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Season's Greetings
and
Happy New Year 2015

FEBRUARY MEETINGS

**OPEN's Annual General Meeting will be held on
Wednesday February 4th, 2015 at 1:00 pm.**

The main items of business will be the Election of Office-bearers and Committee for the 2015 year, and presentation of the Annual Financial Reports.

I will remind you that our Club is operated and administered solely by club members so it is in your interest to contribute to the running of the club.

A short monthly meeting will follow the AGM.

The Annual General Meeting of the Launceston Computer Group (LCG) will be held on Wednesday February 4th at 7:30 pm.

This meeting will ratify the business conducted at the OPEN AGM in the afternoon as well as conducting Election of Office-bearers specific to the LCG.

Newstream Articles

Deadline : 10 Days before Meeting

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Membership

Single \$20, Family \$30 (Includes Email edition Newstream)

Printed & Posted Newsletter \$20 extra

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LCG Committee 2014/15

President: Janet Headlam

Vice President: Ivan Turmine

Secretary: Iris Meek

Treasurer: Dennis Murray

Ass. Treasurer: Laraine Rist

PC Librarian: Vacant

Mac Librarian: Vacant

Newstream Editor: Ron Baker

<mailto:editor@lcg.org.au>

Public Officer: Judy Hall

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen

<mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>

Auditor: Ron Baker

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek

"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-Ordinator: Robert Tierney

LCG Committee: Glenn Gilpin, Reinhard von

Samorzewski, Eleanor Horder, Bruce

Dineen

OPEN Committee 2014/15

O.P.E.N. Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.

Responsible for the smooth running of the Centre on a daily basis

O.P.E.N. Chairperson: Laraine Rist.

Chair all meetings of OPEN and ensure that they run smoothly

O.P.E.N. Vice Chairperson: Robert Tierney.

Chair meeting when the Chairperson is unavailable.

O.P.E.N. Minute Secretary: Heather Loffel.

Handles all incoming and outgoing communications

Responsible for the documentation and distribution of all meeting minutes

Treasurer: Dennis Murray.

Responsible for all monies and banking

Assistant Treasurer: Laraine Rist.

Help the Treasurer where necessary.

Newsletter Editor: Dennis Murray.

Publicity Officer: Iris Meek.

Responsible for all advertising

Membership Co-ordinator: Eleanor Horder.

Keep Membership database up to date.

Co-ordinator O-learn: Eleanor Horder

Tutor Co-ordinator: Laraine Rist, Robert Tierney & Dennis Murray.

Keep regular contact with Tutors to bring ideas and concerns to meetings

Maintenance Co-ordinators: Dennis Murray.

Responsible for the maintenance and repairs to all computer equipment

"V.I.C.T.O.R." Co-ordinator: Robert Tierney.

Webmaster/Content: Tom Olsen. **<mailto:webmaster@lcg.org.au>**

OPEN Committee: Janet Headlam, Karia Wicks, Sandra Viney,

Kay Dawson.

OPEN NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2014–15

DATES TO REMEMBER FROM NOW UNTIL FEBRUARY 2015

Thursday, December 18	Last classes for 2014
Friday, December 19	Christmas Lunch 12 noon At Sunnyhill, Ravenswood
Monday, January 5, 2015	Summer School commences
Friday, January 23, 2015	Summer School finishes
Monday, January 26, 2015 Australia Day	Scheduled classes for 2015 commence. Yes, the club will be open on this day.
Wednesday, January 28, 2015	All day Family History clas- ses. Morning and afternoon sessions.
Wednesday, February 4, 2015 Morning session	How to make effective back- ups of your personal infor- mation, with Dennis
Wednesday, February 4, 2015 Afternoon	1:00 pm Annual General Meeting followed by usual monthly meeting
Wednesday, February 4, 2015 Evening	7:30 pm Annual General Meeting of our parent body the Launceston Computer Group.
Monday, February 9, 2015	Late afternoon class re- sumes at 3:30 pm

NEWSTREAM CHANGES

Those of you who read the November issue of the newsletter may have noted that our long-serving Newstream editor Ron Baker announced that he will not be seeking re-election to the position.

