

How Preferred IT Group Saved Christmas

THE SNOW FILLED THE MAGICAL NIGHT...



'Twas the night before Christmas and all were asleep, except for the elves in Santa's workshop who are Preferred Care Elite. The elves were busy stuffing the sleigh, when Santa shouted out a loud, "Mayday!" Out in the toy shop there arose such a clatter! The elves sprang into action to see what was the matter.

"My server is down" he said with a frown, "I must call Preferred IT Group to get my list found." The tech on call was well on his way, fixing Santa's server so he could take off in his sleigh. "Santa, no need to fear your naughty and nice list is in the cloud from this year." Santa thanked the tech greatly and was filled with cheer, "the kids will be excited for all their presents this year!"

Santa jumped in his sleigh with his reindeer in rows ready to follow that big red nose. Now! Dasher, now! Dancer, now! Prancer, and Vixen. On Comet, on! Cupid, On! Donder and Blitzen! Now dash away, dash away! Dash away all!

The snow filled the magical night as Santa shouted out, "Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night!"

This is the story of how Preferred IT Group saved Christmas, give us a call if we can be of assistance! 260.440.7377.

Happy Holidays from the staff of Preferred IT Group!

Top Holiday Scams in 2020

It isn't just Boomers getting scammed out of their hard-earned dollars. According to the Federal Trade Commission, millennials are more likely to report being victims of financial scams. In fact, reports of fraud are 25% more likely to come from millennials than persons over 40. In the past two years alone, millennials have lost almost half-a-billion dollars to online scams. While you're in the midst of online shopping this year, it's important to protect your identity and your financial information.

Secret Sister

Secret Sister is a social media scam that has been going around for the last couple of years. The way the scam works is simple. Facebook users recruit "sisters" with the promise that they could receive up to 36 gifts. The catch is, they have to buy a \$10 gift for a stranger on the internet. Users provide your name, address and email. Then recruit friends to join. If you think it sounds like a pyramid scheme you're right. Users don't know who they're buying gifts for or whether those internet strangers will even return the favor. In addition, giving personal information such as your home address could open you up to cybersecurity breaches.

Elaborate fake websites

Whenever you receive an email saying that your account has been compromised and requires immediate attention such as a password, BE. SKEPTICAL. Often, these emails will contain links to elaborate web pages that closely mimic major websites such as Apple, Amazon, Google, Banks or even social media sites. These websites are typically part of phishing scams. Phishing scams lure users to these fake websites that capture login information, account numbers, credit cards and more.

Google Voice Code

Whether you're cleaning out your kids' playroom to make room for new toys or just selling used items online to get a little spending money, you're likely to run into the Google Voice Code scam. The Google Voice scam isn't your average scam to take your money. To understand this scam, it's important to understand how Google Voice works.

Google Voice is Google's phone system. To set up an account, you must first link your cell phone number to your



Google Phone number. During the setup process, Google will send a six-digit code for verification. Once you receive the verification code, you finish the setup process and your phone is connected to your Google phone number. This scam works by a scammer finding your information online through an ad or even a dating site. They will then contact you pretending to be interested in the item you're selling and tell you that they need to send the six-digit code so that they can verify you are a real person and the ad is real. This is part of the scam. The scammer will use the code to verify your phone number and will use it to scam others. As a result, if or when someone catches on to the scam, the phone number will be traced back to you.

"Car warranty" scams (mail or phone)

Cars are a popular Christmas gift for spouses and newly-minted teen drivers. However, if you've purchased a new car off the lot within recent years then you may already be familiar with the contract service scam. If you get a phone call or a letter in the mail saying that your extended car warranty is about to expire. Use caution. Car warranty scams attempt to trick consumers into buying useless vehicle service contracts. Often, these service contracts cost anywhere from \$1,300 to nearly \$2,900. A salesperson will convince a victim that the warranty provides bumper to bumper coverage, including engine troubles. However, any attempt to make use of the warranty is stonewalled and refunds for the purchase of the warranty are virtually impossible. Despite government efforts to crack down on car warranty scams, it remains alive and well. The letters victims receive in the mail are often convincing. They look like they come from a legitimate source such as a dealership or manufacturer. But these are not warranties, they are service contracts often sold by third parties. Warranties come with a new car and are included in the purchase price. Used cars usually come with some type of warranty coverage as well.

Learn how to spot a scam and ask us about Security Awareness Training today!

