The Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security

Shopping and banking online are quick and convenient, but is it safe? The cyber defense team at the UTSA Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security has a few suggestions to help make your online shopping and banking experiences safer:

1- Look Before You Click — Clicking is easy. Un-clicking? Not so much. When you hover over a link on a webpage, before clicking, the address you will actually connect to shows up in the bottommost line of the browser. Look. If it does not appear to be the site you intend to visit, find the site through search engines or other means. (iPad/iPhone Safari equivalent: “touch and hold.” This brings up a window that shows the real address.) This is doubly important for links that arrive in email: Phony links in fraudulent emails (“phishing”) are one of the greatest threat to your cyber safety.

2- Safe Site? Make Sure — Always look at the address in your browser top line. Make sure the link says “https” for any site on which financial transactions occur. Also look for the lock icon (above) in the address bar. These visual cues indicate that the session is encrypted, safe from eavesdropping.

3- Be WiFi Wary — Don’t perform financial or any sensitive information transactions over public or any unsecured wireless connection. Your credentials can easily be compromised.

4- Be Unique — When you register on a site, use a unique password. Password manager applications such as KeePass, LastPass or PasswordSafe can assist with managing passwords.

5- Nobody’s Business but Your Own — Don’t have a site store your credit card information, if given the option. The fewer places your data is stored, the less chance for unauthorized disclosure.

6- Too Much Information — Sharing details of purchases on social media may be fun, but visibility means targeting by fraudsters, thieves and “social engineers.”

7- Double Check — Review all forms for check boxes selected by default. You can be “opting in” for spam or services of which you are not even aware.

8- Trust But Verify — Review transactions at your financial institution regularly for unusual charges. This not only helps you catch fraud early, it also assures there were no errors on the side of the online merchant.

9- Cyber Hygiene is Critical to Safety — Keep your computer up to date. It is vital to install patches and update security fixes when software companies recommend, no matter how busy you are at the time.

10- En Garde! — Beware deals that look too good to be true!

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About The Center For Infrastructure Assurance and Security

We are a team of cyber security professionals dedicated to advancing community and organizational security capabilities and collaboration. The Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security (CIAS) has been called upon by the nation to strengthen cyber security preparedness in communities. We are part of The University of Texas at San Antonio and are committed to being the leader in the advancement of state and community cyber security.

What we do

Exercise Programs
The CIAS developed the world’s only model for community cyber security preparedness. We customize our program to suit your organization or community.

Exercise Program Offerings
- Cyber Security Exercises
- Leadership Seminars
- Community Incident Response Planning
- Executive Cyber Security Awareness Seminars

Training
The CIAS offers low-cost training for cyber security. Our offerings include some of the most recognized certification training as well as courses not offered anywhere else.

Training Offerings
- (ISC)² CISSP Prep Course
- CompTIA® Security+ and Network+
- Voice and Data Security
- Planning Cyber Security Exercises
- Organizational Risk and Technical Assessments
- Community Dependency Mapping

Competitions
Known the world over for innovation in collegiate and high-school competitions, the CIAS develops and hosts national-level competitions that help forge the cyber security workforce of tomorrow. The CIAS develops realistic cyber defense competitions that are known as some of the most compelling events of their kind.

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