Unless there are any other members interested in taking over Ron's duties I have made a suggestion that the club could consider revising the format of Newstream so that it focuses predominantly on 'local content' i.e. subjects that are of interest and relevant to members' day-to-day computing needs.

In essence Newstream would be an extension of the OPEN Newsletter, with additional content that reflects the changing and increasing nature of members' computing interests such as iPads and iPhones, Android tablets and smart-phones, and other new technologies. Of course the additional content would require contributions from people other than the current 'editorial staff'.

Newsletter Availability

There is an old saying that goes something like this ...
*"Buy a man a fish, and you will feed him for one day ...
teach him how to fish and he can feed himself for life!"*

That's my roundabout way of explaining why those of you who believed you were on an e-mailing list for the OPEN section of the newsletter haven't received anything for two to three months.

It's difficult enough keeping our main membership database up to date without someone having to take on the additional task of maintaining a separate database for newsletter recipients.

So hopefully I can teach you how to 'fish' for the newsletter yourselves. It's easy — you use an 'inter-net' and cast it in the direction of **www.lcg.org.au** and look for the Newstream link. You can then choose whether to read it online, download it your computer, or print it out. Ask a tutor for assistance if needed.

Dennis

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★ **VICTOR PHONE NUMBER 0408 174 235** ★
★ **Contact the Coordinator Rob Tierney for** ★
★ **assistance with computer problems at home** ★
★ **(Bookings are subject to availability of tutors.)** ★

VENUE TELEPHONE NUMBER

The club telephone is available during class hours.

******* 6343 4928 *******

Members and tutors can be contacted at the clubrooms **during class hours** by telephoning the number shown above.

Monday to Friday 10am – 3pm

Tuesday evenings 7pm–9 pm

The next issue of the Newsletter will be for February 2015, and will be published on or about January 28, 2015.

NEW FAMILY HISTORY RESOURCE

Released in 2014 this new resource is a collection of all the information from the archives web-site but now includes digital images of each record, including the following :

Births	Marriages	Deaths
Wills	Arrivals and Departures	
Census records	Convict records	Inquests

More information will be added over time.

Your convict record will take you to the immediate record without spending an hour sifting through a book or names. If at first you do not find the correct record try clicking on the next page or two.

The web address for this resource is very difficult to remember so I suggest you try the following procedure to access the site.

Type **'Tasmania Names Index'** into Google and when the search-list appears click on :

LINC Tasmania Online—Name Indexes

Scroll down the left-hand side panel and click :

Tasmania Names Index

Type in a surname and select records-type or year-range to refine your search, or enter a full-name in the following format : **smith,john**

Happy Searching!

NEW WAR RECORDS WHICH YOU CAN EDIT AND UPDATE.

"Discovering Anzacs"

<http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au/>

Be aware that misinformation may have been provided by others.

Judy Hall

OPEN NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2014–15

FAMILY HISTORY 2015

Our 2015 classes will start off with a 'double-header' on **Wednesday, January 2015.**

Session 1 in the morning

10:00 am to 12:00 noon

Session 2 in the afternoon

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

As demonstrated in the column to the left new information is being added to our resources on an on-going basis to help you trace your family's origins.

Contact the club for more information.

Classes limited to 8 people.

Judy Hall, Margaret G and Sandra V will return in 2015 to conduct these informative sessions.

EFFECTIVE BACK-UPS OF YOUR PERSONAL DATA

Wednesday February 4th 2015 at 10:00 am

"Lose all my data? It will never happen to me!"

This belief may be the reason why many members don't make 'security copies' (or back-ups) of personal information on a regular basis.

Sadly though, it does happen, and one of our members was on the 'receiving end' early in December. There was a (partially) happy ending with a lot of data being recovered, but a lengthy process was required.

If you do regularly back-up your data are you confident that you can easily access the information? Are you sure that your automatic back-up data is transferrable to another computer if the need arose?

If you have any doubts ask Dennis on Feb 3rd.

STEPTOE COMPUTING"

Our club is a very good 'corporate citizen' in terms of its capacity to re-use and recycle old computer equipment.

On several occasions in the past I have commented that almost any old computer or piece of equipment may have some component in it that can be used to upgrade one of the club computers or to provide a facility for one of our members or friends.

