

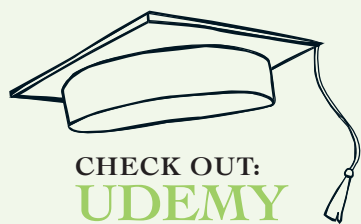
YOUR GUIDE TO THE

Digital Gap

8 pages of tips to get you ahead

19-26

We know how hard it is to stay on top of tech trends today. Now you can save face with this handy pullout, which covers everything from cloud computing and proper SMS etiquette to microblogging and the hottest people to “follow” online – so you won’t feel out of the loop the next time someone is chatting about Web 2.0.



CHECK OUT: UDEMY

Got something to share with the world? Udey.com is a free new website that allows anyone to create and teach an educational online course via video presentations, blogs and virtual classroom sessions. It’s still in Beta mode, but a quick site search turns up entrepreneurial classes from Stanford University, chemistry and mathematics courses from University of California Berkeley, and even more esoteric subjects like philosophy of film from MIT.



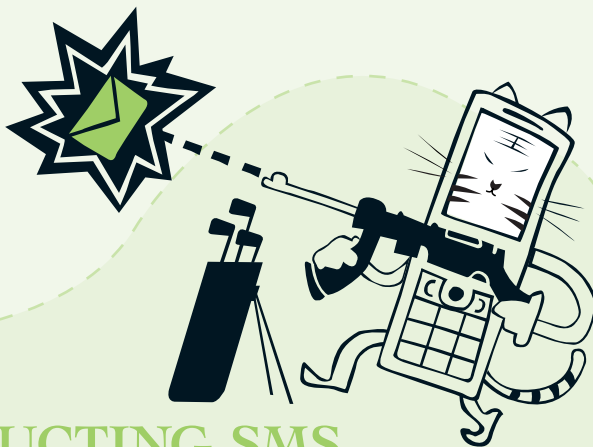
WE LIKE: NEATDESK

A high-speed desktop scanner and digital filing system that lets you scan receipts, business cards and documents in one batch.

www.neatco.com/products/neatdesk

TIP

Is your cup of tea too bitter? You’ve steeped it for too long. Check out www.Steep.it, a web-based tea timer that flashes when your tea is just right! It comes with a simple timing guide for various teas, including black, green and herbal infusions.



SELF-DESTRUCTING SMS

This technology was already in the UK in 2005, but today we can definitely think of a few celebs who might have found this useful. Subscribers can send a fixed number of self-destructing texts, which the receiver accesses via mobile Internet and can read for a few seconds before they disappear. This service isn’t available here yet, but we have our fingers crossed.

Stay up to date with mobile/SMS news at www.textually.org

ARMY DAZE

Learn to throw grenades on a laptop.



The SAF has introduced a somewhat controversial new method of learning: new BMT recruits now get an army-issue laptop to familiarise themselves with grenade-throwing protocol via videos and slides; if they have questions, they can send instant messages to their instructors. We’re not sold on the idea, though... some things just need real practice.

http://bit.ly/throw_grenade



DIY BOOKS

Blurb.com

This US-based online creative service makes self-publishing a breeze. Take a stab at putting together your own cookbook, autobiography, travel guide, coffee-table book, or anything you fancy.

Just1Book.com

A local site that offers free photo book software to make your own albums. Also try calendars, cards and more, with top-of-the-line digital printing.

Rankbooks.com

Another local self-publishing site with typesetting and layout services for corporate publications.

Lulu.com

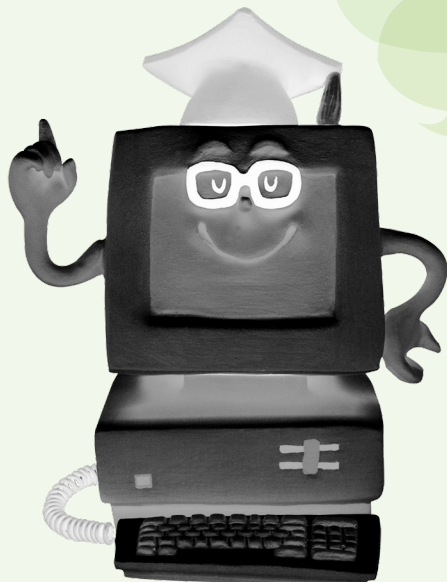
An online bookstore that also allows self-publishing and offers international shipping.

