

# e-Safety Newsletter

- Advertising - not creating a better internet!
- Data Mining
- Computing Corner

Edition 18

## *SID 2014....*

Firstly a huge congratulations to South West Grid for Learning (UK Safer Internet Centre) for another hugely successful Safer Internet Day on 11th Feb. So many schools and others doing many fantastic things, the theme this year being, "Let's Create a Better Internet Together."

Personally, and I'm sure for many others, it was a hectic week travelling to different parts of the country speaking to staff,

governors, students and their parents.

Although hectic it was really enjoyable to see so much positivity rather than the usual dark side of e-safety and risk.

This month I share some of my thoughts from the week. Let me know what you got up to and I'll share it in the next edition.

*Alan Mackenzie*

## **Advertising - Not Creating a Better Internet !**

On Safer Internet Day I had the pleasure to be invited to speak to the students (followed by the parents) at Moulsoford Preparatory School in Oxfordshire. I spoke to the students in individual year groups so that the tone and context could be tailored to the age of the children.

I'm not really one for talking "at" the students, I don't think this serves any purpose. Children and young people have a right to voice their opinion and should be able to challenge what I am saying just like adults, so we opted for an open, honest and (hopefully) engaging conversation approach. This can sometimes be hit-and-miss, after all the students don't

know me, I'm just a stranger to them, why should they talk to me?

Thankfully all the year groups were fantastic; we discussed so much such as: what do they like to do on the internet; who with; favourite social networks and why; what things do they like to create and how do they do it?

Engaging conversations such as this can be quite beneficial as you can gently probe and identify any concerns, then either deal with those concerns at the time or de-brief the school, all the time looking for any gaps in knowledge and giving appropriate advice.

A number of things struck me from the day speaking with all the students:

1. They had a fantastic breadth of knowledge and understanding of risk. Not only in terms of what risk is, but also how to respond to risk.
2. Creativity is at the heart of what they enjoy, whether it's finding new ways to play games, new things to do and enjoy.
3. An interesting and almost universal conclusion to each talk was that to create a better internet, they wanted a safer internet. This had a number of areas including trolls, people spoiling a gaming experience, bad language, being spoken to by strangers - but the one that struck me the most - advertising.

The reason advertising struck me the most was that I had been thinking the very same thing only a few days before. Advertising seems to have completely taken over the internet: games, apps, news sites, social networks. Everywhere you go you are inundated with ads, pop-ups, surveys and much more. Frequently these ads are made to look as though they are an integral part of the site, at other times they spoil the whole browsing experience.

Nesta are co-ordinating an EEF funded research project exploring the potential of remote tutoring to support primary children struggling in Maths before the end of Key Stage 2.

They are looking for primary schools in the Birmingham and London areas to join them in exploring the impact of this new technology.

Find out more and sign up to attend the information event.

Either click or copy/paste the following into your browser:

<http://bit.ly/rtrial>

In terms of the students, their concerns were mainly twofold: ads that spoil the gaming experience, such as popping up at a critical part of the game and the hide button is impossible to click; advertisements that are totally inappropriate to the age of the user.

## What's the problem?

As we all know by now, Google and many others collect our personal information for one main purpose - revenue!

If you read last month's newsletter you will have been introduced to "big data" and "the internet of things". The bottom line is this: our personal information and browsing history is worth money to someone. Advertising and marketing on the internet is easy, relatively cheap, and it works. The problem is the very intrusive nature of some of the advertisements, the collection of information that is not always apparent and where (and to who) that data is going to. This is one of the fundamental reasons why we tell children and young people to be careful with what they are posting on the internet, and where (aside

from the obvious safeguarding reasons).

Many people who use a Google email account will already know that Google also scans your emails for information in order to target advertisements at you. This is known as **data mining**. But, as educators, we've always been pretty safe in the knowledge that if you use Google Education accounts they have been free from data mining and free from advertising (if you want).

Or have they? **NO is the answer.**

It appears Google have been very under-handed here and have admitted that they do mine educational accounts. Quite how I feel about this cannot be said publicly!

Shocked? Yes

Surprised? On reflection, no, not really!!

## What does this mean and should I be concerned?

I have always been a big supporter of Google and have recommended to countless schools the pro's of using Google Apps for Education. I know they collect my data, I know they know my browsing history, I know they target advertising at me and whilst it is sometimes annoying it's an unfortunate fact of online life and I accept that.

The old saying, 'nothing in life is free,' is so true here and this is what we have to bear in mind. Everything that is free has a purpose, from those free games and apps (with their in-app advertising) to free services from providers such as Google and many others.

Should you be concerned? That's a difficult question to answer and I think it's relative to the experience and knowledge of the individual, but one thing is for certain - the proliferation of advertising, data mining, ease of in-app purchases and more is spoiling the internet as a whole. Quite what is going to happen with all of this nobody knows, but one thing is for certain, it isn't going to get better. Which is why the education of **everybody** is paramount.

**Be careful with your personal information, be careful what you share, and with whom!**

# Computing Corner

**Mark Anderson**  
**@ICTEvangelist**

In this blog post Mark introduces us to Explain Everything, which is an app that can be used by students to demonstrate knowledge and understanding.

<http://ictevangelist.com/explain-everything-superb-student-feedback/>

**The Digital Leader Network**

A fantastic site and initiative to collaborate and showcase inspirational work that is going on in schools.

<http://www.digitalleadernetwork.co.uk/>

**From Mark Anderson**  
**@ICTEvangelist**

**New Ofsted Guidance and ICT**

<http://ictevangelist.com/new-ofsted-guidance-ict/>

**Simon Finch**  
**@simfin**

**An Introduction to Blogging with Students**

<http://www.digitallyconfident.org/adults/item/an-introduction-to-blogging-with-students#resource>

**Mark Glynn**  
**@glynmark**

**The Comprehensive Google Drive Guide for Teachers and Students - Educational Technology and Mobile Learning**

<http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2014/01/the-comprehensive-google-drive-guide.html>