

THE CONSTANT CORNER  
COMPUTER TECH SUPPORT SCAMS

Criminals who are technologically savvy are using their phones to gain control of your computer system. Here's how this scam works:

You receive an unsolicited call from someone who claims to be a computer repair tech working for Microsoft. He or she says that a virus or other malware was detected on your computer system and remote access is needed to fix the problem right away. After you've given them remote access to your computer by following their instructions, you get pressured to download the company's software that will better protect your computer system from future viruses.

IF THIS CALLER GAINS YOUR TRUST and you provide him the information he wants, he WILL ACTUALLY CONTROL YOUR ENTIRE COMPUTER FROM AFAR and make changes to your settings that will leave your computer completely exposed and vulnerable. The software he sells you is WORTHLESS, and he will be able to steal all your user names, passwords, bank account numbers, credit card account numbers, and other critical personal information. THAT IS A LOT OF DAMAGE.

If you get a call from a person like this, HANG UP immediately.

If you have already responded to a caller like this and you think you might have downloaded malware or unknowingly released your account and password information, take the following steps:

1. Immediately get rid of the malware by visiting your nearest computer repair company.
2. Cancel all old accounts and open up new accounts with new passwords.
3. Work with your credit card companies to reverse all fraudulent charges.
4. File a report with the Federal Trade Commission under their Identity Theft website.
5. File a report with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center, IC3.
6. Keep track of your credit report and report any unusual findings to your local police department.

And keep this thought in mind: Regardless of any tactic used by criminals, we can stay safe by avoiding the foundation of opportunity.

From the desk of Jane Constant  
Senior Relations Specialist  
Nashua Police Department