



CYBERSIDE CHAT

Love isn't the only thing in the air... Apple fixes AirPods' Bluetooth eavesdropping problem.

A flaw was found on Apple AirPods that allowed attackers to connect to your device and even eavesdrop on your conversations. Apple released a new firmware update for AirPods and Beats, so make sure your devices are up-to-date!



AirPods 2 (A2931, A2699, A2698, A3047, A3048, A3049) and an iOS-compatible iPhone or iPad. For full instructions, you can go to www.apple.com/airpods-pro/hearing-health.

Big nostalgia, tiny screen.

TinyTV 2 is a nostalgic novelty – a fully functional mini-TV combining retro charm and modern convenience. This teensy TV has a 1.14-inch screen, working rotary knobs and authentic static effects when changing channels, just like the '80s portable TVs we loved. You can even upload up to 10 hours of your own videos, making it as practical as it is delightful when you're craving a tiny trip down memory lane.

Pay for new stuff with your old stuff!

One of the founders of Postmates is back with a new payment service called Tiptop that lets you pay for online purchases by trading in something old. Soon you'll be able to see the service alongside PayPal and Apple Pay when you check out online and you can use it to trade in anything TV-sized or below (sorry, no husbands) to help pay for something new.

Concerned your spouse is ignoring you? Use AirPods to test their hearing.

Millions of people are living with hearing loss and have no idea, so Apple has designed a convenient way to test our hearing. To take the test, you'll need a specific model of

TRIVIA

In recent years, reported losses to romance scams have surged. How much money was reported lost to romance scams in 2023?



- A. \$765.4 million
- B. \$1.14 billion
- C. \$33.8 million
- D. \$67.9 million

Answer: B. According to the FTC, \$1.14 billion was lost due to romance scams, with median losses of \$2,000 per person – the highest reported loss for any form of impostor scam.

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY: THE COST OF "FREE" BROWSING

Online interactions fuel companies like Google, allowing them to gather data on your habits and location for targeted ads. While these "free" services seem convenient, they come at the cost of your personal information. This trade-off not only makes ads feel invasive but also exposes you to risks like identity theft and scams.

To protect your online privacy, consider these steps:

1. Use Incognito Mode: Prevent browsers from saving history and cookies.

2. Switch Search Engines: Privacy-focused options like DuckDuckGo avoid tracking.

3. Add Privacy Extensions: Block trackers and secure connections with vetted tools.

4. Use a VPN: Encrypt your connection and hide your IP address on public WiFi.

5. Clear Cookies: Limit tracking by managing or deleting cookies regularly.

With simple measures, you can minimize exposure and reclaim control of your digital footprint.



ATTITUDE CHRONICLE

Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier And More Profitably

WHAT'S NEW

The start of 2025 started with bang, not only weather wise (brr has it been cold) but also it looks like everyone has been hitting the ground running. Implementing new policies and updating or creating their Safe Use Policies. Our employee cyber training programs started with tech tips and support with documentation. We will now be adding phishing training, lunch and learns and round table events to help foster a culture of Data Security for your team. The HMA Benefits People and I will be holding joint panel discussion on February 20th the Benefits of an Internal Security Strategy. This will be held at Westney Gardens and the QR Code in this issue is available for you to register for the event. Emma will be at the Young Entrepreneur Committee Curling Funspiel on February 26th with the Whitby Chamber. If you would like to register your team of 4 or include any prizes that highlight your business, email emma@attitudeit.ca. You can find the event info in this issue as well to register.

Our Team is looking forward to connecting even more with our clients and the community this year. Cheers to a successful February in security measures.

Brandon Jones
CEO
Attitude IT



OUR MISSION:

To build a community of Ontario Businesses that have the most secure IT frameworks in place to protect their business to grow and be profitable.

MAKE TAX SEASON LESS MISERABLE

Ah, February – love is in the air and Cupid may just have his arrow pointed toward you and a special someone. But Cupid has competition. It's also tax season and scammers are out looking for their special someone(s), too. As if taxes weren't horrible enough on their own, criminals are devising new ways to trick us into tax scams, with horrific consequences.

