



Protecting your Home from Cyberattacks

Proper setup and security of a home network take more than off-the-shelf equipment.

Wi-Fi has altered the way by which we communicate with and control nearly every aspect of our lives. For the most part, it's been a positive change as we point and click our way to online purchases, streaming music, YouTube videos, email correspondence, and so much more. Wi-Fi has also facilitated the adoption of completely new methods of managing the components of our homes. Using the apps that came with our Wi-Fi devices we can dim the lights, start the music, and adjust the thermostat conveniently from a smartphone or tablet. But there's a dark side to Wi-Fi—a side that puts you, your home, and your family at risk every day for cybercrime.

Any time you access the Internet—to shop, access a security camera, or stream music, for example—you're passing data to and from the cloud. The video you see on your phone when you access a home security camera, for example, isn't coming to you directly from the camera. The camera first sends the video to the cloud, where it can be stored and retrieved. "There's a round trip of information which increases your exposure to cyber hacking," says Bryce Nordstrand, Access Networks Chief Sales Officer. The cloud is also a repository for passwords, social security numbers, financial data, and other private information. In the blink of an eye, your financial assets, the security of your home, and your identity can be compromised.

Fortunately, you can protect yourself by having a high-quality networking system professionally installed in your home. An enterprise-grade networking system, which is similar to the kind used by businesses, is engineered with technology to minimize the risk of cloud-based data and information exchanged via the cloud from falling into the wrong hands.

Here's How

Most off-the-shelf home networking routers offer fairly basic firewall protection that never changes throughout the life of the product. Cyber-risks, however, are constantly evolving, growing increasingly more sophisticated and dangerous. This type of router simply can't provide the level of protection most homes need. The security protocols and settings of a professional-grade router, on the other hand, undergo constant, daily updates, enabling it to protect the entire home networking system from each new crop of cyberthreats. "The protection software utilized by routers of this caliber are on the lookout for threats worldwide," says Nordstrand. "You can be assured that the router is always up to date and that you're well protected."

Investing in the right equipment is only part of a complete cybersecurity plan, however. The router/firewall, as well as the home network's wireless access points and switches, should be configured, installed, and monitored by a professional home systems integrator. A professional can implement protocols for safer utilization of passwords, deploy settings and software to minimize risk, and offer remote monitoring programs of the entire home network. The latter is particularly helpful to the overall health of your home network and the devices connected to it. Should a potential threat arise or the performance of any device be compromised, your integrator is notified immediately and the problem can be quickly resolved—often before you are even aware of the situation. A monitoring service, combined with enterprise-grade networking equipment, provides the one-two punch that you, your home, and your family need for complete protection of your personal data and uncompromised performance of your home's connected devices.