The latest piece of equipment that has found its way into service at the club is a **Dell E4310 'lop-top'**. Originally this was a fully operational laptop computer until the screen was accidentally broken and the battery was removed. It was donated to the club by an in-law of one of our members after it was deemed to be of no further use.

But on inspection this computer was found to be of significant value. Apart from the broken screen and the fact that it needs to be plugged in to mains power in order to operate, this a very useful piece of equipment.

Imagine having to go out and buy a Windows 8 tower with an Intel I5 CPU, and then purchase a full version of MS Office 2010—you wouldn't get much change out of \$500, if any.

So when you wander past the place where the OPEN 10 tower use to sit don't be fooled by the weird looking concoction of 'half a laptop' hooked up to an external monitor, with wireless keyboard and mouse.

This is in every way a real computer that does all the stuff that a tower can do and in all likelihood is one of the most capable machines in the room.

And the only cost the club has incurred is the \$20 cost of an Express Card that provides two extra USB ports. All the other bits are equipment that the club has had on hand or have been donations.

Dennis

OPEN Session Times

At Studioworks, 1 Pipeworks Rd, L'ton

Standard Sessions \$6.00

[Some special tutorial materials may incur additional charges]

Monday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Basics and Beyond
	3:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Beginners Class
Tuesday	10 am –12	O-Learn & Beginners [all day]
	1 pm – 3 pm	Mac [all day]
	7 pm—9 pm	Basics (Night Class)
Wednesday		Special sessions or Meetings
		As for mornings (see rosters)
Thursday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	General & Beginners
Friday	10 am –12	General & Beginners
	1 pm – 3 pm	Beginners Class

OPEN NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2014–15

SPECIAL WEDNESDAY SESSIONS

Please register on the sheets – numbers may be limited

Date			
December 17	10 am—12 noon	Pre_Christmas Scam Alert FREE information session	Dennis Murray will conduct a review of the scams that have affected members in 2014, and those that you may experience during the holiday period.
	No class in the afternoon	The Facebook follow-up session that was to be conducted has been cancelled.	NETWORK PRINTING TIP - Your laptop or tablet has to be connected to the OPEN-CFS network if you want to use a club printer.
December 18	Morning and Afternoon	Last classes for 2014	If you are using your own portable broadband 'dongle' you don't have access to network facilities
Monday January 5 2015	Summer School Sessions mornings and afternoons at the usual times.		Some of our tutors may be on holiday so please check that there will be someone on duty who can assist you.
Friday January 23 2015	Remember that you can come along any day as often as you like—not just on your regularly scheduled day.		NETWORK DVD TRICK— Some laptops, and most netbooks and Windows tablets don't have a DVD drive. But you can often install software on those devices by 'sharing' the DVD drive on one of the club's computers. Ask Dennis how!
Monday January 26	Regular classes for 2015 commence		However the late afternoon Beginners Class will not resume until Monday February 9th.
Wednesday January 28	Morning and Afternoon	Family History	Two sessions to 'kick off' 2015. 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, then 1:00 to 3:00 pm
Wednesday February 4	10:00 am to 12 noon	Effective Back-ups of your Personal Data	Make regular back-ups of your personal information one of your New Year resolutions. Dennis will show how.
Wednesday February 4	1 pm onwards	OPEN's Annual General Meeting.	Election of office-bearers and committee, and presentation of Financial Reports
Wednesday February 4	7:30 onwards	Launceston Computer Group AGM	

WHY YOU SHOULD READ THE NEWSLETTER!

It only seems like a few months ago that I wrote about the unfortunate experience of one of our members who accidentally deleted almost every document and picture on their computer. In fact it was almost three years ago.

The scenario went like this ... our member believed that their Documents and Pictures had been duplicated as they were being displayed in the User account on the computer's hard-drive (C: drive) and also in the Documents and Pictures Libraries.

So having deleted all the files in the User account area our member was then horrified to see that the Documents and Pictures Libraries were also empty. What had gone wrong?

Sadly, there wasn't a duplication ... the Libraries are actually shortcuts to the contents of the User account folders.

In a subsequent issue of the newsletter I published an article with relevant diagrams showing the relationship between the Libraries and the User account folders.

I'm re-visiting this subject because recently there was almost a repeat performance of this 'data disaster'.

