



Stay cyber-safe this holiday season!

Here at E-Tech, our job is to help you stay cyber-safe any time! This month's newsletter will highlight some of the cybersecurity dangers that come along with the holiday season.

Don't get hacked this holiday season!

Phishing and shipping scams

We hear a lot about phishing scams in our work emails, but it can also happen in our personal emails. Hackers use the holiday season to get to you. For example, hackers will use **shipping notifications** to phish your inbox! With all the season's online purchasing, you'll be getting many shipping notifications, and hackers will use this to their advantage.

You might receive a notification saying your package is delayed. You click a link in the email to track the package, which leads to a site asking you to input your personal information. Now a hacker has access to your accounts and data! To avoid this, go to the official website of the products you purchased and check the shipping status there.

Not-so-real good deals

During prime shopping times, people are always looking for the best deals. Hackers use this to their advantage when they make a **fake website** with deals that are too good to be true. Verify the legitimacy of a website before making a purchase. Look at the URL and confirm that you're on the right site. If the website seems off and the deals are too good to pass up, it could be a fake storefront!

Check those charities

Holiday giving is special to many people. Many would rather give a donation to a reputable charity than give material gifts, and that's the true holiday spirit! But during this time of giving, it's important to ensure that you are donating to a legitimate organization.

Scammers will set up **fake charities** to take people's money. Research the organization before you give! When you do find a charity that is worth donating to, always use their official website to make an online donation or send a cheque to the address that they have listed. This will ensure the safety of you and your money!

Gift card 411

According to Blackhawk Network's 2021 Holiday Forecast report, gift card spending is expected to rise by 27%. Here are some tips to help keep you from getting scammed when buying and using gift cards this holiday season

- Purchase gift cards directly from the store or store website
- Gift cards are untraceable! Do not pay individuals with gift cards
- Use secure internet when checking gift card balance
- Save any receipts associated with your gift card



Avoid secret gift exchanges with strangers online

"Do you want to join a secret gift exchange with 36 other people? All you have to do is send one gift, and you will receive 36 gifts!" Hold on, slow down! This is a popular scam going around on social media sites. These scams collect your personal information — and sometimes, the information of your friends and relatives, too! Keep your gift-giving to the people and charities that you know.