your workspace:
http://www.nationalsummary.com/Articles/Personal_Finance/personal_fin_secure_workplace.htm

Securing your laptop:
<http://www.quepublishing.com/articles/article.asp?p=174137&rl=1>

Preventing laptops theft
<http://www.pcworld.com/howto/article/0,aid,116446,00.asp>