

Would You Give Your Wallet to a Stranger?

If someone were to walk up to you on the street and ask you for your wallet, would you hand it over?

I'm not talking robbery here. I mean that someone you've never met before simply walks up, gives you what sounds like a semi-plausible reason, and asks for your wallet.

Would you hand it over?

Of course not.

And yet when it comes to computers, I hear of people doing much, much worse almost every day.

Many people seem more than willing to give a complete stranger access their computer. Honestly? It's safer to just give them your wallet.

The "**YOUR COMPUTER IS CAUSING ERRORS**" scam

I am, of course, referring to the increasingly prevalent scam where someone:

- Calls you.
- Says that they're from Microsoft, your ISP, or some other official-sounding source.
- Tells you that your computer is "causing errors" of some sort on the internet, or gives you some kind of indication



that your computer is somehow the cause of some problems.

- Have you verify this situation by pointing out the large numbers of errors shown in Event Viewer.
- Offer to fix it for you by taking remote control of your computer.

Don't do it.

It's a scam. It's a trap. These people are lying to you.

Spread the word!

Because this is such a common scam and people are being duped frequently, permission is given to reproduce this article.

Spread the word. Save someone the grief.

It's all about trust

Whenever we give someone else access to our computer, we're placing a tremendous amount of trust in that individual:

- We trust that they know what they're doing.
- We trust that they have the ability to fix whatever it is that needs fixing.
- We trust that they won't recommend things we don't need.
- We trust that, if we're paying them, we're paying a reasonable amount.



In short, we trust that they're really here to help us.

But the trust actually runs much deeper than that:

- We trust that they won't go poking around on our computer looking at things that aren't involved in their repair or assistance.
- We trust that they won't make copies of things from our computer.
- We trust that they won't steal information from our computer.
- We trust that they won't do something malicious to our computer and then hold it hostage.

Stranger danger

Hand Over Your Wallet, honestly, this applies to anyone whom you're considering have help you. Be it the techie friend, the computer repair person, or the applications-support person you've contacted, you're placing all that trust in them as well.

Do you trust them?

And for Pete's sake, if someone you don't know calls you and offers to "help"? Hang up!

You know, it's actually safer to hand over your wallet to a stranger than it is to let a stranger take control of your computer.

Why?

You know what's in your wallet.



You know that your new wallet, with your new cards, is completely within your control.

That's simply not true if someone compromises your computer. Once they're done, you don't know what's missing, you don't know what's been added, and you don't know what's safe.

That's a lot of "don't know".

Instead, **don't do it**. Or rather, make absolutely certain you know and trust the individuals that you give access to your computer.