IT LOWDOWN BEGINNER'S PRIMER TO WEB 2.0

"DIGITAL NATIVE"...

...was coined by American writer Marc Prensky to describe a generation that has grown up immersed in digital technology; it usually refers to younger people who have never been "unconnected" thanks to social networking, mobile phones, iPods and other gadgets. On the other hand, digital immigrants are those who grew up without digital technology and had to learn how to use it (mostly people born before the '70s).

Find out more at the Digital Natives wiki project: www.digitalnative.org/wiki



WHEN WE SAY CLOUD COMPUTING IT MEANS...

"At its most basic level, the 'cloud' is simply the Internet, or the vast array of servers around the world that comprise it. When people say a digital document is stored, or a digital task is being performed in the cloud, they mean that the file or application lives on a server you access over an Internet connection, via a Web browser, rather than on 'local' devices, like your computer or smartphone..."

Walt Mossberg of the Wall Street Journal: http://bit.ly/Cloud_Computing



Facebook was initially only available to US university students and is named after the school "facebook" or yearbook. Especially popular for its user-generated applications, which range from ingenious (eg: sharing book and film reviews) to annoying (like demanding access to your personal data).

Web 2.0 a.k.a. the "second generation" of the Internet – is a blanket term for Web applications with collaborative, user-generated features that encourage people to interact and share data. Think blogs, YouTube, social networking sites and Flickr.



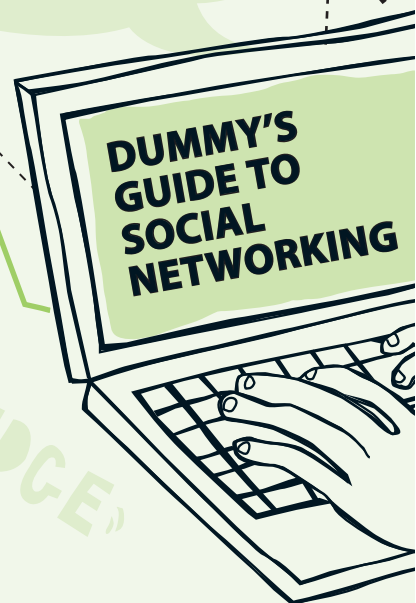
MySpace is often considered more "accessible" than Facebook and users are encouraged to personalise their profiles with themes, pictures and other media. It is especially popular among bands as a platform to promote their music.



LinkedIn focuses on building professional relationships. As of April 2010, it has over 65 million registered users and claims to gain a new member "approximately every second". Users create a social network based on their professional interests and business contacts.

POKE

"NUDGE"





WHO'S CLOUD-SAVVY?

In 2008, the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA) joined Yahoo, Intel and HP to explore the possibilities of cloud computing and iron out data security issues.

Find out more at www.opencirrus.org

In May, IBM opened a new Cloud Lab at Changi Business Park, which aims to help businesses and schools take advantage of cloud computing.

Find out more at www.ibm.com/ibm/cloud

Kim Eng, a stock broking firm, will use Amazon Web Services, a subsidiary of Amazon.com, to host its trading application for the new iPhone launching this month.

ANTI-FACEBOOK?

Here are three alternatives.

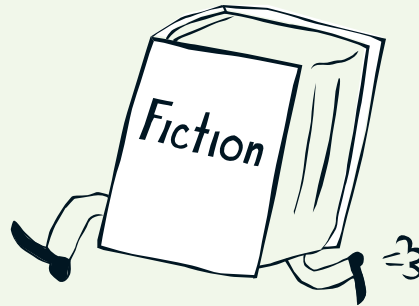
Diaspora is a work-in-progress by four students from New York University that allows users to create and control their own servers or "seeds" and hubs. Go to www.joindiaspora.com for more info.

Bebo.com is a 34-million-strong network that's been around since 2005. Find people with mutual interests in categories like books and films. The best part? All new profiles are automatically "private".

Folkdirect.com is a newcomer that describes its site security as "rock-solid"... we'll let you be the judge. Here's a plus for no-frills nitpickers: there are no third-party applications.

foursquare™

Foursquare is the newest mobile craze to hit Singapore – it's a location-based game that tells your friends exactly where you are. Users receive points for "checking in" at venues, get crowned as "Mayor" of a place if they are regulars, and enjoy a great menu of features à la Yelp.