Somehow one of our members had managed to create a second 'Library shortcut' to their pictures and had sought the assistance of a tutor in helping to clarify the position. The tutor was about to delete the contents of the so-called 'duplicate Library' but luckily another tutor intervened and prevented what could have been a total loss of several Gigabytes of precious photos.

- 1 If you have thousands of irreplaceable photos you should back them up on to DVDs or an external hard drive.
- 2 Don't place total reliance on the Recycle Bin—sometimes a large amount of data may be permanently deleted if it is too much for the 'Bin'.
- 3 Heed the information provided in the Newsletter!

OPEN NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2014–15

THE LAST STRAWS?

I'm not sure what emotions I should be feeling at the moment. Disappointment? Disbelief? Despondency? Depression?

When you have spent a great deal of your time trying to educate and inform members and tutors with little effect, or so it would seem, you reach a point where you wonder just what more you can do to get the message across.

Over a period of 6 or 7 years I have written a lot of articles in this newsletter with the intent that members at all levels are 'equipped' to deal with some of the pitfalls of computing, and also to benefit from the advantages that modern technology can provide.

Many of those articles have been based on actual cases where members have experienced problems with their computing pursuits, and the articles have been written in the hope that others don't fall for the same traps.

Half an hour of your time spent reading the newsletter may save several hours of recovery operations, or the heartache of losing precious photo memories forever, so why shouldn't you try and keep yourself informed?

Reading the newsletter could be compared to reading your TV Guide. Would you rather know in advance when your favourite program is on, or the day after when you have missed it?

If you now take the time to read the article "Tunnel Vision" in the column to the right you might understand the cause of some of my confused emotional state.

Dennis

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

Annual subscriptions for 2015 were due on December 1, 2014. If aren't financial yet please pay your 'subs' ASAP in the New Year.

\$20 for single membership, \$30 for couples.

TUNNEL VISION

Sometimes it seems that the desire to quickly perform a certain computer task can override our better judgement.

"I need to download a piece of software for my HP printer so I'll just Google the model number and go to the first web-site that rears its head, ugly or otherwise."

Wrong! You need to make sure you are going to the genuine HP web-site or you may be downloading something you hadn't bargained on.

"I just HAVE to have that trendy YouTube video clip that EVERYBODY is talking about, so I'll just grab the first downloader that Google suggests and install it without paying any attention to pre-selected tick-boxes for other software."

Wrong again! You need to take steps to ensure that you are not installing spyware by selecting an inappropriate program.

Now you might think this is a silly question but do you understand why we install anti-virus and security programs on our computers?

If your answer is *"So we can just laugh when a warning message appears on the screen"* and then proceed with whatever task caused the warning I think you have missed the point.

Believe it or not it happened at OPEN recently. A member's USB flash-drive was inserted into a club computer and immediately AVG flashed a warning that a 'Trojan Downloader' program was present on the flash-drive.

I'm disappointed to report that the tutor present simply dismissed the message without allowing AVG to do its job.

To leave that 'rogue' program on the member's flash-drive risked the member's home computer becoming infected. There may have also been a possibility of the program being passed on to the member's friends and family.

Please take a little time to consider the implications.

Help for picking your next anti-malware tool

By Michael Lasky

Picking the right anti-malware app can be onerous; there are dozens to choose from, and rapidly evolving exploits are constantly putting them to the test.

Fortunately, a few independent organizations such as AV-Comparatives are also testing leading security packages and posting the results.

Anti-malware testing is a snapshot in time. Currently, the not-for-profit organization AV-Comparatives (site) claims to run the most comprehensive suite of real-world malware tests, and it regularly reviews popular free and paid anti-malware packages.

AV-Comparative's evaluations use nearly 600 malicious URLs found online — including currently active exploits, URLs pointing directly to malware servers, and emails containing malicious attachments. They're the types of infections Windows users are exposed to whenever they browse the Internet.

The organization posts ongoing test results monthly, March through June and August through November, plus summary reports in July and December. (The organization's site offers numerous other free reports, including tests of security products for Android phones.)

October's chart is shown below (Figure 1). It reveals the results of tests of 22 products as well as the free Microsoft Security Essentials app — noted by the horizontal line across the middle.



