



Password

Best practice in passwords for sports governing bodies

What you need to know about passwords to keep yourself and your sports governing body more secure online.

As a sports governing body, if you have multiple email users, online platforms and user accounts for both staff and, particularly, non-staff members of the organisation, for example volunteers, encouraging or even enforcing good password practice across your staff and membership is strongly recommended.

Why is password security important?

News of cyberattacks and data breaches have become commonplace, and the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) is now in full effect, delivering a raised awareness for the individual, of both the importance of keeping their data safe as well as the right to control their personal data in the hands of others. We have reached a watershed moment in IT security. However, some of the most basic yet crucial measures are still being overlooked – such as password security.

Passwords are the fundamental failsafe in the security of your digital devices and the first line of defence when accessing on-premise or cloud-based services, such as a CRM system or Office 365 account.

What makes a good password?

Even now, many of us are still using unsophisticated passwords and basic login credentials, which severely compromise the security of our computers and online accounts, making us susceptible to cybercrime, fraud and identity theft.

According to a recent study by security researchers, 41q, “Password” is still one of the most commonly used passwords in the UK, despite all the warnings.

It's important for any organisation to maintain a good password etiquette.

When creating a sophisticated password, you should follow the guidelines below and create different passwords for each account you have:

- Passwords should consist of 12-14 characters
- Avoid singular, full words
- Utilise both uppercase and lowercase letters, as well as numbers
- Use special characters, but don't use them to replace letters like '@dm1n' instead of 'admin'

How can I manage passwords easily?

We understand that it can be difficult to manage your passwords, but the importance of setting strong credentials should not be underestimated. A password vault or password manager service may be a new idea to you, but it will make it easier for you to keep your systems and accounts safe.

Brands, such as LastPass, 1Password or Dashlane, will help you set and manage complex passwords for all your accounts. They do this by securely storing the passwords for all your online accounts. The service will generate strong passwords for each of your accounts – making them secure – and these can then be accessed with just one set of login details. Simply log into the vault, select the account you wish to access, and the vault will log you in.

Sounds simple? Well it is, and it could fundamentally change the relationship you have with login details and – most importantly – make your accounts more secure.

What can I do to make my systems more secure?

Increasingly, a password and username alone are not sufficient – no matter how complex it is.

Multi-factor authentication is a login process in which the user must provide multiple pieces of information, to gain access to the system. Instigating a multi-factor authentication process within your IT infrastructure is a great way to enhance the security of systems and data.

Microsoft Office 365 offers a multi-factor authentication facility that includes a layer of physical authentication – whereby a text message is sent to the user's phone with a randomly generated access code. Adding this element to the login process dramatically increases the level of security and significantly reduces the risk of an account being breached.

Microtrading can advise on and facilitate the implementation of an enhanced and more secure login process for your IT system, including multi-factor authentication.

For more information and advice

Microtrading would advise any business owner or CEO considering how to improve the IT security of their organisation to get in touch and discuss their requirements with one of our security experts.

You can call **Andrew McLellan, Senior Business Advisor** on **0121 784 0077** or email am@microtrading.co.uk to get help and discuss your needs in more detail. Also, visit our website www.microtrading.co.uk and news page for the latest updates on technology and IT security.

