

Identity Theft or the Plague of Modern Society

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Identity theft is undoubtedly a major problem of our modern times, especially in areas where technology is used consistently, hence there's a higher opportunity for identity thefts. Recent surveys show that in the United States only, \$57 billion have been stolen this year, which is a \$6 billion increase since last year.

But identity theft does a lot more damage than simply resulting in the loss of money. Studies show that the total number of victims of identity theft in 2006 spent over 600 hours trying to resolve their problem without success. This severely cut down the productivity of the companies they worked for and decreased their focusing ability. In addition, identity theft has an emotional impact which can be equal to that caused by a violent burglary.

In one particular case, a victim of identity theft reported that her name and identity were used in acquiring goods and services of over \$55,000. This resulted in her getting an arrest record and eventually, a prison record. The case was even more severe, since the person that had "borrowed" her identity also engaged in drug traffic and other illegal activities which shed a new light on the victim's arrest record. Of course, after a while, the real identity thief was found and the victim's name was cleared, but the trauma of being arrested out of the blue for something they had no knowledge of and thrown in the Chicago Federal Prison remained.

Although the United States and their solid economy and technological levels are a haven for identity thieves, other parts of the World are also affected severely by this plague. For example, the United Kingdom reported £2 billion losses towards identity theft each year, although these numbers were mildly contested by some non-governmental organizations arguing that they were manipulated by the government to force the introduction of national ID cards. Australia's records show a rough identity theft fraud of over AUS\$4 million per year.

Because of the growing unrest caused by identity-theft, the US Federal Trade Commission has formed a set of precautions and recommendations that are to be used in preventing getting your identity stole. A few of the most important points of this precautions book include the shredding of documents and paperwork containing personal information after they are used, never giving out personal information without knowing exactly who you are dealing with, using protection programs for your computer (such as anti viruses, anti spyware / adware programs, firewalls, etc), not keeping personal information out in the open and tracking your financial records in order to spot any discrepancies.

It's also very important to report identity theft as soon as you have discovered it, for two reasons. The first reason is obviously to stop the thief from doing too much damage while he has control over your personal information, with the second one being the fact that it's a lot easier to track an identity theft fraud when the trail is still "hot". Knowing these things are guaranteed to protect you from being an identity theft victim and the whole issue should not be taken lightly, unless of course you fancy the idea of getting an arrest record because someone else was buying drugs with the help of your stolen identity. More resources on identity theft protection and tips on preventing identity theft please see our website. Also learn the basic things related to paper shredders by visiting our related website, Paper-shredder-expert.com