

GDPR and less junk mail, or maybe not?

GDP – short for the EU General Data Protection Regulation, came into force recently. This is a major shake-up in the way that personal data is collected, stored and processed. **It affects all of us.** Prior to 28th May you will probably have received lots of emails from organisations asking you to re-subscribe to their mailing lists. The reason is that under the GDPR it will be unlawful to keep sending emails to customers unless they have categorically agreed to receive them. In the past it has become accepted practice that organisations assume your approval to receive marketing communications by some pre-ticked box on a web page. So, if you haven't re-subscribed then you will certainly be receiving less marketing stuff in your inbox. The bad news is that on the other side of the fence, the hackers and spammers of this world flout the law anyway, so they will just keep sending out all the junk mail regardless!

But email is just a small part of this new regulation. More important is the way that our personal data is used, and this can mean everything from name, address, telephone number and email, to financial data. **Every organization** no matter how big or small, that keeps customer records has to have a policy in place to explain why they keep data, ensure that it is stored securely and not processed unnecessarily or passed on, without prior consent. Customers also have the right to ask what information is being held about them, and if they so wish can demand that their details be deleted, provided of course there is no ongoing binding agreement in force such as finance etc. It is worth adding that even though this is an EU regulation, the UK will still be bound by it when we leave! More riveting information about GDPR can be found here: <https://www.eugdpr.org>

Junk email aka spam has of course been an annoying part of our online existence for many years. As mentioned above

this should be partly improved under the regulations, but we should all be careful that we are not tricked into agreeing to receiving junk by the bad guys who will no doubt come up with new schemes and scams. So, don't agree to anything unless you are sure it is from a reputable organisation that you trust. And conversely don't click an 'unsubscribe' link from any organization you don't recognize, because if it is from a scammer it will just alert them that yours is a live email address.

Windows 10 April Update – yes I know this might seem a bit late, but this big update was delayed and has been rolling out to computers all over the world ever since. As usual with these big releases, like the Creators Update a while ago, it has not been without a few glitches, so watch out for this one. Not that you can do a lot about it as the update process is now fully automated and cannot be turned off! Also, after this update you will be presented with some screens relating to data privacy, such as using voice and diagnostic data, to which you have to agree or disagree.

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ESET also has a program update available for most users. so if you see a notification from Eset popping up advising you to update to the latest version, it is safe to do so.

User account control (UAC). In Windows there is a security feature designed to prevent malicious software being installed on your computer which goes by this catchy name. So, whenever you start to install a program or sometimes an update, you will be presented with that familiar, but somewhat worrying message, that says a certain program wants to make changes to your computer, do you agree? To which of course you have to agree, unless you were not installing anything or don't recognise the program.

Smart socks send data to your Physio :-} Meanwhile over on the **BBC Click** website, this is one of the news headlines, which seems wacky but has a distinct medical purpose!

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Security Central:

If you haven't already upgraded to ESET Internet Security, now is the time to do it. And for anyone who hasn't tried ESET yet, don't just take my word what an excellent product it is, go to the website <https://www.eset.com/uk/home/free-trial/> and download a **free one-month** trial! Just make sure you uninstall any existing anti virus you may have, even if it has expired. For prices, upgrades and licences – just give us a call.

Telephone scam – yes, I must mention this again. There has been another spate of unsolicited calls to computer users in this area purporting to be from Microsoft (who they are not) offering to fix problems with your computer (which they won't) and then fraudulently taking money for their non-existent services. If you get such calls, and they can be very persistent, tell them you are not interested, or that you have a local computer specialist, or that you don't have a computer!

Remember to look on my website for copies of the current and previous two articles where they can be read, downloaded or printed. And if you are considering investing a new computer you will also find on there my popular article on 'things to consider when buying a new computer. Or if you would like a copy sent by email, just drop me line.

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