

Personal Security and Identity Theft Expert Says GPS Tracking Will Curb the Rate of Laptop Computer Loss and Theft

(BOSTON, Mass. – Sept. 25, 2006 - IDTheftSecurity.com) News of the widespread loss of Commerce Department laptops since 2001—many assigned to the Census Bureau—has provided possible hints to explain the boom in identity theft seen these past few years, according to an authority in the field. Robert Siciliano, a personal security and identity theft expert, said the Commerce Department’s revelation of more than a thousand laptops lost, together with previously publicized research and the theft of laptops from other firms, illustrated the need for companies to turn to solutions such as GPS tracking to curb the rate of laptops being irretrievably stolen or lost.

“When you lose more than a thousand laptops—many of them containing Census Bureau data—less-than-scrupulous individuals are bound to find the information useful,” said Siciliano, who provides consumer education solutions to Fortune 500 companies and their clients. “With Census Bureau data in hand, the identity thief’s puzzle is a particularly easy one to complete.”

The Privacy Learning Institute recently featured Siciliano on its Web site. This year, he has discussed identity theft on CNBC’s “On the Money” multiple times, on NBC’s “Today Show,” and on FOX News. President of IDTheftSecurity.com, Siciliano is also author of “The Safety Minute: 01.”

Siciliano advised organizations that use laptop computers to consider solutions from companies such as MyLaptopGPS (www.MyLaptopGPS.com), whose product of the same name not only tracks any stolen laptop worldwide via the Internet, but also silently removes important files once the machine is stolen—returning them to the rightful user while placing them out of the criminal’s reach.

As reported by the *Associated Press*, officials at the Commerce Department have released figures showing the loss of more than 1,100 laptops since the year 2001. More than half, according to reports, had been assigned to the Census Bureau. According to Siciliano, the news was no surprise:

- In May, the theft of a laptop from the Veterans Affairs Department jeopardized millions of U.S. veterans’ identities. A few months later, another laptop theft there put the personal information of additional veterans at risk.
- In June, Hotels.com reported the loss of a company laptop containing the financial records of about 243,000 customers.
- Also in June, Equifax Inc., one of the three major credit reporting companies, suffered the theft of a laptop computer containing identifying information on the company’s 2,500 U.S. employees.

Research released in August by the Ponemon Institute LLC found that the frequency of laptop theft in the workplace is, in fact, high. Furthermore, findings from an October 2005 report by CREDANT Technologies indicated that as many as 90 percent of missing

company laptops house sensitive data, with a large percentage of these being noncompliant with California SB 1386's encryption data requirements.

"Laptop security needs a revamp," said Siciliano. "These machines are, apparently, difficult for organizations to track and keep. GPS and other technologies would go a long way in curbing the rate of laptop loss and theft."

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Identity theft affects us all, which is why Robert Siciliano, president of IDTheftSecurity.com, makes it his mission to provide consumer education solutions on identity theft to Fortune 500 companies and their clients. A leader of personal safety and security seminars nationwide, Siciliano has been featured on CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, "The Suze Orman Show," "ABC News with Sam Donaldson," "The Montel Williams Show," "Maury Povich," "Sally Jesse Raphael," and "The Howard Stern Show."

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