

# 3rd Sector COMMuniCaTions

From those friendly people at DOT-COMmuniCaTions  
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**3rd Sector COMMuniCaTions** is a regular column offering I.T. advice & support specifically for not-for-profit organisations. If you have an IT-related problem that might also benefit others, please send an email to the address shown below, & we'll do our best to answer.

**Q. My computer has recently slowed down to a crawl, my browser homepage has changed and I've been plagued by pop-up windows after I downloaded an anti-virus program from the internet. Someone said that the program may have been infected, how can I know?**

**A. There has been a plague of rogue applications that report false or exaggerated system security threats.** What probably happened is while on the internet, a dialogue box popped up claiming that "Your PC is infected with a virus" (this isn't from any installed anti-virus program on your computer but it is very easy to confuse). Regardless of which option you choose, it will appear to perform a "free scan" before stating your computer is infected & telling you to run their program to remove the viruses. Again clicking any button installs the program which simulates a virus scan & displays a list of "infections" (which don't actually exist). In reality the malware has taken control of your internet browser & some versions will try & remove any legitimate anti-virus software you have installed. The program will then recommend the "viral threats" are removed, clicking any button will take you to the malware site & you will be told you need to purchase a full version of the program to do so. This is the primary purpose of the malware, to make you hand over cash to get rid of viruses you don't have. If you choose not to pay, you will find the malware will redirect you to random websites, many of infected with malware & will prevent you from navigating to your favourite websites.

**What can you do about it (before it installs):**

1) If a dialogue box appears whilst browsing claiming your computer has been infected, Holding down the Ctrl & Alt, keys and then Del will bring up the Task Manager program, click on the applications tab which lists all active tasks. Select Internet Explorer /Firefox etc. & click the End Task button in the bottom section of the Task Manager. A dialogue box will appear, choose the "End now" option. This will close the browser & help prevent the malware from installing itself on your computer.

2) Install and keep up to date anti-malware software and run it regularly.

If the program has already installed you may need to get professional assistance to remove it,

\*The two most common are known as Antivir (not to be confused with the genuine Avira Antivir) & Security Shield, however there are a number of variations, all are very similar & are changing names/websites daily.

**Q. Can you help me set up a secure flash drive so even if I lost the drive or had it stolen, the data would remain confidential?**

**A. . TrueCrypt (<http://www.truecrypt.org/>)** is a free, open-source encryption program that will provide the security you want. You can either encrypt the entire device so that any person who plugs in the USB drive won't see any data at all, or create an encrypted file or folder on the device so that you can also access non-confidential data even on computers that doesn't have TrueCrypt installed.

This program is very powerful so be careful. If you encrypt something with it you will not be able to unencrypt it without the password.

**Skinner's Company Grants**

The Skinner's Company Lady Neville Charity provides one-off grants of up to £1,000. The priority areas are disability, local heritage, local community and performing & visual arts. The Charity will accept applications from registered charities or not-for-profit organisations based in the UK employing less than the equivalent of four full-time paid staff.

Funding is available for items of non-recurring expenditure (such as equipment) and should make a significant contribution to the project. You are welcome to discuss with the Administrator. Details from <http://www.skinnerhall.co.uk/>

**FREE Diagram Tool**

Gliffy is an online diagramming tool that will allow you to create professional-quality flowcharts, diagrams, floor plans, technical drawings, and more. Try it for free, no sign up required. Visit <http://www.gliffy.com/>

**Top Five Free Productivity Tools**

There are plenty of free productivity tools that are available to help you be more efficient and effective. This selection was picked by Simon Duncan, ICT Champion for Yorkshire and Humber and is a great list to uncover some gems you may not know about.

<http://tinyurl.com/33ne8jo>

**FREE Calderdale.COMmuniCaTions Newsletter**

Sign up to DOT-COMm's irregular Newsletter filled with I.T. related advice, links and special offers on refurbished equipment. Only available to staff and volunteers of not-for-profit organisations in Calderdale.

To register go to: <http://tinyurl.com/yczm3m6>

**DOT-COMmuniCaTions'** is Calderdale's **ONLY** dedicated not-for-profit provider of computer support services & solutions to local community, voluntary & faith sector organisations & not-for-profit social enterprises.  
 For more information & a free consultation,  
 please contact: 01422-845003 or email: [talk2us@dot-communications.co.uk](mailto:talk2us@dot-communications.co.uk)