FAST FICTION

www.twitip.com/how-to-start-a-twitter-novel/
Dig into the coolest new way to get new fiction – in bite-sized 140 character doses.

@tweetthemeat is a horror-themed Twitter magazine that encourages readers to submit their own content. Besides great, visceral one-liners, it also announces a regular writing theme and publishes the best submissions.

@nickfaber is a New York-based writer who creates 100-word "microfiction" stories that readers get to name.

@goodcaptain is a Twitter novel by Jay Bushman, based on a novel by Herman Melville. The full archive is available at www.goodcaptain.com.

WORD UP

Microblogging involves making short and frequent updates on what you're doing. A blog entry – which can be anything from fiction, an opinion piece or news analysis – often goes into greater detail, with more forethought.

OUR FAVOURITES

www.twitter.com creates 140-character posts (tweets) about what you're doing, eating, watching... you get the picture. It lacks the reciprocity of most social networks as you can "follow" a person's feed, but they may not follow you back.

www.posterous.com is a convenient mobile blogging platform to post quick updates to your Flickr, Twitter account or whatever blog service you have – here's the best part – from your e-mail.



POKE



Smartphones allow us to be increasingly wired. However, this over-connectivity can distance us from our immediate surroundings, and prevent us from fully disengaging from work. Stick to these commandments religiously when using your smartphone, and we guarantee it won't take over your life.

- 01 If you're at a function, save rigorous texts for a fake toilet break.
- 02 When it comes to abbreviations, save Internet slang (LOL, BRB) for your friends. It's inappropriate in a professional context, no matter how comfortable you feel with your boss.
- 03 You can probably get away with a quick text in a large group – say, at a board meeting, presentation, company gathering and so on.

*“With iPods and iPads and Xboxes and Play-
Stations – none of which I know how to work –
information becomes a distraction, a diversion, a form
of entertainment, rather than a tool of empowerment,
rather than the means of emancipation.”*

US President Barack Obama at Hampton University, Virginia, May 9, 2010



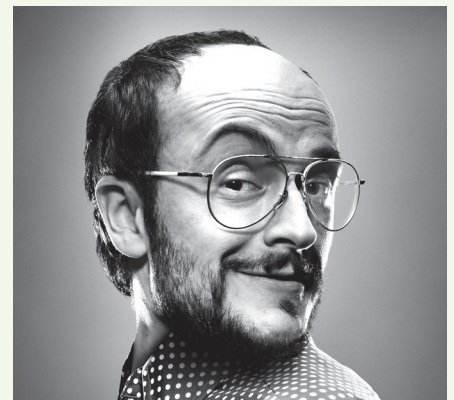
LOCAL

ZDNetAsia.com A great source for business-related tech news all over Asia – its navigation system displays the most headlines in the IT world and has a whole section devoted to Singapore.

Geekonomics.us Nicholas Khoo is a CNET Asia blogger, IT advisor, and director of online finance portal, Qotion.com. He also assists MICA on new media issues.

Techgoondu.com An extremely accessible blog run by an assorted crew of Singaporean technology journalists, some of whom have been on the beat since the early '90s.

BEST TECH & GADGET SITES



FOREIGN

Engadget.com A meticulously updated Web zine that comes in five languages (including Chinese and Korean) and three flavours: classic, mobile and hi-definition.

Kotaku.com This Gizmodo.com affiliate is a great gadget and gaming resource for amateurs and pros alike – its name is a cheeky dig at the Japanese “otaku”, a person with a fixation on video games and anime.

Makezine.com A “Projects” section gives step-by-step instructions on using technology to improve your daily life. There are also more challenging projects for DIY tech hobbyists, like how to make your own ham radio antenna.

Q&A WITH TECHXAV



Techxav.sg is a local tech blog run by two teens-turned-mini Web celebrities, Xavier Lur and Zhou Tong. Their gumption impresses us.

What do you think of the new curfews in Korea for gaming-addicted kids?

XL: I've heard of cases whereby kids can skip their meals or even school to hook up to their computer screens. A curfew should be implemented strictly on these kids.

ZT: There should be control for gaming-addicted kids, since "addiction" in gaming is quite serious. But the more important part is to lead them to be interested in the "rest of the world", instead of controlling by brute force.

Your take on the most exciting gadgets released this year (besides the iPad)?

XL: I think the main focus this year is the tablet, with HP and Dell releasing new tablets to compete with Apple's iPad. Perhaps the 4th-generation iPhone will generate more buzz than tablets.

