

FEATURED PRODUCT

Lock-and-Load Security for PCs

While most people know about the dangers of suspicious websites and unknown email attachments, what about physical security? Leaving your computer unsecured or unattended could be the biggest mistake you ever make, according to Christina Hansen, a product specialist for CableOrganizer.com.

"In this day and age, many of us are 'running errands' on our computers," she says. "And even though shopping, banking, doing taxes, and accessing medical records online have become everyday activities, we need to give them special consideration because our personal information, and very identities, are at stake."

But it's not just people who need to be concerned: Companies are at risk too. "The hard drives of company computers can contain a lot of personal or proprietary information, from employee Social Security numbers to classified information dealing with product or technology development," says Hansen. She adds that the loss of such information can present a major liability risk to companies, whether it's from an old PC in a storage closet or a laptop carried by a traveling executive.

Securing computers against theft or unauthorized access doesn't have to be hard. "It's really not difficult, or necessarily expensive, for companies to secure on-premises computers against theft," says Hansen. "The key is to invest in products that have been specifically designed as theft deterrents."

Hansen explains that desktops and laptops in high-traffic workplaces can be secured in security cabinets, such as those manufactured by Black Box Network Services. And back-office server installations can be secured with floor enclosure server racks, which can be configured to prevent access to secure hardware while permitting access to other components.

Security should also be a concern when traveling, Hansen says. "Whether you're working outside the office or surfing the web on your

laptop in a public place, it's important to protect your computer when it's outside its 'natural environment,'" she says. "Laptops can easily be stolen if left unattended, and there's always the risk of prying eyes getting a look at on-screen personal information when you least expect it."

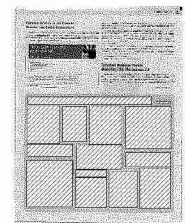
For travel, Hansen recommends products such as Kensington's Micro-Saver lock and alarm, which can secure a notebook to tables, desks, or other furniture. For those who are worried about unauthorized access, Silex's USB fingerprint reader locks passwords and personal files behind a biometric barrier. For privacy, 3M sells a removable filter that blacks out the screen for anyone trying to sneak a peek from the side.

Proper security just makes sense, says Hansen. "Employees have the right to know that their personal information is being vigorously protected by their employers," she says. "Information theft in the workplace is a double-edged sword; it not only has the potential to destroy an employee's personal life but also carries potential legal ramifications for companies who aren't careful enough and lose information through their own breaches in security and technology."

—Kurt Schiller



Black Box's CPU Security Cabinet keeps workstations under lock and key but still allows easy access for maintenance.





Black Box's laptop lockbox can be secured to the underside of a desk for safekeeping.



The Davko security stand from Kendall Howard is ideal for protecting small PCs.



Kensington's MicroSaver computer lock triggers an alarm if someone tampers with it.