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Figure 1. AV-Comparatives October anti-malware performance chart includes 22 vendors. Source: AV-Comparatives

Two interesting measurements in the chart are false positives and Windows' "Out-of-box production," which includes the built-in Defender for Windows 8 and the optional Microsoft Security Essentials for Windows 7. The false-positives number is an especially important stat; more on that below.

When looking at this or any other AV performance table, be aware of numerous caveats. For example, AV-Comparatives notes that while some products might achieve 100 percent protection in the tests, that's not a guarantee that you'll see the same level of protection. The tests are extensive, but they don't include all malware. Moreover, the results are a snapshot in time. Existing exploits can adapt quickly, and new forms are popping up every day. (It's the reason new virus definitions are offered frequently — and are necessary!)

Blocking good data can cause serious problems Obviously, we all want an AV package that's 100 percent effective. But in their efforts to be absolutely thorough, some anti-malware apps flag perfectly safe sites, files, and code as dangerous and block them.

Nearly all AV products have a few false alarms, but frequent flagging and blocking suggests an overly aggressive antivirus monitor. Useful and safe data might be automatically quarantined, never seen by the recipient. False positives are akin to important email messages that get lost in your junk/spam folder.

As noted in a Wikipedia page (see the subsection "Problems

caused by false positives"), an AV product that automatically deletes or disables an important file can break important applications — possibly even Windows. According to the October AV-Comparatives chart, F-Secure blocked around 98 percent of the malware thrown at it. But it also had, by far, the highest number of false positives. Other products were equally or more effective but reported few, if any, false positives. F-Secure's high number somewhat diminishes its overall effectiveness.

What the AV-Comparatives chart doesn't show On the surface, AV-Comparatives' interactive Real-World Protection Test (site) chart shows results for 22 antivirus applications in simple, coloured bars. But if you hover your cursor over the various areas of the chart, popup boxes will show the exact percentages for each product. A dropdown box above the chart lets you sort by anti-malware vendor or performance score. (Note: If you have problems viewing the chart, try a different browser.)

These details show overall relative effectiveness at stopping malware, but they don't tell us about a product's price/subscription length, ease of use, or the toll the software takes on your system's performance.

Obviously, the fees (most are annual) are given at each vendor's site. Finding information on ease of use and system-resource use requires more research on the Web. Typing "antivirus reviews" into Google or Bing returns a useful list of sites that have compared and tested a host of antivirus applications. Some review sites even offer discount codes for specific anti-malware

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products.

An important note: Testing an AV product's ease of use or resource utilization is relatively easy — any competent tech publication or PC tester can do it. But reliable, fair, and accurate testing for malware detection and removal is extremely difficult. Only a few security labs have that capability. AV-Comparatives is one such organization; another is AV-TEST (site). When reading comparisons of anti-malware products, consider the source of the malware-detection/-blocking data.

Here are some of the sites I find valuable when considering my AV tools. Each site has a different perspective and different evaluation criteria — and a different top choice. You should base your pick on which characteristics are most important to you — or to those whose PCs you're managing. For example, a power user most likely wants a less intrusive AV product; but you might want to install a more aggressive package on a child's or novice user's system. (Windows Secrets should, of course, be one of your primary sources for malware news.)

PC Magazine's Antivirus section PCWorld's Antivirus-software category Laptop's AV section TopTenREVIEWS' list Testing AV software's effects on PC performance An antivirus/malware detector might block nearly every threat that comes your way (even AV products can't always protect us from ourselves), but if the app causes slow computing speed or severe disk-access delays, we're likely to reduce its suite of protections or possibly even turn it off.

You'll find performance tests at both AV-Comparatives (site) and AV-TEST (site). AV-Comparatives runs several everyday PC

tasks to see how a system's overall performance is affected when a particular AV product is turned on or off. The tasks include copying files, archiving data, installing/uninstalling apps, encoding media, opening Office docs, opening PDFs, and downloading files. The organization also runs Futuremark's PCMark 8 benchmark suite (more info). Charts in downloadable PDFs summarize the results.

