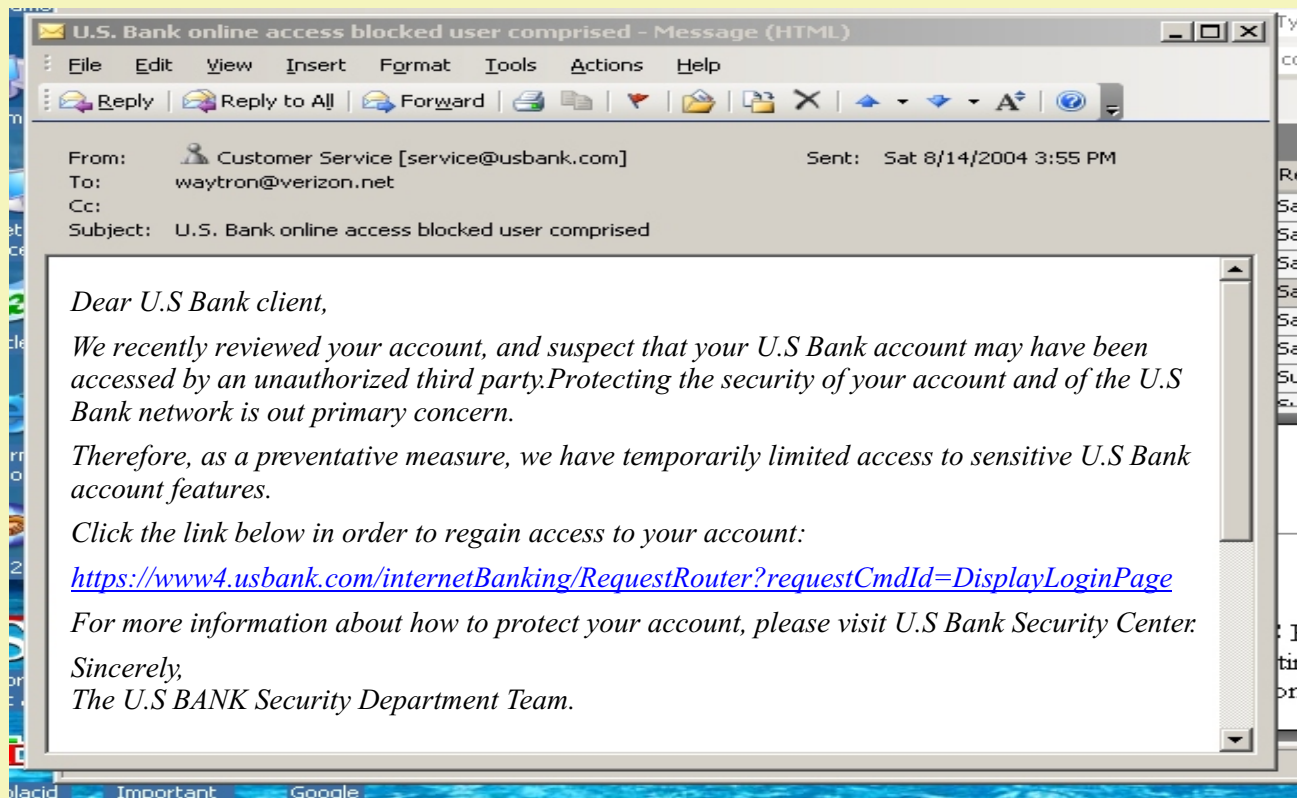


May 2005 Newsletter

Due to the increase in the number of requests that I have received regarding security with both email and internet surfing, I have decided to take the next few months to discuss some of these issues. While I don't feel that you should stop using your computer for fear of identity theft or contracting a computer virus, it may be helpful to have a better understanding of the possible threats that are out there.

PHISHING (Fish'ing)(n.). Which is the act of sending fictitious email pretending to be a legitimate company such as a bank or financial institution for the purpose of acquiring your personal information like account numbers and passwords. Below is an example of an email that I received that falls into this category. Had it not been for the fact that I don't even have an account with this bank, I may have clicked on the link and given them all my account information.



Here is a brief guideline for protecting your personal information:

1. Never click on a link within an email to take you to any location that you intend on supplying your personal information.
2. Never supply important information such as account numbers to any webpage that does not start with https://. Locations that start with http:// (without the "s") are not secure.
3. Type important website addresses directly into your browser, instead of using links within emails or other websites. Links, favorites and bookmarks that you create yourself are fine.

If you are interested in learning more, visit <http://www.safer-networking.org/en/articles/phishing.html>

Watch Out For Overheating Laptops

More than ever, people are replacing their desktop computers with laptops and notebook computers. The size advantage is obvious, but there are some disadvantages too. One major problem that is starting to surface is overheating. Many laptops were not originally designed to run 24 hours a day and may be prone to early failure due to heat problems when left on for long periods. Overheating can result in early hard drive and processor failures as well as sudden crashes and slow performance. To reduce the risk of premature problems, I would recommend the following:

1. Use a cooling pad under the laptop whenever possible. These pads are designed to sit under laptops to promote proper cooling. Some are available with small fans.
2. Keep the vents clear of dirt and dust. Vacuum and blow out air vents with compressed air on a regular basis.
3. Never use your laptop when the vents are blocked by objects such as pillows, thick pile carpets and clothing.
4. To keep your battery in good working order, exercise the battery every once and a while by unplugging the laptop and letting the battery run down.

When selecting a new Laptop, keep in mind that unlike Desktop computers, there are very few upgrades that can be added later on. Because models change so quickly, purchase any extras like docking stations and DVD drives at the time of purchase, while you can still get them.

Note: If you are like me and don't like using the touch pad, there are many notebook mice to choose from that simply plug into the USB port.

Windows XP Tip of the Month

So many of you are now filling your computer with hundreds of digital photographs just sitting there in the My Pictures folder. Why not use a few of those as your desktop background or even as a screen saver slide show. Wouldn't it be nice to have your favorite photos displayed on your screen whenever you are not using it.

Creating a Custom Desktop Background

From the START Menu, Click on My Documents and then Double Click on My Pictures. Navigate to your favorite photo and Right click on the file name. Select Set as Desktop Background. You Done! You can change to another photo anytime you want.

Creating a Slide Show Screen Saver

RIGHT Click on any blank section of your Desktop, Select Properties - Select the Screen Saver Tab - Click on the small arrow to display the available options for Screen savers - Scroll down and select My Picture Show. Now Select the Settings tab and browse to the folder name that contains the photos that you want to use for your show.

If you received this newsletter in error or wish to remove yourself from the mailing list, please send an email to dana@waylandcomputer.com and type "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

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