



# Information Security News, Tips & Trends

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## Welcome to the inaugural issue of Information Technology News, Tips &

**Trends** brought to you by [JANUS Associates](http://www.janusassociates.com). This publication is aimed at providing timely information on a broad range of topics in the IT sector. It will feature articles and information that are of interest to government and business readers alike. It will also when necessary include information of importance to individuals regarding their personal computer use. Please consider reviewing the first 3 issues for suitability should you presently be considering the unsubscribe option. Feel free to forward any information in this newsletter to your colleagues, family or friends who you believe may find value in a particular piece. We hope you enjoy this publication and invite your comments.

## European cyber-gangs target small U.S. firms, group says

[The Washington Post](http://www.washingtonpost.com) 08/25/2009

Organized cyber-gangs in Eastern Europe are increasingly preying on small and mid-size companies in the United States, setting off a multimillion-dollar online crime wave that has begun to worry the nation's largest financial institutions. A task force representing the financial industry sent out an alert Friday outlining the problem and urging its members to implement many of the precautions now used to detect consumer bank and credit card fraud.

"In the past six months, financial institutions, security companies, the media and law enforcement agencies are all reporting a significant increase in funds transfer fraud involving the exploitation of valid banking credentials belonging to small and medium sized businesses," the confidential alert says.

Businesses do not enjoy the same legal protections as consumers when banking online. Consumers typically have up to 60 days from the receipt of a monthly statement to dispute any unauthorized charges. In contrast, companies that bank online are regulated under the Uniform Commercial Code, which holds that commercial banking customers have roughly two business days to spot and dispute unauthorized activity if they want to hold out any hope of recovering unauthorized transfers from their accounts. [Read More](#)

## 7 easy ways to protect PC based information from theft

The proliferation of Personal Storage Devices (thumb drives, iPods, USB external hard disks, etc.) and simple remote access has created unprecedented levels of convenience and at the same time a substantially increased risk of data loss. Pocket sized external USB storage devices can put hundreds of Gigabytes of data storage at your fingertips which is easily enough space to house an industrial-strength database or thousands of documents, spreadsheets, photos and other sensitive information. With the right software installed, these devices can be configured to automatically transfer data off any machine into which they're plugged. This can be a convenience for the owner of the data, or for the Bad Guy an easy way to potentially access and steal your data. Exploiting this type of threat is very inexpensive and does not take expertise.

Securing your environment is very easy and involves a multi-tiered Best Practices approach including:

## ABOUT JANUS

JANUS Associates provides a full range of information security and business information solutions including risk analysis, penetration testing, Payment Card Industry and regulatory compliance assessments including HIPAA, disaster recovery and business continuity planning and testing, eDiscovery, data forensics and data breach crisis management.

In business since 1988, JANUS has the longest tenure of any independent IT security firm in the nation and has been in the forefront of providing quality IT centric services.

JANUS is an independent, woman-owned vendor neutral company with deep skills and strong credentials in the government, commercial and Not-For-Profit sector.

- Creating and enforcing sound policies and procedures that lock down the system BIOS on all computers processing, storing or transmitting data.
- Creating a logon requirement that uses password and / or biometric authentication every time the PC is turned on.
- Requiring the use of strong passwords that contain a minimum 7 character combination of both alpha and numeric symbols.
- Never sharing or writing down your passwords.
- Automated forced changing of passwords every 60 days.
- Locking the PC after 10 minutes of inactivity to prevent unauthorized access to the machine and its data when the user steps away.
- Turning off the PC when it is unattended for long periods of time. This one is an often overlooked critical step. A turned off PC means that someone who gains unauthorized access to the network has no access to the hard drive of that specific machine. If the PC is infected and part of a Bot network shutting it down will prevent its use as a zombie for mass spamming or D.o.S. attacks. Think about it; how many people do you know who leave their pc's at work or home on 24/7? If it's on it can be accessed remotely.

Securing your PC and data isn't rocket science. It's simply a matter of common sense and best practices. Cases in point; would you leave your house unlocked when you go to work for the day or leave your keys in the car and walk away? Of course not. So why would you leave your PC unlocked when you aren't there? Easily implemented precautions that cost you nothing beyond a few minutes of your time can help minimize the risks associated with data loss and identity theft.

## **FREE Network Scans for up to 16 outward facing IP addresses.**

**JANUS is offering complimentary electronic scans of your IT infrastructure** which may reveal unknown risks and exposures that could lead to potentially dangerous data loss or a breach.

A JANUS Information Security Specialist will scan up to 16 outward facing IP Addresses for potential vulnerabilities and / or mis-configurations at no charge. In addition to the scans, a report of findings will be issued to the requesting party and the findings will be reviewed by conference call or an in-person meeting.

**If you have any questions or would like additional information about this offer please contact**

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