

Welcome to week three of National Cyber Security Awareness Month! This week's topic is all about staying protected in our interconnected world. The focus this week is on properly using social media. From banking and shopping to healthcare, social networking and downloading the latest apps – we live robust, online lives. In our digital lives we may face any number of issues, and unfortunately it is very easy to overshare and potentially expose information we never intended to expose. We never use the Internet in isolation.

Consider these facts:

- In 2015, 73% of the US population has a social media profile.
- Nearly 2 billion people worldwide use social media
- Facebook alone has nearly 1.5 billion active users

Those are a lot of potential eyeballs viewing the information that is posted to social media accounts!

With that in mind, here are some things to keep in mind when using social media and in online discussions in general.

1. Don't reveal too much information about yourself. Consider the fact that unless you change your privacy settings, anyone can see your information. Don't put anything out there you wouldn't share with a complete stranger.
2. Be sure to check into the various privacy settings of your social media sites and make changes so you feel comfortable with who sees your information.
3. Realize that applications that run on social media sites could send information about you to third-party entities, generally for advertising purposes, but a compromised version of these apps could send data to criminals.
4. Be wary of scams, including fake accounts and advertisements that are designed to capture your personal information.
5. Realize that anything you put out on social media is out there for good. Think, take a deep breath, or count to ten before posting in anger.
6. Realize that your social media presence can affect your ability to be hired for a job. Many employers routinely check potential employees social media profiles. Over 70% of job recruiters have rejected candidates based on information found online, usually on social media sites.

