



F&I

Gil Van Over

What you Don't Know About Fax Machines

Imagine you are at your doctor's office. The office clerk asks for your driver's license and insurance card, then disappears to make a copy for the doctor's file.

After your combined four hour visit, during which you saw the doctor for five minutes, you pay your deductible by check. The office clerk dutifully makes a copy of your check as part of the office's deposit documentation.

Unfortunately, you are referred to a specialist, who wants a copy of your medical file. This file, of course, includes job information, social security number, insurance information and other personal, non-public information. So, the office clerk makes a copy and forwards it to the specialist.

Hackers can download free software over the Internet to decipher the hard drive resident in many copiers.

Then, the doctor decides to upgrade copiers, much to the cheers of the office clerk. The old copier is sent to the dust bin, or traded in, or donated to charity, or sold to an upstart dentist just out of dental school.

Unfortunately, what you don't know, is that all of your personal, non-public information has likely been stored on the copier's hard drive and is accessible by any amateur hack artist.

I ain't lying

This is not a dream. This is not a fantasy. This is not a syfy story.

Many copiers and fax machines save digital images of documents that are copied. Hackers can download free software over the Internet

to decipher the hard drive resident in many copiers or fax machines and extract personal, non-public information.

Obviously, this is a potential issue given the fact that car dealers are required to safeguard and properly dispose of personal, non-public information.

So, what to do?

Actions to take

First, check with your office supply vendor. Some vendors and manufacturer offer an option in which the information copied is regularly overwritten so that it cannot be retrieved later. If your copier or fax has that option, make sure your security settings are set to overwrite data.

If your copier or fax does not have such an option, and it is not time for a new machine, make sure that the copier and fax is kept under lock and key like your filing cabinets so that the janitor cannot access it at night when no one else is around.

Finally, if and when you decide to upgrade, make absolutely certain that the hard drive is either destroyed or erased before you trade it in or donate it to charity.

Sometimes what you don't know can cause problems.

Continued good luck and good selling. 

Gil Van Over is the president and founder of gvo3 & Associates, a national consulting firm that specializes in F&I, sales, Red Flags and Safeguards compliance and training. Visit gvo3's web site at www.gvo3.com. You can reach Gil at: gover@dealer-communications.com.

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