



Dedicated I. T. Support for Home Users & Micro Businesses

SCM August Newsletter

Hello everyone and welcome to the 2nd edition of the Stone Computer Man newsletter. If you wish to opt out of this newsletter then see the link at the very bottom of each issue.

Is Your Data Safe

The data that we have on our PCs and laptops is important to us and so it is important that we do all we can to ensure that it is safe. There are several aspects to data security and you might wish to consider the following:

- 1) Secure your data against malicious attacks by ensuring that you have a good anti-virus solution installed and that it is kept up to date. As always do not open suspicious Emails and be wary of phone calls that might be a scam especially those saying you have a problem with your PC.
- 2) It is important to back up your data regularly and depending on the amount of data you have this can be done to a USB pen drive or a portable USB hard drive. Both forms of storage are relatively inexpensive these days with pen drives available for just a few pounds and portable hard drives starting at around £60 for 1Tb models. There are various ways to backup such as using the built in Windows backup feature, Microsoft's free SyncToy and for Macs there is Apples built in Time Machine
- 3) There are many options these days to backup to "The Cloud" but see the next item before you decide if that is the option for you.



There is nothing worse for me than having to tell a client that their data is lost because a hard drive has failed and then finding out that there is no backup and that all of their photographic memory's or documents are lost for ever.

Cloud Storage



As mentioned above there are many offers of free cloud storage available today such as Google drive, Sky Drive and of course Dropbox, but have you ever looked at the terms and conditions, if you're like me probably not that is until now. Here are just a few extracts copied and pasted that may give you pause for thought.

Google Drive

"When you upload, submit, store, send or receive content to or through our Services, you give Google (and those we work with) a worldwide license to use, host, store, reproduce, modify, create derivative works (such as those

resulting from translations, adaptations or other changes we make so that your content works better with our Services), communicate, publish, publicly perform, publicly display and distribute such content. The rights you grant in this license are for the limited purpose of operating, promoting, and improving our Services, and to develop new ones. This license continues even if you stop using our Services.

Microsoft OneDrive

"To the extent necessary to provide the Services to you and others (which may include changing the size, shape or format of Your Content to better store or display it to you), to protect you and the Services and to improve Microsoft products and services, you grant Microsoft a worldwide and royalty free intellectual property licence to use Your Content, for example, to make copies of, retain, transmit, reformat, distribute via communication tools and display Your Content on the Services. If you publish Your Content in areas of the Service where it is rendered available online publicly or without restrictions, Your Content may appear in demonstrations or materials that promote the Service. Some of the Services are supported by advertising. Controls for how Microsoft personalises advertising are available on the [Security & privacy](#) page of the Microsoft account management website. We do not use what you say in email, chat, video calls or voicemail, or your documents, photos or other personal files to target advertising to you. Our advertising policies are covered in detail in the Privacy Statements."

Dropbox

"When you use our Services, you provide us with things like your files, content, email messages, contacts and so on ("Your Stuff"). Your Stuff is yours. These Terms don't give us any rights to Your Stuff except for the limited rights that enable us to offer the Services. We need your permission to do things like hosting Your Stuff, backing it up and sharing it when you ask us to. Our Services also provide you with features like photo thumbnails, document previews, email organisation, easy sorting, editing, sharing and searching. These and other features may require our systems to access, store and scan Your Stuff. You give us permission to do those things, and this permission extends to our affiliates and trusted third parties we work with."

Clearly from the above it is worth taking the time to research cloud storage provider's terms and conditions before jumping in and uploading you data to "the cloud".

Security



You may have heard that Facebook's CEO, Mark Zuckerberg and FBI director James Comey, amongst others cover the web cam built into their laptops. This done to protect themselves from hackers who might be able to access such cameras. As well as laptops of course, Macs, tablets and phones have cameras. So do we need to worry about this? I personally believe that you can never be too cautious when it comes to security and will certainly be covering my laptop and Mac cameras as I rarely if ever use them.

You can use a piece of tape but specialist clips like the one shown above are available (This one from Amazon at £7.60 for a pack of 5) that make a much neater job and have a convenient slide so that you can easily uncover the camera when you need to use it.

Car Parking

What has this to do with I.T. I hear you say.

I have been made aware of someone who parked their car on one of these car parks where you have to enter your registration number, or part of it into the machine, prior to purchasing your ticket.

In this instance, due to arthritis, the person inadvertently keyed in an extra character, however the machine issued a ticket with the keyed information on it.

Subsequently the person received a notice for parking charges (no not a fine only courts can issue fines as far as I know). The notice clearly displayed photographs of their vehicles registration plate (number plate recognition technology) and also a copy of the incorrect registration number that had been entered into the machine.

The error was obvious and surely this notice should not have been issued notwithstanding if the technology deployed by the people running the car park is this clever why can it not reject what was obviously an invalid registration number. I have no doubt that an appeal will be upheld but to save yourselves the time and trouble be careful when keying your registration number into these machines.

As always if you need further advice with any of the above don't hesitate to ring me on 01785 530770