You need to protect your computers – what and how?

Every internet user who has been using internet for quite some time now may have faced the menace of viruses, adware, spyware and 'worms' at least a couple of times. To protect your computer from such problems is of paramount importance. Here we suggest some ways that can help you to avoid them, or at least minimise the damage caused.

Identity Theft

This is one of the biggest problems for internet users worldwide. Since millions of people use the internet to perform everyday tasks such as socialising, on-line shopping, e-banking and payment of bills, the incidence of identity theft has increased dramatically. Thousands of users are being duped into giving their information like passwords, credit card information etc. These are sensitive data that a hacker intends to steal as they can be used for stealing and disrupting the interests of the victim.

Some ways to protect your PC from identity theft are:

- Use of firewalls and other security software

- Use only secure websites and networks for performing various transactions. Social networking sites are susceptible to hacking. Never divulge any personal information to a stranger. It is the responsibility of the user to regularly change his password and other sensitive information.

- Public computers are more prone to hacking. Never use such computers to perform any transactions like payment of bills etc. Do not forget to log out of such PCs after using them

- A user should avoid installing a random program in his PC. Some of these programs steal sensitive data in disguise of doing some another task.

Protection from Viruses

Viruses are programmes that require an agent to perform their task. A virus requires another programme for its survival. The virus attaches itself to another program me and disrupts the working of the genuine programme. Viruses are more difficult to detect because the victims programme is still being executed but maybe at a slower rate. Hence, the best way to get rid of

these viruses is to prevent them from getting into your PC in the first place. Various anti-virus software are available on the market. Some of these are effective while others are not. Consult a computer engineer to find out which software is more suitable to your PC. Do not hesitate to spend a decent amount for genuine anti-virus software.

To protect attacks on LANs/WANs/WiFis:

A malicious user can intercept the network and modify the contents of the information. To avoid this, install firewalls at various access points over the networks. A firewall prevents unauthorised access to the network.

To protect from adware

Adware automatically downloads advertisements on your PCs. These Ads are at times annoying distractions. They may not be as harmful as viruses but can make your PCs slower. Various software is available that avoid adware to be run on your PCs.

These are some of the ways by which you can protect your computer from various inappropriate use. Vigilance and awareness is of the utmost importance.