



Cybersecurity in an Insecure World: 4 Tips For Protecting Against Cybersecurity Threats

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Welcome to Cybersecurity Month! The preceding months leading up to October have been fraught with what seems to be a non-stop string of cybersecurity incidents, with many large companies splashed across the news thanks to the actions of criminals. At Alliance Data, we recognize the importance of a sound cybersecurity program now more than ever before. October is Cybersecurity Month, and Alliance Data associates serve as the first line of defense against any security threat our company may receive. Some companies consider their dedicated Information Security staff and IT department to be the sole defenders against cybersecurity threats. While we definitely depend on our subject matter experts in these areas, we believe each one of our 17,000 associates has a key role in keeping our data secure and our IT systems safe. In a world where cybersecurity criminals are always looking for an opportunity to create havoc, no one can afford to take this issue lightly.

How do you turn your entire associate population into cybersecurity experts? We believe the best way to give our people the tools to identify, respond and defend against any cybersecurity threat is to educate and engage them by establishing a culture centered on being “security minded.” This is achieved through continual education, training and awareness-building through the rank and file of our global operations, and asking our associates to be responsible and accountable for all data that we use and manage.

Wondering how to keep safe from cybersecurity threats? Here are some easy tips on how to better protect yourself:

1. Use unique passwords for every site and choose passwords with longer passphrases that include a combination of letters, numbers and symbols.
2. Never click on links emailed to you from unknown, untrusted sources or download unknown attachments from emails or the Internet. They could contain harmful malware.
3. Be wary of imposters asking for your personal information. Never send any information like your social security number or credit card information via email to anyone at any time.
4. Never plug in an untrusted USB drive into your computer – even if you think you know where it came from.

This Cybersecurity Month, take a moment to remind yourself that criminals never rest, and your organization is only as secure as your weakest link. Cybersecurity Month may only be 31 days, but the only way to do it right is by making cybersecurity a year-round affair.