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## TEKKIE HELP NEWS

### NEW OFFICE

We are delighted to have moved out from our home base into our own new office with a spacious and fully equipped workshop. If you need to drop in for help, please come to:

216 Joo Chiat Road  
#04-26 SoHo Life  
Singapore, 427483

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!

On 3<sup>rd</sup> September Tekkie Help turned 4 years old. We are very proud of how our company has evolved over this time. 4 years ago, Bo our CEO, spotted a niche in the market and went out solo helping people solve their IT issues. We now have 7 great technicians, 2 support staff, an office, 1 van and 2 cars dedicated to helping you to get your technology working the way you need it to.

### APPLE COMPUTERS FOR SALE

Did you know that we sell refurbished and sell Apple computers? If you are looking for a well-priced Mac, get in touch!



## This issue

How to fix your Internet problems  
Cyber crime – how to protect yourself  
Netflix update  
New Mac OS – Should you upgrade?

## Fed up with slow Internet and lack of coverage?

### How to get seamless wireless Internet throughout your home

We have had hundreds of calls this year from people who are at their wits end dealing with snail paced Internet browsing, buffering media content and lack of wireless signal in critical areas of their home. In Singapore, there are a number of factors that can result in slow speeds and Wi-Fi black spots. We'll explain some causes and share a few tricks of the trade to help optimise your home wireless network.

#### Causes of low signal

In Singapore, Wi-Fi is particularly troublesome due to the heavy steel/concrete construction of buildings. This is because radio waves do not penetrate such heavily reinforced walls. They also do not bend well around corners and so further problems are encountered in unusually shaped apartments.

In addition, the high population density in Singapore also contributes to wireless congestion resulting in radio interference. It is not uncommon to pick up the signal of 40 other wireless networks from within a condo.

Another possible reason for low or zero signal strength is that your computer is too far from the wireless access point. This is very common in large houses, particularly where the Internet entry point is usually in the basement.

#### How to optimise your home network

So, we have discussed possible reasons why your Internet experience may be pretty poor, what can you do to improve it? We use a number of different techniques and equipment, some of which are very simple (you can have a go at trying) and others are more complex and you may need us to help.

#### 1. Check your wireless router and access point is working properly.

First things first, make sure the router or access point is turned on and that the wireless signal light is illuminated. Try power cycling the router/access point by turning everything off (including the modem), waiting at least 10 seconds, and then turning it back on. If it is an old router, it will most likely be using an old wireless standard. Consider upgrading it to one that uses Wireless N (802.11n) or Wireless AC (802.11ac). These technologies will greatly increase the range and speed.

#### 2. Do an Internet speed test

What speed of Internet should you be getting? The local providers have a vast selection of different packages ranging from 1Mbps to 1Gbps (1000Mbps) and a choice of cable or fibre optic broadband. Find out if you are getting your purchased download speed by plugging your computer directly into the first router and doing a speed test. For this, open your browser and go to [www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net) and click "Begin Test". You ideally needs to be 50MB and above of download speed for smooth internet browsing, the more the better. It is worth remembering that you won't necessarily get the download speeds that are advertised so check the small print of your contract (it is usually 60% and above). If the speeds you are getting are below what you are paying for, give your provider a call to file a complaint.

#### 3. Fibre or Cable?

The Next Generation Nationwide Broadband Network is Singapore's all-fibre ultra-high speed broadband network that is capable of delivering speeds of 1Gbps.

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If you have the option to upgrade to fibre (i.e. you have a NetLink Trust termination point in your house or fibre in close proximity), we recommend doing so as this should ensure a superior Internet experience. It is important to note that in a home with thick concrete walls or a low quality router, upgrading to fibre will not address these other issues and therefore will not improve your Internet connection.

#### 4. Move your router/ access point

In order to achieve “wireless Feng Shui”, the physical location of your router is important as you need to allow your wireless signal to flow effortlessly throughout your home, dancing harmoniously with all of the other noise and interference that may be going on. This means positioning your router centrally. Ensure it is placed away from solid walls that may shield its ability to radiate freely in the direction where coverage is required. Also ensure it is away from microwaves, cordless phones or any other device that can interfere with the signal.

#### 5. Install wireless repeaters

If you have black spots, consider placing wireless repeaters in strategic locations. A repeater will pick up your wireless network signal retransmit it from that area. For example, by placing such a device on the stairs between floors, it may be possible to “repeat” the wireless signal

and provide a strong signal to the next floor of a house.

#### 6. Install wireless access points

You can try adding additional wireless access points (APs) to your network. The most reliable way is to buy access points and run ethernet (LAN) cables from your router to each additional AP. If you don't already have Ethernet LAN/wiring around the property, you can try utilising your existing electrical outlets. With Ethernet over power cable units. Please note however, that these can be quite glitchy!

#### 7. Convert telephone sockets

If there is no data cabling and a property has telephone wiring, it is possible for us to convert the telephone points to data and use the telephone cabling to transmit WiFi around a home.

As you can see, wireless optimisation isn't an exact science; there is no one universal solution as there are so many variables. What is good though is that generally, there are solutions; you shouldn't have to put up with poor functioning wi-fi. You may just need to make simple adaptations or it may be more complex using a combination of methods.

If you need help, Tekkie Help can come in and analyse your wireless environment and devise a plan to achieve fast running and seamless wireless throughout your home. Just call us on 81138682.

