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ACCAN Cyber-Security Roundtable for People with Disabilities

7 June 2010

Background

In 2009, Australians reported losing $69.9 million dollars as a result of online scams[1].

As part of this year's National Cyber Security Awareness Week, ACCAN hosted a Cyber-Security Roundtable for People with Disabilities on 7 June 2010 at Parliament House, Canberra.

ACCAN invited our members as well as representatives from Government and Industry to discuss Cyber-Security issues that are affecting people with disabilities. The Roundtable consisted of three sessions: Protecting everyone online; Online accessibility; and Targeted consumer education.

Speakers included:

- Col Brokenshire, Brain Injury Australia
- Josie Hodgetts, Deaf Society of Western Australia
- Mark Pattison, National Council on Intellectual Disability
- Kenny Johar, Vision Australia
- Kylie Johnson, Livewire
- Stuart Strathdee, Microsoft, Chief Security Advisor
- Daniel Feiler, eBay Australia
- Scott Hollier, Media Access Australia
- Sean Duca, McAfee
- Lloyd Borrett, AVG
- Brenton Philp, SCAMwatch (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission)
- Suzanne Shipard (Australian Communications and Media Authority)
- Charlie Brown, Today Show Technology Editor

Below is a summary of the day's discussion.

Vulnerability

- People with acquired brain injuries can experience memory loss and may find it difficult to remember online passwords and PIN numbers.

- There are many threats for people with vision impairments which do not necessarily affect those without disabilities. These include:

- **Luring attacks** (whereby the individual is lured to another website unknowingly)
- **Site impersonation** (looks like a familiar site but may be misspelled, such as goggle instead of google). People who use assistive technology may not be able to differentiate the site as they cannot scan the whole page but can only view section by

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[1] Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, *Update: Issue 28, April 2010,* p. 17

section which does not necessarily make the impersonated website obvious. This is dangerous as some people may enter bank or other personal details in what they believe to be a known and trusted site.

- **Cross-site scripting** is a threat where a Trojan is installed on the individual's computer. There is no auditory indication of a problem underway and therefore, a person using assistive technology would have no way of knowing of the threat's existence.
- **Viruses** are not accessible and pose a threat to people who are blind or have vision impairment, as screen-readers cannot notify the person of an attack.

Confidence barriers

- People with intellectual disabilities do not always have a lot of personal confidence online due to reasons such as poor written language and may fear abuse online.
    o How can people with intellectual disabilities be included in Gov 2.0 if they do not have the confidence to be engaged in online public forums?
- Conversations may be a challenge for people with disabilities. For instance, people with acquired brain injuries may find it difficult to explain a cyber threat in writing or verbally.
- On a positive note, people with disabilities can feel less isolated by joining online communities. The Roundtable heard about the case of one person with cerebral palsy who believed she was the only one with this disability, until she joined Livewire's online 'safe' community.

Gaps in awareness

- 64% of Deaf people use the Internet but do not know who to contact about scams.
- Session one saw the presenters discussing current issues faced by people with disabilities in relation to threats. Session two saw presenters from Industry explaining solutions to these online protection concerns. There appears to be a gap between the current protection information available and people with disabilities' awareness of it.

Improved accessibility will lead to improved security (Universal Design)

- The idea of universal design of websites, making all websites accessible to everyone, was discussed. This would greatly impact the lives of 20% of the population who have a disability.
- Government Departments will implement the WCAG 2.0 guidelines to all of their websites by 2015, however there are still accessibility functions the Government can apply now, such as AUSLAN videos and videos with captions.

- At present, many people with disabilities are not even aware that they may have a virus or a scam is present, due to the lack of accessibility of websites whereby they cannot determine such threats exist.
- The 'Stay Smart Online' Government initiative includes six tips everyone can follow to protect themselves online. Mark Pattison of National Council on Intellectual disability noted that his staff had trouble following the first three tips, so how can other people with intellectual disabilities follow these? A better way to get protection messages across may be through alternative multimedia formats, such as videos or video conferencing.
- Website security checks - Websites that ask for security checks are not always compatible with screen readers, making it difficult for people with vision impairments to navigate through this requirement.
- Cyber-security does not only relate to computers. Smart phones and touch screens are the rising technologies. The cyber-security and accessibility issues of these devices must be addressed.

Suggested action Items

- ACCAN or Industry representatives to host an information session about free or inexpensive security protection software options for people with disabilities.

- Stay Smart Online to produce accessible videos targeting vulnerable communities. For example, by funding the Deaf Society of WA's research report once complete. A summary of the report is to be provided in AUSLAN video that is also captioned in accordance with

- Seek commitment from security software providers to offer accessible customer support for free anti-virus software.

- Software vendors to provide information about a range of online protection solutions for people with disabilities, particularly those who require screen readers. This information should include pre-validation of security to overcome a CAPTCHA (security check) which screen-readers may not be able to read. This also includes saving known websites to 'favourites' so the chance of arriving at an impersonation site is minimised greatly.

- SCAMwatch is under review by the ACCC to increase its usability. The recommendations from ACCAN, its members and other disability consumer advocates can be incorporated into this review.

Aspirations

- A 'power group' consisting of government, software vendors (Microsoft, AVG etc.) and consumer advocates that will work together to provide suitable educational

tools for people with all disabilities.

- The Government will be implementing WCAG 2.0 by 2015 to all of its websites. The Government should take necessary action to provide Deaf people with the opportunity to respond to Gov 2.0 in AUSLAN.

- Universal Design of websites – ensuring that all websites are accessible to everyone i.e. complying with the WCAG Standards.

- Cultural shift in incorporating Universal Design in cyber safety products.

- Software vendors to work with ACCAN to identify opportunities to fund research about Cyber-Security issues for people with disabilities.

Consumers and Industry speak

"Information that is available on the internet is not available in our first language [AUSLAN]." **– Josie Hodgetts, Deaf Society of WA**

"...losing my independence was not something that I dealt with particularly well at that point in time [however] with the combination of a few things, awareness through education and that is education presented to me a format that I can access; the collaborative effort between manufacturers and with the support of the government, I do feel I have been able to regain some of my independence." **– Kenny Johar, Vision Australia**

"One of the things I think is the biggest technology that really could prove very useful to many of the different groups represented here today is a lot of work that many companies in the industry - not just Microsoft - are doing around identity management." **Stuart Strathdee, Microsoft**

"One of the really big issues that people with disabilities run into is the fact that there is no-one at other end of the line to support them in getting proper protection on their computers." **– Scott Hollier, Media Access Australia**

"I didn't ask to have this program installed on to my computer yet it was [and] I didn't have any means of getting rid of it, because it wasn't speaking to me enough to be able to take it off...Yes, it's frustrating for everybody, but in some cases where some people can do something about it, we can't." Zel Iscel, **National Ethnic Disabilities Alliance**