

by Jennifer Varney

# MEDIA AND TECH TALK

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## **DID YOU KNOW:**

<http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST04-012.html>

\*For the complete article

## ***Browsing Safely: Understanding Active Content and Cookies***

Many people browse the Internet without much thought to what is happening behind the scenes. Active content and cookies are common elements that may pose hidden risks when viewed in a browser or email client.

### **What is active content?**

To increase functionality or add design embellishments, web sites often rely on scripts that execute programs within the web browser. This active content can be used to create "splash pages" or options like drop-down menus. Unfortunately, these scripts are often a way for attackers to download or execute malicious code on a user's computer.

### **What are cookies?**

When you browse the Internet, information about your computer may be collected and stored. This information might be general information about your computer (such as IP address, the domain you used to connect (e.g., .edu, .com, .net), and the type of browser you used). It might also be more specific information about your browsing habits (such as the last time you visited a particular web site or your personal preferences for viewing that site).

## **NEW THIS SUMMER**

This summer the technology staff has again been busy at work to make your technology run smoothly during the school year. Some changes that have been made include the purchase of new teacher stations at the middle school and the middle school technology lab. These machines were purchased as a part of our existing replacement schedule and will aid teachers in utilizing technology to enhance instruction.

At the high school, the CAD lab machines were replaced in order to support the need for memory with the computer aided drawing software that the student's use.

As for software, *Study Island* has been purchased for the elementary buildings and the Math portion for the Middle School. *Study Island* is a web-based MEAP prep tool based on Michigan's Curriculum Framework including each Grade Level Content Expectation (GLCE) for grades 2-7. *Study Island's* focus on the GLCEs enables students to improve their performance in all skill areas tested on the MEAP. *Study Island's* child-friendly interface moves students step-by-step through mastery of each Expectation. Each section (5th grade math, for example) consists of topics that cover each of the GLCEs. Topics consist of questions, answers, explanations, and lessons that address the skills from the GLCEs.

*Achieve Data Warehousing – Data Director* has been supplied to us this year by the Eaton Intermediate School district to use to gather important student data. Several administrators and teachers have attended sessions about the new program. *Data Director* is robust, customizable web-based data warehouse and assessment management system. *Data Director* is used to gather, analyze, aggregate and disaggregate all types of data for students, teachers, parents and administrators at the school, district or state level easily.

Security – We have worked to enhance our security package with what we currently pay for through our Novell purchase. At the beginning of the year, if you are struggling with being able to access something, please notify your lab managers. The lab managers will be able to communicate this to the technology office, so that we may make the necessary changes.

There have been no other significant purchases or changes in existing software for this year.

We are excited about this year and the ability to continue with our success in maintaining the quality technology in our district. We wish to continue to support technology needs and work with staff members in order to incorporate technology into today's lesson planning. If you have a specific need or would like to learn more about a particular piece of

software or hardware, contact your building lab manager, media specialist or the technology office.

### **FREE TOOLS ON THE WEB TO OFFER APPLICATION ALTERNATIVES**

#### **Google Docs & Spreadsheets** **[docs.google.com](https://docs.google.com)**

If you've ever struggled to keep track of different versions of spreadsheet or word processor files sent over email, Google Docs & Spreadsheets may be right for you. Google Docs & Spreadsheets is a free web-based word processing and spreadsheet program that keeps documents current and lets the people you choose update files from their own computers. You can, for example, coordinate your student group's homework assignments, access your family to-do list from work or home, or collaborate with remote colleagues on a new business plan.

#### **THINK FREE** **[thinkfree.com](https://thinkfree.com)**

Free online alternative to Microsoft Office  
Free 1GB online storage  
Free online document collaboration  
Free document viewer  
Free documents: ThinkFree Docs

#### **OPEN OFFICE** **[openoffice.org](https://openoffice.org)**

OpenOffice.org is a [multiplatform](#) and [multilingual office suite](#) and an [open-source](#) project. Compatible with all other major office suites, the product is free to download, use, and distribute.



#### **PICKNIK** **[picknik.com](https://picknik.com)**

Online photo editing made fun.

With Picnik you can quickly edit all your online photos from one place. It's the easiest way on the Web to fix underexposed photos, remove red-eye, or apply effects to your photos.

It's fast, easy, and fun.

#### **CHARLOTTE WEBPAGE**

The District Technology committee worked last year on providing information to our parent's relating to educational material. This summer, we have placed a new link on our home page called **Parent Resources**. This link provides web site information for parent's that includes curriculum, learning disabilities and internet safety, along with many more exciting sites.

#### **BLACKBOARD**

There have been changes made in Blackboard this summer. New login accounts for teachers and students have been implemented. Students will now login using cps.their first initial of their first name and their full last name. Students are now in control of changing their passwords, but teachers will have the ability to reset if a student forgets what their password is. As for teachers, the same naming convention applies as with students. You should have received notification through email and your Blackboard course of changes made. Student accounts are in affect now, and the new teacher naming convention will be implemented completely in October. If you have any questions regarding this information, please notify your media specialist or Jenn Varney at ext. 5751.

#### **SOMETHING NEW**

Have something technology or media related to share. Do so by submitting a brief summary to [varneyj@charlottenet.org](mailto:varneyj@charlottenet.org) and it can be published in Tech Talk.

Summaries can be related to a website that you would like to share with colleagues, a lesson plan that you have found using technology or a lesson that you use in the media center. Take a brief minute to share your success story with other's in your district.