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This Thanksgiving, Pass The “Storytelling Fork”



Thomas Fox is president of Tech Experts, south-east Michigan's leading small business computer support company.

Plan on getting together with friends and family this Thanksgiving? Then pass the “storytelling fork” and you’ll create incredible memories

that no one will forget!

This tradition is a variation of the “talking stick,” which is an old Native American tradition used in council circles to give everyone a chance to speak.

When matters of great concern came before the council, the leading elder would hold the talking stick and begin the discussion. When he finished, he would hold out the talking stick, and whoever wished to speak after him would take it.

In this manner, the stick was passed from one individual to another until all who wished to speak had done so.

The stick was then passed back to the leading elder for safe keeping.

They believe that whomever holds the stick is imparted with the sacred power of words.

So how can you use this as a fun Thanksgiving tradition for your family?

Before everyone leaves the dinner table, bring out your “storytelling fork” and request that everyone tell a story as a small payment for the meal they’ve just enjoyed.

To make it fun, tie a red ribbon around a silver serving fork and hold it up for everyone to see.

Say, “This is a magic Thanksgiving fork. Although it seems like an ordinary serving fork, it has special powers that will imbue the holder with amazing storytelling ability. When you hold this fork, memories

and fun stories of people and places you’ve seen will come flooding into your mind. When you hold this fork, everyone will listen.”

Start by giving them a story of your own. Maybe you can talk about the day your children were born. Tell stories of your childhood or previous Thanksgiving meals.



Talk about how you met your spouse or an old friend, teacher, or mentor who had a big impact on your life.

Or talk about the funny habits or quirks of

family members who have passed away. Then, pass the fork for others to do the same.

Kids will love the attention they get when telling a story, and you’ll have several memories that will last forever!

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Choosing A New Printer For Your Office

*by Frank Wright,
Service Manager*

When it comes to the type of printer you use for your everyday printing needs the choice seems pretty simple doesn't it? That may not be the case at all...

With hundreds of different printers, brands, etc. the task of finding the right kind of printer that will suit your company's needs can be more difficult than expected.

So what should be taken into consideration when looking to buy a new printer?

Some important points to consider: Size, cost, cost to maintain, type of ink, functionality needed, and finally speed.

While most everyone can agree with the statement "you get what you pay for" that tends to hold true with printers as well.

The problem with using this sentiment as your sole deciding factor when it comes to the type of printer you need is that you can end up with a printer that is WAY too big for your company and your needs.

Many different manufacturers make copy machines that are very large. For most small businesses, a large copier is overkill.

A nice Multi-Function printer will



work just fine, and save you quite a bit.

So the second thing to consider is cost. Buying a printer that doesn't cost much generally means it's made of inferior parts and will wear out sooner than one that would have cost a bit more money.

Cost largely determines the feature set available on a printer. Take for instance Ink Jet printers versus Laser Jet printers. Ink Jet printers are much cheaper but tend to wear out long before a Laser printer would.

While considering the cost of the printer itself it would be good to consider the cost of the cartridge as well as other maintenance items.

Some higher end printers have the ability to have maintenance kits installed; the benefit to this is that these printers tend to be able to outperform cheaper printers.

Being able to replace easily worn parts keeps a printer running well for a number of years.

What type of cartridge is best or most cost effective?

This really comes down to what the printer will be used for.

For general home users using an Ink Jet printer may be fine, and cartridges for these types of printers are much cheaper as well.

If the printer is for a business or someone that does a lot of printing, then a printer that takes toner cartridges would be a better choice. Printer functionality is a huge point to consider.

What is needed by the device? Does it just need to be able to print black and white images or are color images necessary as well? Does the printer need to be able to receive faxes? Make copies?

All are valid, important questions when considering the type of printer needed.

The final point to consider is speed. If a company needs a large amount of documents printed at one time by many different users it would be a good idea to consider a printer with a high PPM (pages per minute) rate.

Still confused what would suit your needs? Give us a call and we can get you a quote on a printer that works well for your business.

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Secure Online Accounts Without Sacrificing Ease Of Use

by *Jeremy Miller,*
Technician

The Internet allows us to do so much, such as: buy things, research information, and share just about anything. There is and will always be someone out there that is going to take advantage of Internet users in one way or another.

Keeping that in mind, most places on the Internet use password authentication, this is both good and bad. It is good because you are required to enter credentials that you originally provided to enter a protected area of a website.

This may keep your data safe from most people with malicious intent. However, most people are not perfect at remembering passwords, especially complex passwords, so most people end up using the same password for many websites. This is a bad choice.

If a hacker obtains your password, they may be able to access any site on which you use that password or a similar password. The best Internet practices are to use a different complex password for each website.

Complex passwords are passwords that contain upper and lower case letters, numbers, special characters, and they must not resemble any dictionary word.

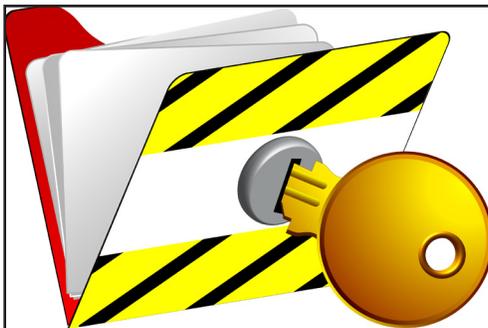
An example of a bad password is: love, password, P@ssw0rd. A good example of a complex password would be: "n\$)M1@x{1_5" 65".

