Cyber security Laws

From day to day, we all must abide by the laws and regulations of the country we live in and when we sit behind a keyboard this does not change. The internet is a dangerous place and is still relatively new to everyone that uses it. The internet is accessible to anybody with a phone or any sort of electronic device which has Wi-Fi or 4g connection. There is both pros and cons to this because people may find a way to take advantage of others who are new to being online and constantly connected to the world. To try combat this and any illegal activity which may lead to users online being wronged, there has been laws and regulations put in place.

One of the most infamous cyber-crimes has always been hacking. To define hacking, it is when a person intentionally accesses an information system without permission or reasonable excuse. In Ireland this is an offence. Ireland have covered a lot of areas related to hacking as in can be done in many ways. As an attempt to combat hacking there has been a law put into place placing a ban on hacking tools, which have been described as “any programme that is primarily adapted for use in connection with the commission of a cyber offense” and “any device which is capable of accessing another information system without detection”. Putting a ban on these tools is a very effective way to reduce there use because they cannot be sold legally and require a lot of effort to get them.

Data protection online has always been a topic of discussion when speaking about the internet. But what actual laws are set in place to protect your data? Altogether there are 8 rules of data protection which are all legally enforced. These 8 rules were put in place to protect data online and consist of the following;

1. Obtain and process information fairly.

2. The data must be kept for a specified, lawful purpose

3. The data should be used and disclosed only for the specified purpose.

4. The data must be kept safe and secure.

5. The data must be up to date, accurate and complete.

6. The data must be relevant, adequate but not excessive.

7. The date must be retained for no longer than is necessary.

8. A copy of the data must be made available to the data subject, on request.

These rules cover every aspect for a user to have full data protection, but what are the consequences for breaking these rules? Non-compliance could lead to a complaint to the data protection commissioner and could lead to a court case. The only problem with this law is it only applies to data controllers who are established in Ireland.

Cyber attacks are a global issue and cost businesses billions a year and cost people their jobs. But how are Ireland dealing with this? According to the European commission, a report shows that the Irish are particularly vulnerable to cyber threats. Many companies have fallen victim to scams from hackers. This is not a good statistic for Ireland and it makes you wonder just how effective the laws on cyber security really are in Ireland?

Viruses

Viruses have always been a massive issue when it comes to Computers, laptops and even phones. They come in many different shapes and sizes and some of them are almost impossible to detect. No two viruses are the same and some are much more harmful than others. Viruses are created to infect your computer with a program you initially didn’t want. Viruses for companies are a serious problem and could cost them billions. Malware is written by programmers with the intentions of stealing or destroying and the practice of writing viruses is illegal.

A man called Leonard Adleman split viruses up into 4 subsets. These subsets let us know what type of virus a computer has contracted. If a program is infected by a virus it is one of the following;

1.Benign. This means means the virus does not spread and isn’t harmful to your computer.

2.Trojan horse. This type of virus is harmful to the programme which contracts it but is not contagious.

3.Carrier. This type of virus is not harmful for the host programme. What it can do however is spread the virus to another program and possibly making the program which contracted the virus from the host harmful.

4.Virulent. This type of virus both changes the programme and spreads the virus. This type of virus has the potential to completely wipe all the programmes on a computer and rewrite them how the virus creator wishes.

One of the biggest viruses to ever spread was the “ILOVEYOU” virus. This virus was created by Onel De Guzman as part of his undergraduate thesis. This spread so fast because people kept clicking into it due to the intriguing nature of the virus. It was disguised as a love letter which many people could not resist opening. Once it was opened it set a programme off which sent itself to everyone in the email list of the recipient. 45 million PCs were hit with it only 5 days later. De Guzman was never criminally charged. This virus hit in the year 2000 and resulted in changing the emailing system. This virus showed people how to write a code which sends spam mail out by itself. There was a fix for this virus but not many people had it as it was so in demand. The result of this virus is that 90% of all emails are sent to spam now. This virus opened the door to the potential viruses and worms had and “showed the shape of things to come”.

However, 20 years on from this virus, many things have evolved. Viruses and worms still run rampant among unprotected computers, but with viruses evolving so have security systems. Many companies now have the best of the best anti-virus protection and places like MessageLabs stop over one million viruses a day from getting into people’s computers. Many people are almost much more aware of malware than they once were. If someone was sent an unusual email or brought to a site from a pop up ad they would no not to click into them.

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