Technology In Our Lives

Simple Tips To Keep Your E-Mail Messages Secure

(NAPSA)—When you click "send" on an e-mail to your customer, client or friend, more people than just the intended recipient can read it. E-mail is such a common form of communication that we sometimes forget how easily e-mail content can be viewed by others. Whether you are e-mailing clients, your lawyer or even your child's teacher, you should treat your message as a confidential communication.

Consider your e-mail messages to be much like a postcard that you drop in the mail. Like a postcard, your messages and any attachments can be viewed by anyone involved in transporting them from you to your intended recipients. If you've ever e-mailed your Social Security number, credit card numbers or other sensitive information, then you need to take steps to protect your e-mail content—otherwise, your sensitive information could fall into the wrong hands. You can help to safeguard your e-mail by following these five tips:

• Be aware of the risks. Keep in mind that ISPs may store e-mail messages and attachments that pass through their mail servers, possibly for months. In addition, hackers can often tap into e-mail during transmission or by gaining access to e-mail accounts.

• Don't send vital business or personal information in an unencrypted e-mail. Without encryption, private information such as customer information, contracts or passwords can be viewed or stolen.

• Use a secure, encrypted e-mail product to send sensitive business or personal information. When you e-mail sensitive information, make sure you use a product such as MessageGuard™ from

Your e-mail messages may not be as private as you think, especially if you're sending them from a public place.

Network Solutions. Affordable and easy to use, MessageGuard is a subscription service that allows you to send and receive encrypted e-mail and attachments with your existing e-mail account using Outlook® or Outlook® Express e-mail accounts or though Network Solutions' Webmail.

• Never reply to e-mails requesting your personal information. Be sure that you know who sent the e-mail: Scammers can "spoof" the sender's address, making it appear that the e-mail came from a trusted source such as PayPal or eBay. If you are not expecting the e-mail or if the sender is unknown, do not share personal information.

• Don't leave your e-mail open for others to view. Log off your computer when you walk away from your desk at home or in the office. Consider passwords for multiple users of one machine, particularly if you are not using password-protected Web access for your e-mail.

For more information about MessageGuard, visit http://messageguard.networksolutions.com.