## Cyber crime – How to protect yourself

### Don't be fooled by suspicious emails and other phishing attempts

Over the past few months we have had a worrying increase in the number of people coming to us who have been targeted by online scammers. We have also been targeted ourselves! Cyber criminals have got extremely clever and professional. Their emails appear to be credible legitimate requests from known and trusted organisations such as Gmail, Yahoo, etc. The emails often highlight an urgent necessity for you to verify your account.

This practice is sometimes referred to as “phishing” – a play on the word “fishing” – because the fraudster is fishing for your private account information so that they can gain access. Once they gain access they use your personal information to commit identity theft, charge your credit cards, set up PayPal accounts, read your emails and empty your bank! They can also lock you out of your account by changing your passwords.

If one of your friends or contacts have been successfully hacked in this way, you may receive an email from them with an attached document and, in order to access the document, that to access you need to login using your

email login details. Whatever you do, don't provide any of your details!

#### How to protect yourself against phishing

1. Be wary of emails asking for confidential information. Legitimate organisations will never request sensitive information via email. Most banks will in fact tell you they won't ask for your information unless you're the one contacting them. If in doubt contact the organisation directly yourself.
2. Don't get pressurised into providing sensitive information. Phishers like to use scare tactics and may threaten to disable an account until you update certain information. Again, check if you are not sure.
3. Most of the spam you receive on a daily basis – as well as potentially dangerous phishing emails – is coming to you because a site you have signed up to has sold your email address to another company. It is worth familiarising your self with the privacy policy of pages you sign up to (usually at the foot of the webpage). The most useful thing to look for is whether or not it will sell its mailing list.

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## THE APP ZONE

A quick review of the apps we are loving at the moment.

### 1PASSWORD



One way to ensure security is to have strong passwords.

**What it does:** 1Password remembers all your passwords and sensitive information. You can also use it to generate strong and unique passwords.

**Why we love it:** The convenience of your passwords, credit card details, PINs all being held in one place. It is super secure too as open the app you need to use your TouchID.

### POCKET MALL



Singapore is a Mall culture. You can get anything you want in them but some malls can be ridiculously complicated to navigate. This is where Pocket Malls helps.

**What it does:** It allows you to search for the mall you're in and search for the store or type of store you are looking for.

**Why we love it:** It's free, it will save you hours of lost time and it also enables you to search for malls for a particular shop you are looking for.

4. Closely look at the email address of any suspicious emails. Quite often cyber criminals are very clever in creating email accounts that at first glance look like they are legitimate. One example we had was from "@gmail.com" (note the spelling), which on a small screen is very deceptive.
5. If you need to enter your password and username, only do so when the connection is secured. If you see the "https" prefix before the site URL, it means everything is ok. If there is no "s" (secure) – beware.
6. Make sure you maintain effective software to combat phishing.
7. Even if you receive a message from one of your friends, remember, they could also have been hacked. That is why you should remain cautious at all times.

### You've been hacked – what to do

It is all very well giving tips of how to protect yourself. Sometime you may be caught off guard and become victim of a cyber scam. If you do, don't panic.

1. First thing to do is to change the password of the account(s) that has been compromised. If your email has been hacked and your email inbox contains passwords for PayPal, Bank, DropBox etc. Assume the criminals have read these emails and so it is essential you also change these passwords.
2. Check the settings in your email account – look for security information about when the account was last accessed, have emails been auto forwarded and filtered? If so remove these settings.
3. If in doubt or worried, give us a call and we can help secure your computer and ensure your data is safe.

## TEKKIE HELP'S Q&A CORNER

### Q: Has Tekkie help found a solution of how to access US Netflix?

A: Unfortunately Netflix are still very much clamping down on access outside of the US. We have found not found a stable solution as yet. There are a few VPNs that still enable access, such as Express VPN. We are reluctant to role this out to customers as it does not work for everyone and there is no guarantee that it won't be blocked in the near future. Good news is that BBCiPlayer and other UK and US content is still accessible with Smart DNS or VPN services.



### Q: There is a new Mac OS available – shall I upgrade?

A: The latest Mac OS "Sierra" was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> September and promises to have some great enhancements. Our advice is to hold off upgrading just yet. It is best to wait a couple of months until any bugs and glitches are rectified. Once you decide to upgrade your system, it is essential to take a full back up of your computer (using Time Machine). You'd be surprised at the number of customers that come to us for help following an upgrade that went wrong and corrupted their system.

## Live life to the max with Survival Chic!

Life in Singapore can be hectic. For us, we like to maximise the precious few hours in the week when we aren't in front of computers. Whilst not a tech related company, we are great fans of **Survival Chic (SC), Singapore's top Dining & Lifestyle Membership**. It will certainly help you get the best of Singapore in your precious leisure time. There are 2 types of Membership:  
- **SC Dining Program:** 30% off at [50+ Top Restaurant Partners](#), including alcohol & guests, brunches & sets, weekdays & weekends. 25,000+ in savings.

- **SC Full Membership:** Includes [Dining Program](#) Benefits above, plus weekly [Complimentary & VIP invites](#) to the city's most sought-after private events.

Highly recommended - join [here](#) in less than 1 minute!

\*\*\*Tekkie Help customers also enjoy 1 additional month of Membership, free of charge by quoting 'Tekkie Help' when joining!\*\*\*



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