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ONLINE SAFETY AND SECURITY TIPS FOR THE BUSY HOLIDAY SEASON

Master Lock Offers Tips and Solutions for Staying Protected Online

MILWAUKEE, Wis., November 6, 2013 – 'Tis the season for online shopping. With online sales expected to increase 13 to 15 percent¹ this holiday season, more and more consumers are taking advantage of this convenient alternative to holiday mall crowds. To ensure online holiday experiences are safe ones, Master Lock and Mario Armstrong, Digital Lifestyle Expert™, are providing tips for secure online shopping along with other recommended online tools for a safe and secure holiday season.

“The holiday season should be fun and festive – not stressful,” said Mario Armstrong, The Digital Lifestyle Expert™ and Master Lock representative. “However, the joy of the holidays can be lost quickly if people interact with an un-safe website, lose important receipts or blow their budgets. Luckily, the internet now offers a ton of great tools to help people navigate the holidays safely, securely and with as little stress as possible.”

- 1. Make smart online purchases.** The convenience of online holiday shopping can quickly be derailed if you become a victim of identity theft due to sharing your credit card and shipping data with a non-secure site. Before providing any personal or financial information, make sure that you are interacting with a reputable, established company. Check to make sure the website is secure by verifying the address has an “s” in “https://” at the beginning of the URL, that a closed padlock is located in the URL bar, and that if you are entering any personal information, there is a checkmark or padlock image indicating the website is protected by a trusted source. If you’re still worried about using your personal financial accounts for transactions, a pre-paid debit card may be the way to go – just be sure to read the fine print for any fees and terms.
- 2. Click with caution.** Consumers may be bombarded with link-heavy holiday emails this season sending well wishes or advertising hot gift items and sales. However, with more than 9,500 malicious websites detected by Google every day², consumers are advised to click links with caution to avoid a malware-spreading site. Before clicking, hover over the link first to review the complete URL. Beware of small errors in website addresses such as missing letters, misspellings, a different .com extension or other tweaks to a company’s name. For extra protection, type the address into the web browser directly to ensure you are not being redirected to a fraudulent site from a link.
- 3. Set and track your budget.** Avoid post-holiday regret or debt by setting a realistic budget and tracking your purchases to ensure you adhere to it. A variety of apps and websites can help you with your budget tracking goals, such as Mint.com. For easy access to your private information on the go, store online passwords in the [Master Lock Vault](#) smart phone app or website for easy recall. Vault users can store and organize URLs, usernames and passwords in one protected place

in a 256-bit SSL data encrypted, firewall protected, 24/7 monitored “safe deposit box.” Simply click on the stored URL for your popular sites for easy access directly from your Vault.

Master Lock Vault users can also use the Vault to access virtual holiday shopping lists, schedule reminders for bill due dates and holiday social events and even store newly received gift cards for easy access for post-holiday shopping.

4. **Keep digital receipts.** Easily file away receipts from your holiday shopping in one place to cross-reference purchase dates and totals with your bank and credit card billing statements to check for any unfamiliar charges, or to facilitate easy returns after the holidays. A quick and easy way to do this is to take a photo of the receipt immediately and store it in the Master Lock Vault. You can also use the Vault to store photos of gift receipts. If they accidentally get thrown out with the wrapping paper, you can easily re-print them. Check with your local store for specific policies and information.
5. **Don't leave a digital trail to your gift purchases.** If you are using a computer that other family members use and don't want them to see what sites you've visited, enable your browser's private browsing feature when researching and buying gifts. Private browsing (also known as the incognito setting on Google Chrome) allows you to surf the internet without saving any information about which sites you visited or searches you've conducted. In some browsers this may be found under the Tools menu; check your browser's specific settings to learn how to set up private browsing.

About Master Lock

Master Lock is the world's largest manufacturer of [padlocks](#) and related security products providing innovative security solutions for home, automotive, campus, power sports, bike and storage security needs for consumers and industry alike. Master Lock Company LLC is an operating unit of Fortune Brands Home & Security, Inc., a leading consumer brands company. Headquartered in Deerfield, Ill., Fortune Brands Home & Security, Inc. (NYSE: FBHS) is included in the S&P MidCap 400 Index. For more information about Master Lock, visit www.masterlock.com.

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¹[National Retail Federation](#)

²[PCWorld](#)