

Top Tips on How to Avoid Losing Your Life if You Lose Your Smartphone at the Christmas Bash

It's a fact that people lose more than just their reputation at the annual Christmas party with thousands of mobile devices getting reported lost the morning after the office/workplace party with a sore head and a guilty conscience.

Stop and think for a minute what could happen to your personal or corporate life if your smartphone - such as the iPhone or Nokia N9x series - with no security on it got into the wrong hands.

Do you have a password on the handset that would deter an opportunist?

Are your emails, passwords, contact names and other security details lying on your phone for all to see at just the click of a switch?

Could someone pick it up and assume your identity?

If so, what can you do to make sure that you if you do lose your mobile phone or smartphone you don't lose your entire personal and corporate identity with it?

Tip One - Back-up your smartphone's data - download any important data back onto your computer with all your contact names and numbers - imagine how lost you'd be without all of these contacts.

Tip Two - If you have important and sensitive data on your smartphone that is to do with work or you hold clients details on it, then under the data protection act you are required to adequately protect this information. Therefore, get your IT department to encrypt your smartphone or any mobile device that is owned by the company, they can do this remotely - then you've nothing to worry about because no-one apart from yourself will ever be able to read it.

Tip Three - Use a strong password on your smartphone, just as you would on your laptop or work PC which combines numbers, letters and symbols.

Tip Four - Put your name and number with details of a reward on the smartphone if found and returned.

NB - This will make sure a mercenary - sorry, sympathetic - person returns the handset to you.

Tip Five - Use your smartphone's security features - such as the Personal Identification Number (PIN) number which only you know to stop others getting access to it!

Tip Six - Use your head - don't keep data on your phone that others could use against you - such as revealing pictures.

NB - this tip does not apply if you are (a) blackmailing the person being revealed, (b) have pictures of a celeb you can possibly sell to the News of the World, or (c) have pictures of Paris Hilton, as everyone's seen all of her naughty bits anyway.

Tip Seven - Don't save old SMS or emails on your handset that you don't need anymore - you'd be surprised how many people keep their default password emails on their mobiles and other hugely sensitive information like PINs, bank account details or passwords!

NB - the tip about bank account details does not apply if you are so stinking rich that you won't miss the odd million going walkabout...

Tip Eight - Check your message folders such as drafts, saved and outbox as there will be lots of information you just don't need to keep there. Look at your call list - delete any numbers you no longer need.



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NB - this tip does not apply if you are a celebrity, as your phone is going to get nicked or hacked, and the contents - even if deleted (hah!) - sold to Russell Brand's scriptwriter for him to publicly ridicule you on your answerphone.

Tip Nine - Physically mark your handset with personal information. This will greatly reduce the second-hand value of the mobile if it is stolen.

Tip Ten - Record your IMEI: Every mobile phone has a unique 15-digit electronic serial number that can be referenced by dialing *#06#.

NB - if you can remember your IMEI, please let us know how you do this, as most people cannot remember London phone numbers which are ten digits long.

Tip Eleven - Notify your network carrier AND the police immediately in the event of loss or theft. Tell them your IMEI number (now that you've logged it down, or if you are a clever clogs and can remember it) and any other identifying features on your phone.

NB - this tip does not apply if you've won the Lotto and are so stinking rich/drunk that you wouldn't notice the GDP of small South American country exiting your bank account on the supposedly protected direct debit system. Just try getting your money back from the bank - hah!..

Tip Twelve - Don't leave your device open to access (e.g. leaving Bluetooth or WiFi on, visible and unsecured).

NB - this tip also applies at the Christmas Party, the following pub and night-club, unless you want to raise your chances of getting lucky with some geeky weirdo that thinks hacking your mobile is funny.