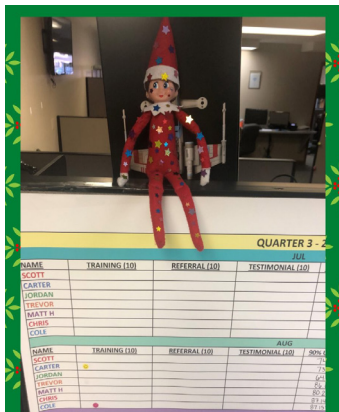
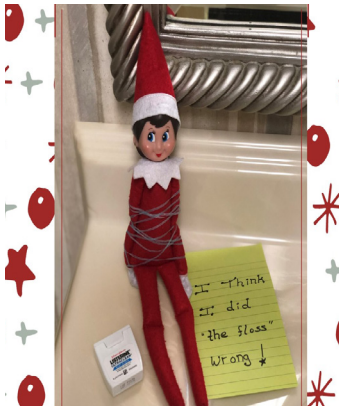
Source: <https://www.carlsonattorneys.com/news-and-update/yearly-holiday-scams>

Holly is Back!

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December 2020

Our elf Holly has made it back to our office for this holiday season and she wasted no time getting into some mischief!



12 TECHNOLOGIES OF CHRISTMAS: TECH GIFT GUIDE

1. *Apple Watch* - While not exactly a new technology, the many features make it an ideal gift for any age!
2. *Security Key* - Investing in a security key can help protect your identity during this holiday season.
3. *Tesla Powerwall* - This device is designed to switch on within "a fraction of a second" after detecting a power outage.
4. *Headsets from Bose, Apple, and Plantronics* - The perfect gift for both at work and at home that will help keep you focused.
5. *Apple Arcade* - This application has plenty of games to keep your kids entertained and is compatible with any Apple device.
6. *Home Security System* - Protection that can be viewed and controlled on smartphones from almost everywhere.
7. *LightStim* - A professional grade, FDA-cleared, LED light therapy device backed by science.
8. *Nespresso Machine* - The perfect gift for any coffee lover in your life!
9. *Smart Vehicle Technology* - If you're thinking of a new vehicle this holiday season, consider smart safety features such as backup cameras, enhanced cruise control, and many more.
10. *Google Assistant* - The latest version is a step forward in integrating millions of iOS devices into the Google world.
11. *Smart Plug* - The perfect gift for anyone who does remote work or who uses Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant.
12. *Sensor Mirror* - The perfect gift for someone who loves primping, and would also be perfect for someone with an important event on the horizon, like a speaking engagement or a wedding.

Source: <https://aragonresearch.com/12-technologies-of-christmas-tech-gift-guide/>

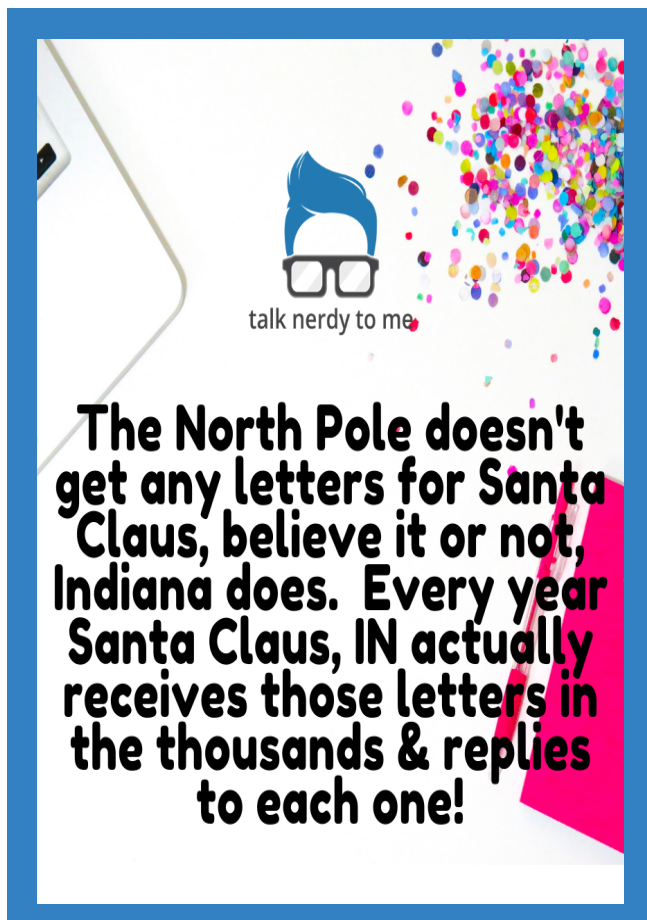


One of Windows 10's top security tools is getting a new tool that will help individuals manage their passwords. Microsoft Authenticator uses encrypted messaging to generate a secure code that allows individuals to access their personal accounts, using their smartphone as an authentication device.

Now it appears that Microsoft Authenticator will soon be gaining password management functionality, giving users the ability to sync and manage their passwords from Microsoft's Edge browser. Basically, the new password management functionality will work by allowing Microsoft Edge users to manage and store their passwords in Authenticator – once they have updated their settings to allow Authenticator to autofill passwords. By bringing password management to Authenticator, Microsoft is creating a smoother experience for individuals that regularly switch between desktop and smartphone devices.

Source: <https://www.techradar.com/news/microsoft-authenticator-is-getting-its-own-password-manager>

FUN FACT!



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