

Police Scotland recommends software and app updates



Police Scotland is urging people and businesses across the country to always download the latest software and app updates as soon as they are available, as they contain vital security upgrades which protect devices from viruses and hackers.

According to CESG, GCHQ's cyber security arm, this is the most important action people and businesses can take to protect themselves from cybercrime.

The latest statistics, from Ipsos MORI, reveal that the majority of people in Scotland don't always download the latest software updates for their mobile phone (77%) or for their computer (72%), as soon as they are available, despite it taking only a few minutes to do so.

The Ipsos MORI research, also found that the majority of people thought they did not know a lot about the security benefits of downloading the latest software updates for computers (77%) or mobile phones (74%).

Yet it only takes a few minutes to download software and app updates versus the time it can take to recover from a cyber hack. This is why Police Scotland is supporting Cyber Streetwise and asking people to make #quickupdates.

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Detective Superintendent Willie Cravens, Head of Police Scotland's Cybercrime Unit, said: "Many people believe

software updates are purely cosmetic, but this is not always the case. In many instances they also address security vulnerabilities in software, plugging gaps which hackers exploit to gain access to the general public's devices, which range from smartphones and tablets to games consoles, desktop and laptop computers and, increasingly, 'smart' televisions which are essentially computers as well.

"The research also showed that one of the main reasons for people not downloading the latest software updates is that they think it takes too much time. I would urge anyone who has a device – and that is now most of the population – to take the time to do this, as the cost in time and monetary terms of trying to recover from such an attack on their device can be very considerable. In some cases, compromised devices may be made unusable and have to be replaced, so the importance of updating software cannot be emphasised enough."

Lynn Farrar, Chair of Neighbourhood Watch said, "We wholeheartedly support the #quickupdates campaign and we are urging everyone to download software updates on mobiles, laptops and computers as soon as they appear in order to protect against cybercrime. This is such a quick and easy way to protect yourself, your family and your community against hackers it makes sense to get into the habit of doing it as soon as you possibly can."

To find out more, including how to set your device to that it automatically downloads the latest software updates visit <https://www.cyberstreetwise.com/software-updates>