



COMPUTER & ONLINE CRIME

This seemingly faceless and non-violent form of criminal activity has hit home for many of us in the community in recent months with the child pornography scandal. Many people have been taken into custody and many computers confiscated. Regardless of how people try and justify things, there is no excuse for either possessing images or participating in these vile acts. This is a disgusting element in our society that has grown into a worldwide industry with millions of dollars changing hands. The only real way to stop this perpetuating, is to stop the demand for it because, it is as always the most vulnerable that are being exploited. Additionally in countries with less stringent laws and policing systems it is harder to protect the kids. While we live in a country where dobbing or "whistle blowing" is never looked upon very favourably, I think all of us realise that we have a fundamental responsibility to protect those who cannot otherwise defend themselves.

With movies like Ocean's 11, the idea of robbing a casino seems romantic and almost possible. Only now, rather than seeking control of real casinos, "gangsters" are extorting cash from virtual casinos which are the fastest growth sector of gambling. The first known wave of threats came last September, with cyber-mafia using massive spam attacks to slow betting sites. The major weapon of choice is Denial of Service (DOS) attacks as online betting sites are bombarded with requests rendering it to the point of collapse. Then a message is sent to the site demanding a sum of money in exchange for stopping the attack. Alarming one CEO has already stated, "I think everybody who has been attacked has paid."

However, it is not all bad news, as some technology is designed to catch the criminals instead of aid them. "I feel safer doing my killing in home state" was a quote from a US serial killer prior to his execution. Law enforcement officers now have a new computer tool at their disposal which tracks criminals based on geography with stunning results. Coming from Canada and the US in the last decade a software program has been developed which documents information like where bodies were discovered, last known sighting of victims, etc. and then using thousands of calculations and prior criminal cases produces a coloured 3D map of where the perpetrator most likely resides. In one particular case not only did it pinpoint the murderer's house within a block, it predicted his race, employment and marital status. At worst it at least gives Police a good place to start door knocking.

Product of the Month

Wireless Internet Radio - Most people these days have a lot of music stored on their computer. Now a device has just hit the market that allows you to listen to all that music on your stereo regardless of the position of it and your computer in the building. This also applies to thousands of Internet streaming broadcasts and radio stations from all over the world which you are, of course, unable to listen to via a normal stereo. It also allows you to organise titles as you would on a PC (i.e. by date, artist, genre, etc). Thus it makes it a great device for setting up music for a party.

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Chris Jacob is a director of Computer Troubleshooters Bayside (www.ctsbayside.com.au)