Radio Days – 2010-09-18

Tip of the Week – Beware Scams!

There are all sorts of scams doing the rounds at the moment. The most recent one involves a caller purporting to be from *Microsoft* or *Windows* and telling you that you have a problem with your computer. They then go on to "prove" that your computer is infected by telling you to look in certain folders and, lo and behold, there is the "proof" that your computer is infected!

If you get a call like this please ask them for their name and phone number, telling them that you will ring back. Your next step should be to report this matter to the police and give them these details. On no account should you ever pay for any software or allow them to log into your computer as this will give you a nasty surprise when you get the bills! If they ask you to log onto a website you should terminate the phone call immediately. The website will allow the caller to install any program that they want onto your computer. If in doubt, take the time to check out the ACCC scam watch website given below.

I am now starting to help more of my clients over the internet. For this to happen they install a program called CrossLoop. When run, CrossLoop displays a 12-digit number when they have to give me. My client then has to accept me as the person who is helping them. Thus they have many steps to take to let me in, and they can see what I am doing and can stop it at any time. This is a completely different approach to the scammers.

Computer Life Span

There is a common feeling that a *Dog Year* is seven people years. This is because a dog's normal life span is about on seventh of the lift span of a person. In the same way we can talk about *Computer Years.* A computer's life span is even shorter than a dog's: about five years so a *Computer Year* is about twenty people years. This means that, for many computers, about five years is all that they are good for. There are a number of reasons for this.

- After five years there will be at least one new version of Windows which is designed for more powerful hardware. Also there are new programs, like word processors and accounting programs, which need these more powerful computers.
- After some years the new generation of anti-virus programs no longer work on older versions of Windows, as a number of my clients have discovered to their cost. Most manufacturers now only support the current version and the previous one. When Microsoft stops supporting a version of Windows then everybody else follows suit.
- In extreme cases the computer cannot keep up with modern technology. A client had an old computer with Windows 95. He updated to a fast internet connection and found that it was no faster than his old dialup connection. The problem was that the old computer could not cope with his new fast internet connection
- Another client had a old computer with an old printer. The old printer died and she tried to connect her new printer to the old computer. The old printer had a parallel port connection (this is a cable with a large plug at each end). The new printer only came with a USB connection but her old computer did not have USB plugs and her Windows 95 did not support USB. Her only option was to get a new computer.
- The battery in a laptop will only last for about two years. If you need a portable computer which will run on battery you may well be horrified to discover that a new battery will cost almost as much as a new computer!

Further Information

Scam Watch	www.scamwatch.gov.au
CrossLoop	www.crossloop.com