According to IRS data, tax scams spike in January and February and intensify through April. Last year, scammers targeted numerous business owners by misrepresenting the Employee Retention Credit (ERC), charging hefty fees for assistance with applications – even for a credit many victims didn't qualify for. So many business owners were attacked that

the IRS set up an ERC withdrawal program to help those who realized they had unknowingly submitted fraudulent claims.

Popular Tax-Time Scams

Tax scams are particularly tricky because no well-meaning taxpayer wants to make a mistake and get in trouble with the government. Scammers and cybercriminals prey on our fear of compliance issues by posing as IRS agents, tax software providers or even colleagues in financial departments, with urgent messages demanding payment or Social Security numbers.

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It may be only February, but these scammers are likely already in your inbox. Take a few minutes to read about these common tax-time scams and what you can do to prevent them.

Phishing And Smishing Scams

Scammers love pretending to be the IRS to get your personal information. They'll send fake e-mails or texts promising refunds or threatening legal action, hoping you'll click on their links or share sensitive details. These scams don't just target individuals – they often go after tax pros and businesses because those can give access to loads of valuable data.

How to prevent it: Never click on links or reply to unexpected messages claiming to be from the IRS. If something feels off, report suspicious e-mails to phishing@irs.gov, and always verify messages directly with the IRS through official channels.

Online Account "Help"

Scammers are targeting taxpayers by offering help setting up an IRS online account. Their goal is to steal your personal tax and financial

information, which they can use for identity theft. These criminals may pretend to be "helpful" third parties, tricking you into handing over sensitive details like Social Security numbers or IDs, which they can use to file fake tax returns and steal refunds.

How to prevent it: Only create your online account directly through IRS.gov and avoid any unsolicited offers for third-party help. If someone reaches out offering to assist, it's probably a scam.

Fuel Tax Credit Scams

The IRS is warning taxpayers about popular scams pushing Fuel Tax Credit claims, which are only available for off-highway business or farming use. Scammers will mislead you by fabricating documents or receipts for fuel to make false claims, often charging hefty fees in the process. While these scammers profit, you are left with the risk of facing IRS scrutiny and potential penalties.

How to prevent it: If you're considering claiming a Fuel Tax Credit, make sure you're eligible, as incorrectly claiming it could lead to serious consequences like fines or criminal charges. Always consult a qualified tax professional to ensure your claims are legitimate.



You Know The Saying: If It Sounds Too Good To Be True, It Probably Is

Many of these scams are plastered all over the Internet, often with promises of tax savings that sound too good to be true. But the old saying still rings true: If something seems too good, it probably is. These schemes might look tempting, but they can land you in hot water with the IRS and lead to serious legal trouble. This year, make tax season a little less miserable by sticking to legitimate, proven methods. You can also check out the IRS Dirty Dozen list with details on all the common tax scams and tips on how to stay safe this tax season.

Cant Miss Events:

The Benefits of an Internal Security Strategy

Join us to learn practical strategies you can implement in your business to ensure compliance, protect your employees' data, and optimize access to benefit resources.

FEBRUARY 20TH, 2025
3PM PRESENTATION
4PM SOCIAL HOUR

WESTNEY GARDENS
1010 WESTNEY RD NORTH
AJAX, ON L1T 0P3



MEGAN O'SHAUGHNESSY
Employee Benefits Consultant



BRANDON JONES
CEO



REGISTER HERE!



Don't miss it - secure your spot today!



STOCK THE SCHOOL SHOP

High School Tech Classroom Material Drive



Do you have scrap materials?
Do you have slightly used equipment?
Do you have extra sets of tools?
Looking for ways to reduce your waste and recycling costs?



- Carpentry/Woodworking
- Manufacturing Technology
- Transportation
- Welding
- Culinary
- Electrician
- Engineering
- Communication Technology
- Plumbing

School budgets are limited, and with the pressure of hosting more students in trades and technology, let's help stock the classroom for state of the art learning.

Your partnership is important!

Reduce your waste and recycling by donating unused items, over stock, and/or when you upgrade your small equipment, donate the old.



JOIN TOGETHER TO HELP STOCK OUR HIGH SCHOOL TECHNICAL CLASSROOMS

Flip the page over to see how you can get involved!

Program Partners



ATTITUDE IT
Keeping Your Technology On Course

