

Safe Net Shopping

Well it looks like this Internet thing is here to stay. In fact the content on the Internet only seems to be getting more diverse. People use the Internet everyday to accomplish many of their tasks. I personally use the Internet to check the daily news, check up on the weather forecast, research products and services I want to buy, get vacation travel ideas, process my digital pictures, and communicate with friends, family, and business associates through e-mail.

This year, shopping on the Internet increased by 25 percent over the previous year. Many people find that the Internet is the perfect department store. It stays open 24 hours, and contains countless shops specializing in every niche market you can imagine. Some people don't actually purchase their items online, but use the Internet more like a giant directory for researching the things they want to buy. Others however, find the ease of purchasing their items online irresistible and don't think twice before hitting the submit button to finalize their purchase. Safe Internet shopping is the topic of this week's article.

When purchasing online be sure to take your time and research several vendors that offer the item you are looking for. Once you decide on the exact item you can use a search tool such as Google to find other vendors that offer the same item. I like to open multiple windows containing the vendors I'm interested in so that I can compare the details. This makes it much easier to switch between the vendors so that you can compare shipping costs, warranty information, the return policy, and the payment options.

Be sure to consider every aspect of the vendor you are using. Shipping costs, shipping times, and return policies can vary wildly from one vendor to another. Also more importantly, contact information can be very elusive, or even non-existent on some vendor's websites. Be sure to find this information before you even consider making a purchase and be sure they offer not only an e-mail address but also a physical address and a telephone number for their customer service department.

The safest way to pay for your purchases is by credit card. If a credit card transaction goes terribly wrong you can explain the situation to your credit card issuer and they can credit the transaction amount. When completing any transaction online be sure that the website offers secure checkout. A secure checkout will encrypt your private information including your credit card information so that only the vendor you are purchasing from can read the data. You can verify that the checkout is secure by looking for a padlock in the lower right of your browser screen and verifying that the web address begins with "HTTPS."

Lastly, you should be sure to print out the transaction screens along with the contact information and keep them on file until you receive your product and verify the correct charges have been billed to your credit card. This will make it much easier to prove your case should the vendor refuse to follow through with the transaction.

The Computer Depot is more than happy to help with any technology oriented questions, just give Thomas, Roger, or Scott a call at 947-0749. Or e-mail Thomas at sales@computerdepotonline.com with your questions.