ZT: Maybe the iPhone. I bet Apple will release something different from the prototype we've seen.

You guys recently started TechXav Philippines. Why?

ZT: Firstly we have a cool guy called Deondre Ng living there – he is an experienced blogger and photographer, and we all believe that he can handle the job very well. Secondly, the US tech blog giants have dominated almost all of America and Europe. What's left is luckily the best place for rapid growth – Asia. We have so many developing countries to choose from, and we have no pressure in competition with those adults.

XL: Gradually, we will be entering other countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, or perhaps Brazil, depending on our abilities and the workforce.



CHECK OUT

Hackerspace.sg

Hackers have notoriously been associated with illegal activities, but the term "hacker" originally referred to a computer programming enthusiast. In fact, hackers often help to improve computer security, for instance, by pinpointing flaws in a consumer anti-virus program and so making it safer. Enter Hackerspace.sg, the self-styled "Zouk of Geekdom", where tech-heads gather, tinker and socialise; this is just one of many creative "hackerspaces" around the world.

HackerspaceSG on YouTube:
www.youtube.com/hackerspacesg

HackerspaceSG on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/hackerspacesg

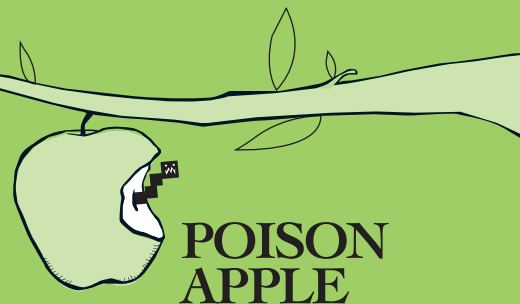
TRIVIA

As early as 1909, legendary physicist and engineer Nikola Tesla predicted the invention of a portable messaging service that would be available on a hand-held device with wireless energy; Popular Mechanics magazine editor Seth Porges claims that Tesla wrote in the magazine that one day, people would use such a device to communicate with their friends.

THE FIRST TEXT

...was sent by British engineer Neil Papworth on December 3, 1992. Papworth used a computer to send a Merry Christmas greeting to a colleague's mobile phone on the Vodafone network.

http://bit.ly/first_SMS



POISON APPLE

Okay, I admit. I've become more anti-social since the iPhone entered my life. I pay less attention to the world; any spare moment waiting for the bus is a chance to bond with the phone. I can find out when the next bus is coming; the latest news; and even pretend to be at work by firing off some e-mails.

During meetings, I can't resist furtive glances at it: Did a new e-mail come in? Any Facebook updates? Who's tweeting what?

It's really not just me. Other people have their eyes glued to their laptops (and other devices) during meetings too! Whatever gadgets we're constantly fiddling with, we're surely morphing into multi-tasking animals that need to be "connected" at all times.

There're reports that we get dumber with excessive multi-tasking. More disturbing was a report that "technologically-distracted" parents can cause hurt and jealousy in their children. Now, that's reason to pause and take stock, especially as a parent.

Bridgette See,
Contributing Editor

NB: To stop the poison from spreading, I am going to ban my iPhone from meetings and will stop replying to emails if they are really not *that* urgent. Wish me luck.

TRIVIA

A recent study, The Future of Free Time, predicts that, as 3D technology improves, more people may want to see the world from their homes rather than set foot on terra firma.

WORD ON THE STREET

PRIVACY

WHO CARES?



WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

Plenty, if the blogs, tweets and Facebook posts by youths here are anything to go by. And this Internet generation is not shy about baring their souls online.

From rants about parents and teachers, to boasting their vital statistics and broadcasting their sexual exploits, Dr Carol Balhetchet has seen them all.

The director of youth services at the Singapore Children's Society said of youths here: "Many are just not aware of the concept of privacy. [To them], it is not as important as the need to ventilate their feelings and to get those feelings acknowledged by their friends."

And youths tend to shoot from their hips – and not consider the possible consequences – when they join in the online chatter.

Take, for instance, a girl who blogged about how she is still a virgin at the tender age of 14.

Dr Balhetchet, who counselled the girl, said: "The girl thinks she has a beautiful body but wonders why her boyfriend has not tried to sleep with her. All

For many youngsters growing up in today's tell-all online culture, privacy may be as alien as using a typewriter or fax machine.