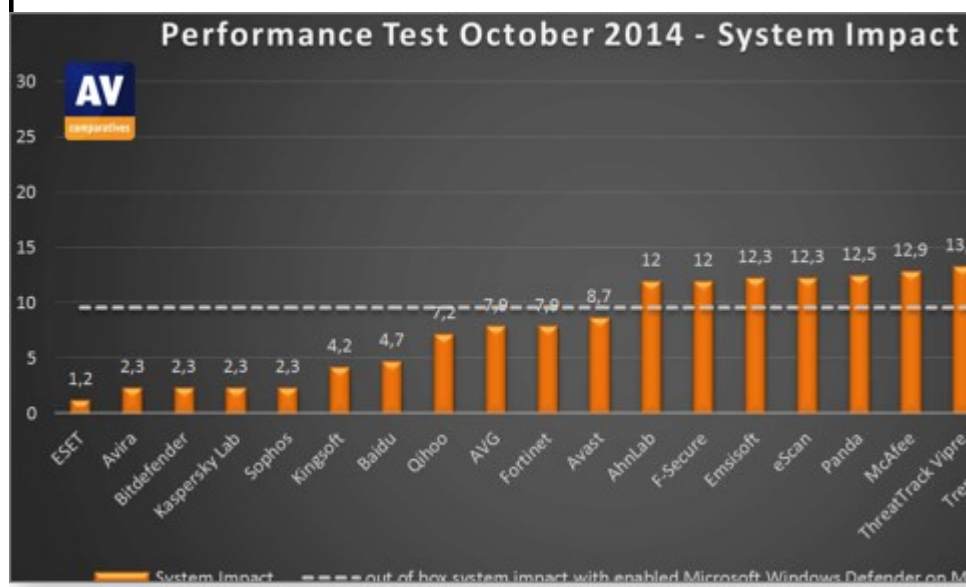


Figure 2. AV-Comparatives October performance results. Even the slowest product in this group had relatively little impact on general system speed. Source: AV-Comparatives Keep in mind, however, that the results shown by AV-Comparatives, AV-TEST, or any other organization indicate an

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AV app's performance only on that organization's test systems. You might see very different results on your system, depending on its particular configuration of memory, disk, CPU, Windows settings, and applications. In other words, published results are only a general guide to the impact an AV package might have on a Windows system.

In the past, many anti-malware products had a significant impact on overall system speed — especially the big AV suites. That's far less the case today. As dozens of stripped-down antivirus products became available for download, all anti-malware vendors were compelled to lower system demands. In the above chart, scores range from 1.2 (Avira and Bitdefender; fastest) to 25.3 (Lavasoft). But that breadth of low and high scores could initially be deceiving. In AV-Comparative's 10 tests, Lavasoft scored "fast" or "very fast" in eight tests — and received no "slow" scores.

More important, the AV-Comparative tests don't measure an AV product's impact on system boot time. Depending on the product and system configuration, boot times can be affected noticeably. More frustrating, your PC can seem to boot quickly, only to grind to a virtual halt a few minutes later while the anti-malware system runs some necessary process.

Bottom line: AV software speed tests are one metric in selecting the best product for your system. Give them a higher priority if your system is already relatively slow.

Another metric is, obviously, the ongoing cost of the AV package. Don't be put off by multiple choices of packages each

vendor offers. You'll have to decide whether any extra features justify higher prices. I recommend sticking to the basics.

Beware the hacker routing of your router Avast, whose anti-malware software was highly rated by AV-Comparatives, reports that four of five Internet-connected households in the U.S. are at risk of attack via their Wi-Fi-equipped router (DNS hijacking). According to Avast's research, a survey of 2,000 households found that more than half of the routers had not had their easily hacked default password changed or had no password protection at all.

Hackers can use compromised routers to redirect user data to a malicious site. Think of it as a quick and dirty way to capture your online banking sign-in credentials. Avast, of course, would like you to know about a feature in its latest paid and free AV packages (site) that the company claims is unique. Its Home Network Security Solution specifically guards against router threats such as Domain Name System (DNS) hijacking and weak passwords.

Better yet, simply ensure that your router has a strong password. For safekeeping, write the password down on a small piece of paper and tape it to the bottom or back of your router. That way you'll never lose it.

Keep in mind that network-access passwords based on WEP encryption are easily cracked. (Even WPA and WPA2 can be cracked if you use a simple, obvious password.)

For even tighter security, create a custom SSID network name. A default SSID such as "Netgear" or "2Wire100" is a flag to hackers that your network might be an easy target. Also