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How to Protect Yourself While on Social Networking Sites

According to industry experts, in 2009, social networking site users age 55 plus grew by 923 percent, from less than 1 million to almost 10 million. With this growing trend, users can enjoy connecting with friends and family, but need to use caution to protect their privacy while online.

Consider the following tips while participating in a social networking site:

- Only submit the required email contact information. Do not include your home address and telephone number.
- Modify the privacy settings so only your accepted friends may view your profile. Fraudsters look at public profiles and try to use the information posted for their gain.
- Only accept friend requests from friends and family you know and trust. Scam Artists open fake or fraudulent profiles just to get information.
- Beware of phishing campaigns. Similar to an email spoof, these emails appear to have legitimate log-in pages in the body of the message. They're hoping to access your personal information, including password or account number.
- To thwart hacking into your social networks, pick passwords that are difficult – at least eight characters and a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols.
- If you use a shared computer to log onto a social network – similar to ones at work or the library – be sure to completely log off when finished.
- Finally, the best defense is a good offense. Be sure to install the latest security software and keep it updated.

Be sure to report any security concerns you might have with your social networking site to the administrators, so they can better learn how to protect their site.

Prevent Financial Elder Abuse!

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