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The Risk of Technology and Identity Theft

Equifax releases report on what consumers can do to protect themselves

ATLANTA, Oct. 23, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- You are looking at something that puts you in the line of fire of identity thieves. Whether viewing this document via a computer, a tablet or a smartphone, your use of modern-day technologies increases your risk for identity theft. That is the conclusion of an [Equifax white paper](#) released today that takes an in-depth look at how identity thieves are taking advantage of the tech age – and what consumers can do to help protect themselves.



The report, titled "With Just One Click: The Impact of Technology on Identity Theft," examines how a data breach, a stolen smartphone, social media, phishing attacks and weak passwords can lead to identity theft. The report gives consumers tips and resources to empower them in protecting their information.

"As we go about our daily lives, it can be easy to forget how the technology we use every day can make us the target of identity thieves," said Scott Mitic, Senior Vice President at Equifax. "But by arming yourself with knowledge and the right techniques, you can help protect your personal information."

Identity theft is a fast-growing problem, with multiple, large companies being victimized by major data breaches in the past year – and the pace is accelerating. More than 200 million data records were stolen in just the first quarter of 2014, according to research by SafeNet. One in three people who are victims of data breaches will quickly become victims of fraud, found Javelin Strategy and Research.

"Data breaches continue to be a pervasive problem in the digital age, and we expect that trend to continue," Mitic said. "Our tendency to share personal information online leaves that information vulnerable to hackers and identity thieves."

Tips for consumers include:

- Make sure your security software is up-to-date on both your computer and smartphone. Free solutions are available from reputable sources.
- Keep your phone locked with an access code. Turn off Bluetooth and Wi-Fi.
- Download the latest software updates for your device to fix security holes.
- Be on the lookout for email scams.
- Keep your social media accounts private and don't share common identifying information like your mother's maiden name or your birthdate.

- Use unique and complex passwords.
- After a data breach, change your passwords, place a fraud alert with the credit reporting agencies, close affected accounts and monitor your credit report.

For the full report and more resources on protecting yourself from identity theft, visit http://www.equifax.com/assets/PSOL/Technology_and_Identity_Theft_wp.pdf.

About Equifax

Equifax is a global leader in consumer, commercial and workforce information solutions that provide businesses of all sizes and consumers with insight and information they can trust. Equifax organizes and assimilates data on more than 600 million consumers and 81 million businesses worldwide. The company's significant investments in differentiated data, its expertise in advanced analytics to explore and develop new multi-source data solutions, and its leading-edge proprietary technology enable it to create and deliver unparalleled customized insights that enrich both the performance of businesses and the lives of consumers.

Headquartered in Atlanta, Equifax operates or has investments in 19 countries and is a member of Standard & Poor's (S&P) 500® Index. Its common stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) under the symbol EFX. In 2013, Equifax was named a Bloomberg BusinessWeek Top 50 company, was #3 in Fortune's Most Admired list in its category, and was named to InfoWeek 500 as well as the FinTech 100. For more information, please visit www.equifax.com.

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