

The

INTERFACE

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The San Gabriel Valley Technology User's Group. The Club for TRSDOS and MS-DOS

FBI: 43% Internet Fraud from Auctions

Editor's note: A visit to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's web site greets the visitor with a fascinating report on the federal interagency investigation on internet fraud released just as we went to press.

RICHMOND, VA - April 9, 2002 - Nearly 43 percent of all reported Internet fraud comes from auction fraud, according to the Internet Fraud Complaint Center's annual data trends report. The IFCC, a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C), today released an annual compilation of information on complaints received from victims and referred to law enforcement during its first full year of operation. Non-deliverable merchandise and non-payment accounted for 20.3 percent of complaints and Nigerian Letter fraud made up nearly 15.5 percent of complaints. Credit/debit card fraud and confi-

dence fraud round out the top five categories of complaints referred to law enforcement during the year. Nigerian letter fraud (\$5,575), identity theft (\$3,000), and investment fraud (\$1,000) complainants filed the highest median dollar losses.

"Fraud committed via the Internet makes investigation and prosecution difficult because the offender and victim may be located thousands of miles apart. This borderless phenomena is a unique characteristic of Internet crime and is not found with many other types of traditional crime," said Thomas Richardson, Deputy Assistant Director, Criminal Investigative Division of the FBI. "Jurisdictional issues often require the cooperation of multiple agencies to resolve a case. This is a hallmark of the IFCC. It streamlines the case initiation effort and saves victims and enforcement agencies a great deal of time."

The number of complaints to the IFCC is rising rapidly. While the primary mission of the IFCC is to address Internet fraud, the IFCC served a critical role for the United States starting on September 11, 2001. On that date, just hours after the terrorist attacks in New York, Pennsylvania, and metropolitan Washington, DC, the IFCC Web site served as the mechanism by which people filed on-line tips with the FBI regarding these attacks. Tens of thousands of tips were received and processed in real-time in the months following the tragedies and some of the information received

Memory Jogger...



See you at the next SAGA-TUG meeting this Friday, April 12, 2002 from 7 to 10 p.m. at the Arcadia Park Senior Citizen's Center, 405 S. Santa

Anita Ave. (See page four for directions and more upcoming events.)

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Oh, How I Miss My LaserJet!

Roy T. Beck

As most of you know, I am moving to Northern California. Actually I have been in the process for a couple of years, but the actuality is close upon me.

I have been moving my “stuff” in monthly increments for quite some time now, and last trip (in March) I moved most of the contents of my office. This included my number one desktop machine, a couple of other machines, and several printers, including my HP LaserJet 4. Since Barbara, my wife, will probably stay here a couple of months more while I look after the contractor’s work up north, I made the decision to leave here my laptop and my HP Officejet R60. The latter is a very versatile machine, being a color inkjet printer chassis with ability to print in B/W and color, serve as a copier on its flattop glass panel, and scan documents. It has good resolution (I don’t remember the numbers at the moment) and is a good all-around machine. So far, so good.

My HP LaserJet 4 is B/W only, and prints 12 pages per minute. Even that is somewhat slow by present standards. I believe the current HP LaserJet 6 can operate at 20 pages per minute.

I receive a goodly amount of e-mail every morning, largely related to genealogy, my other avocation. The reason I miss the LaserJet is the amount of e-mail to be printed out. I believe my daily average is at least 60 pages, maybe more. With the LaserJet, the time devoted to printing was tolerable; but the OfficeJet is another story. It runs at about 2 pages per minute in B/W, still slower in color, especially at higher resolution. Having made the decision and moved all the other equipment (and printers) 500 miles away, I am stuck with the consequences until we are once again organized into a single household.

Actually, just moving ourselves, our cats and all our stuff to Redwood Valley won’t immediately solve my problems. Because the contractor will soon begin dismantling the Redwood Valley

house with a view to adding a second story, we will be living in a house trailer on the property. I will then be faced with the need to find space for our computers, printers, etc. My anticipated solution will be to set aside space in an outbuilding for the computers. I have electric power there, and some time ago I ran some extra wires from the main house to the outbuilding. That includes a couple of coax cables and some twisted pairs I can use as telephone extension wires.

That same computer space will have to serve as an office for our domestic affairs, including payment of bills, keeping track of the contractor’s billings, etc, etc. I don’t have a good space heater there at present; I hope the contractor will let us back into part of the new house before really cold weather sets in.;

As I said in the title of this piece, Oh how I miss my LaserJet!

Some Passing Thoughts...

Roy T. Beck

I noticed in a recent issue of the LA Times a small story about an AOL miscue.