Password cracking has come a long way from brute-force dictionary based attacks, which allow a hacker

to guess your password using a computer and wordlists. The use of complex passwords has become a necessity for anyone wanting to keep their information secure.

The best way to solve this conundrum is to implement a password manager. I have tried many password managers and have found the best results to be with LassPass password manager.

It is a feature rich password manager that is very secure. LassPass



does not store or even know what your password is.

You can add LassPass as a browser extension or an app on your computers or mobile devices. You will only have to remember your password to LassPass to access any password protected websites.

Once LassPass is installed you simply visit a website that requires a login, such as your webmail or Facebook. Once you enter your username and password LassPass will ask if you would like to remember it.

If you choose yes it will auto fill out the information required to automatically login to the website the next time you visit it.

LassPass can also store secure encrypted notes that work great

for bank logins. Most banks have a multi-stage login which is where you enter your username and password on different pages.

You can store your usernames, passwords, account numbers, and card numbers in secure notes for ease of access. All of your passwords can be accessed from any platform and any device.

LassPass also provides users with many tools that make using the LassPass password manager better such as: password generators, automatic form filling with the ability to have multiple identities, easily backup the data to local storage, on-screen keyboard to prevent key loggers, ability to share information via email, and most importantly two-factor authentication.

A two-factor authentication device allows you to use a password and a device such as a USB flash drive, YubiKey©, or Google Authenticator App to authenticate.

This improves your security because you have to have the second credential. Since that is in your possession, a cyber criminal would have to actually steal your device to hack your passwords.

Once you start to use LassPass as a password manager you will not want to return to remembering passwords or creating weak password that are easy to remember.

Give us a call to talk about improved security for your online accounts. We can help you setup the password manager and teach you how to use it. This is another way to make sure that your identity does not get compromised.



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Timely Tips For Social Networking Safety

Social networking websites like MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, and Windows Live Spaces are services people can use to connect with others to share information like photos, videos, and personal messages.

As the popularity of these social sites grows, so do the risks of using them. Hackers, spammers, virus writers, identity thieves, and other criminals follow the traffic.

Read these tips to help protect yourself when you use social networks.

Be wary of links

Use caution when you click links that you receive in messages from your friends on your social website. Treat links in messages on these sites as you would links in email messages.

Post judiciously

Know what you've posted about yourself. A common way that hackers break into financial or other accounts is by clicking the "Forgot your password?" link on the account login page.

To break into your account, they search for the answers to your security questions, such as your birthday, home town, high school class, or mother's middle name. If the site allows, make up your own password questions, and don't draw them from material anyone could find with a quick search.

Watch out for a friend's hacked email

Don't trust that a message is really from who it says it's from. Hackers can break into accounts and send messages that look like they're from your friends, but aren't. If you suspect that a message is

fraudulent, use an alternate method to contact your friend to find out. This includes invitations to join new social networks. For more information, see Scammers exploit Facebook friendships.

Protect your address book

To avoid giving away email addresses of your friends, do not allow social networking services to scan your email address book.

When you join a new social network, you might receive an offer to enter your email address and password to find out if your contacts are on the network. The site might use this information to send email messages to everyone in your contact list or even everyone you've ever sent an email message to with that email address.

Don't friend everyone

Be selective about who you accept as a friend on a social network. Identity thieves might create fake profiles in order to get information from you.

Choose your social network carefully. Evaluate the site that you plan to use and make sure you understand the privacy policy. Find out if the site monitors content that people post. You will be providing personal

information to this website, so use the same criteria that you would to select a site where you enter your credit card.

Posting is permanent

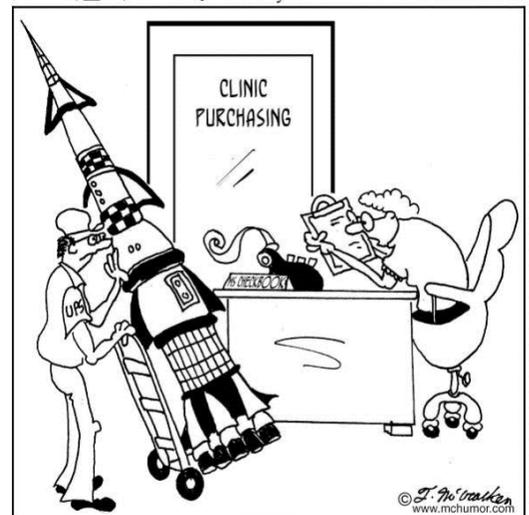
Assume that everything you put on a social networking site is permanent. Even if you can delete your account, anyone on the Internet can easily print photos or text or save images and videos to a computer. And don't forget, Google caches!

Avoid apps and games

Be careful about installing extras on your site. Many social networking sites allow you to download third-party applications that let you do more with your personal page. Criminals sometimes use these applications to steal your personal information.

To download and use third-party applications safely, take the same safety precautions that you take with any other program or file you download from the web.

MCHUMOR.COM by T. McCracken



"Well here's the problem.
#AB5 is a Nuclear Missile.
AB6 is a box of surgical gloves."