But two experts tell Clare Tan that there is a price to pay for throwing privacy out of the window.

her friends have had sex. She never considered the risks of posing such personal information online, that perhaps there may be 'buayas' (sexual predators) waiting for a chance to pounce on girls like her."

THINK BEFORE YOU "SPEAK" ONLINE

Blame it on youth, but the teens tend to be naive when navigating cyberspace, she added.

They don't realise that besides their friends, strangers, such as scammers and even potential bosses, could be interested in their personal data, said Mr Eugene Seow, executive director of TOUCH Community Services. TOUCH runs a Cyber Wellness centre that educates teens about the potential hazards in cyberspace.

Also, many youths upload content at the "spur of the moment", thinking they can remove that information later, he added.

However, the reality is that content uploaded to applications such as Facebook or blogs are also stored in caches. Even if the data is deleted from these applications, the information remains in the caches and can be retrieved until they are over-written or flushed out.

TMI (Too Much Information): tamer stuff culled from Twitter

01

@lydia pical: Oke I'm in the toilet now! bringing my phone! Haha stupid!!

02

@CeETRoN: *runs to toilet*



03

@iluischavez: Totally did my essay while I was on the toilet. Hahaha, heck yeah to random ideas :) Anyways, goodnight everyone!

04

@sjwalter: Sipping a beer, doing a diabolical Sudoku, sitting on the toilet. Ah, summer.

01

@Naika_tei (In Japanese): "[Urgently needed] toilet paper in the 3rd floor toilet of Akiba Yodobashi." 18 minutes later, @Naika_tei: "The toilet paper arrived safely! Thank you very much!"

And some youths have learnt – the hard way – that erasing their postings is harder than imagined.

A Singaporean girl is now stewing in regret after her former boyfriend allowed others to see pictures of their sexual adventures posted on her blog. She took down her blog after realising what he had done, but it was too late.

The pictures were copied by other netizens and have made their way to several websites and forums.

And if this is not bad enough, a sex video of the girl and her former flame was posted on a porn website, together with her contact details, urging viewers to call or send her private messages. The video has been viewed more than 30,000 times by users worldwide.

The woman told The New Paper: “I never wanted the publicity and I will only live to regret this for the rest of my life.”

A Singapore Polytechnic survey last year of 800 youths on their social media habits threw up some disturbing results. For instance, the majority shared personal information on social networking sites and 9% of respondents said they have been sexually harassed on such sites.

ANONYMITY IS AN ILLUSION

Hiding behind the veil of anonymity is another reason why youths are so nonchalant about their online privacy or remarks.

But online anonymity is an illusion, as some have found out.

One teen found himself in a police station after he posted on Facebook that he wanted to bomb Xin Min Secondary School and Ang Mo Kio Police Station. A netizen stumbled onto his Facebook account and posted his rants on online portal Stomp.

A lawyer said in The New Paper: “People should know that if they make false bomb threats, even in jest, on the Internet, they can be punished.”

THE LURE OF ONLINE FAME

And nobodies in real life have found they can be somebody in cyberspace by posting controversial stuff and getting people to “follow” them. And so, privacy goes out of the window – again.

Dr Balhetchet says: “Some youths are looking for attention, to be popular, to have followers on their blogs or Twitter accounts, so they post controversial and intimate information about themselves. We have seen kids who post pictures of themselves having sex and they don’t think such pictures are private. To them, living on the edge is cool.”

But whatever the reason behind their cavalier attitude towards online privacy, experts say youths have to be more educated on the issue, or risk having that information come back to haunt them in the future. ●

TRIVIA

CHATROULETTE: NASTY OR NICE?

Chatroulette puts two random strangers together for a video, audio or text conversation.

Of course, all the things that could go wrong have already been much-discussed by the media (for instance, 1 out of 10 “spins” turns up someone doing something

naughty). But don’t despair yet, Merton the musician who improvises spontaneously with each new stranger gives hope.

Watch

him in action:

www.youtube.com/pianochatimprov



“We don’t give a flying tweet about privacy. If we did, why are we willingly geotagging photos, telling friends when we’re at our favourite restaurant, and revealing so many other once-private details of our lives... if we truly cared deeply about preserving a private sphere, none of these phenomenally popular Web services could exist.”

– “Does privacy on Facebook, Google, and Twitter even matter?” by Farhad Manjoo, Fast Company, May 2010

BEFORE YOU HIT “ENTER”:

1. Reveal only the information that you are comfortable with everyone knowing, including prospective employers.
2. Remember that once uploaded, it is almost impossible to remove anything completely from the Internet.