AOL and Time Warner merged Jan 11, 2001. According to spokesmen for the conglomerate, the merger generally has gone smoothly, with one notable exception. By corporate edict, everyone had to use AOL’s software, Netscape 6.2.e. Because of security concerns, an elaborate identity checking procedure is incorporated in the software. The problems are two fold: The identity checking function sometimes locks out an individual which means he is unable to exchange e-mail until the IT department fixes the problem for that individual at that time. This sometimes isolates individuals for as much as a day. The second problem is that the software appears to choke on large attachments, including graphic files and PDF documents.

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Internet Fraud

proved useful for the prevention of further terrorist acts and the subsequent criminal investigation. With the IFCC's recent role in collecting terrorist tips for the FBI, the activity to its Web site has soared and fraud complaints are expected to show a dramatic increase.

"We anticipate the number of complaints to rise from 1,000 a week to 1,000 a day," said Richard L. Johnston, Director of the NW3C. "We know more Internet crime is out there, it's just a matter of victims knowing where to go to report it and then actually reporting it."

For more information on the IFCC, or to obtain a copy of the 2001 annual data trends report, visit www.ifccfbi.gov. Tips on preventing Internet and computer-related fraud can also be found on the IFCC Web site.

About the NW3C

Funded by a grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance, the NW3C is a non-profit organization that provides a national support network for state and local law enforcement agencies involved in the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of economic and high-tech crime. More information on the NW3C and its initiatives is available at www.nw3c.org.

About the IFCC

The IFCC is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National White Collar Crime Center and began operating in May 2000. The IFCC Web site is located at www.ifccfbi.gov



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Passing Thoughts

After many squawks from mandated users of the software, the Corporation has conceded the problems are unbearable, and have reluctantly granted permission for each individual to use whatever software he is comfortable with. The spokeswoman noted the corporate version of the software is not the same as the version used by AOL's 33 million worldwide subscribers.

A personal observation: Perhaps Cardinal Mahony should have required use of the AOL software; Since it excessively restricts communication by being very fussy about identity checking, It might possibly have prevented the release of the Cardinal's e-mail to the press!

Wanna buy a cheap computer?

According to a recent LA Times article, Wal-Mart has reacted to user requests in a curious way. They are offering (as a test) computers with no video display and no DOS. This came about because some users wanted to buy the machines they were peddling on line, but with a DOS other than Windows. Since Wal-Mart didn't have arrangements with other DOS vendors to support those DOSes, they opted (as a test) to offer a bare machine. I don't know if a keyboard or printer is included. You will have to consult their Website at Wal-mart.com to find out.

If a user is knowledgeable and comfortable with installing a DOS obtained from another source, this offer might be interesting, but there is considerable industry skepticism as to whether the machine will fly. If a buyer purchases this machine and then buys Windows XP, complete edition, he will be on the hook for more money than if he buys a machine with Windows preinstalled.

My guess is that this one-time test offer by Wal-Mart will probably not be extended.

Roy

The Win XP Guide scheduled for this issue will appear is a special Win XP issue next month. Honest, it will! —Editor

Next SAGATUG Meeting
Time and Place:
7 to 10 p. m., Friday, April 12, 2002
Arcadia Park Senior Citizen's Center
405 South Santa Anita Avenue,
Arcadia. (In the park just south of
Huntington Drive) Meetings are on the
second Friday of every month.

FOR MORE INFO AND DIRECTIONS TO MEETINGS, GO TO www.SAGATUG.org

Thanks to the folks at **Hosting 24-7**, hosts of the new SAGATUG website who are hosting us free of charge!



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Deadline for the Newsletter
The deadline for the INTERFACE is the last Saturday of the month.

Republication:
Articles may be republished if credit is given to the author and the San Gabriel Valley Technology User's Group.

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Upcoming Events:

Manhattan Beach, Last Saturday, monthly, TRW Swap Meet, Admission Free.

Santa Ana, last Sunday of each odd month, ACP, 1310 E. Edinger, Admission Free.

Pomona Swap Meet 3rd Saturday, monthly, at Cal Poly Pomona, 3801 W. Temple Ave., Admission Free.

Pomona Fairplex, April 13 & 14 2002
Bldg. 4 at LA Fair grounds, Gate 14, Admission \$7, plus parking.

Buena Park: The computer fair at Buena Park moved to the Orange County Fairgrounds. (See Costa Mesa) .

Costa Mesa, May 18 & 19
Orange County Fair and Exposition Center, 88 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92626. Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. \$5 admission.

Santa Monica, April 27 & 28, 2002,
at Civic Auditorium, Admission \$5.

Santa Barbara, June 1, 2002
at Earl Warren Fairgrounds, Admission \$5.

Burbank, May 11 & 12, Hilton Burbank Airport & Convention Center, 2500 Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505 Open 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. \$5 admission.

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