SOURCE: TOUCH Cyber Wellness

← Enter

Toilet Tweeting
can earn you

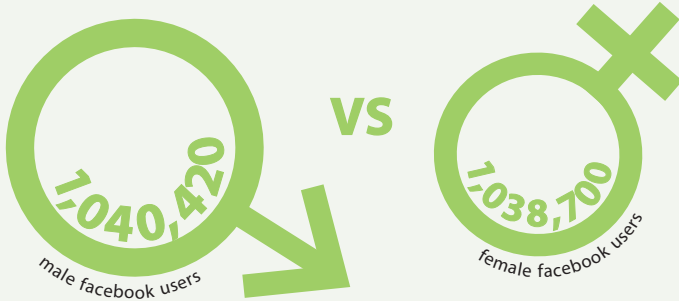


In November 2009, a toilet manufacturer appointed five toilet ambassadors to tweet from loos in New York’s Times Square. They each collected US\$10,000 for six weeks of toilet tweeting.

ONLINE SINGAPORE IN NUMBERS

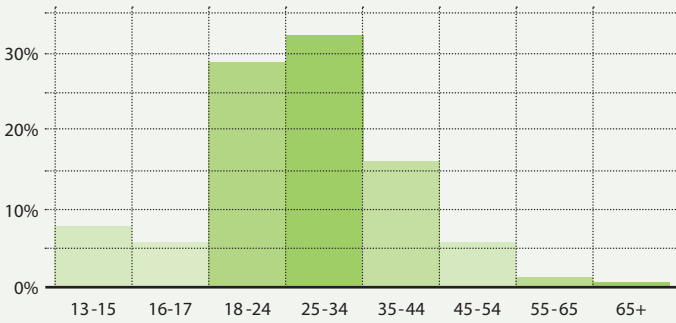
FACEBOOK FEVER

In early 2008, there were only 300,000 or so Singaporean Facebook users. Today there are more than 2 million.



Source: <http://bit.ly/googlecnn>

Who uses facebook

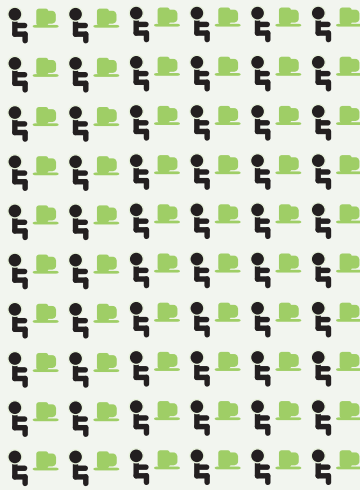


source : <http://bit.ly/facebaker>

Top Facebook app in the world

FARMLIFE

75,469,379 monthly active users



FarmVille players in the US outnumber real farmers 60:1.

TOP 3 MOST

Googled

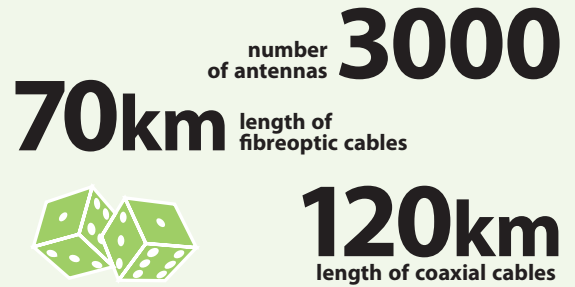


BLOGGERS of 2009

Source: http://bit.ly/google_zeitgest_SG



Who's to know if you're rolling dice at the casino or working real hard on your laptop now with wireless at Marina Bay Sands?



TAKING STOCK : PCs@HOME



NO COMPUTER:

2003: 26% 2009: 17%



1 COMPUTER:

2003: 51% 2009: 35%



2 COMPUTERS OR MORE:

2003: 23% 2009: 48%



source : http://bit.ly/ida_statistics

I DON'T HAVE A PC BECAUSE...

2%

The kids are too young

13%

Money No Enough

14%

Can't teach an old dog new tricks

32%

I don't know how to

39%

There's no need to

source : http://bit.ly/ida_statistics

WARNING : VIRUS DETECTED!



Most common infocomm security measures for business enterprises in 2009.



PROTECT & DETECT

source : http://bit.ly/IDA_enterprises