



**Case Communications December Newsletter**

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**Welcome,**

Welcome to the Case Communications December News letter. This month we look at security issues, the UK's lag in Broadband data rates, and a gloomy forecast that the Internet will be gridlocked by 2010.

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**Still no sign of the 25 Million missing records.**

The Police still seem no closer to finding the 25 million records that went missing from HRMC, and although no evidence of criminal activity has been detected, Scotland Yard has appointed an expert in organised crime to head up the investigation.

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**Struggling To Keep Up**

Europe is lagging behind the lightning-fast web speed of the Far East, and Britain is lagging behind most of Europe. What are we doing to catch up?

[\[More\]](#)

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**Right to Reply**

In the wake of the recent loss of personal data files debacle at HM Revenue & Customs, the following was spotted on The Register ([theregister.co.uk](http://theregister.co.uk)) and attributed to a government employee:

[\[More\]](#)

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**Net gridlock by 2010 study warns**

Consumer demand for bandwidth could see the internet running out of capacity as early as 2010, a new study warns.

[\[More\]](#)

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**A Cracking Invention**

Colossus loses code-cracking race

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### **Operators Defy Regulators**

Phone firms fight EU network plans.

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### **Pressure to Increase Speeds**

Drive for superfast broadband switches up a gear.

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### **Facebook is facing a backlash organised by the US based online democracy watchdog MoveOn**

It looks like a rebellion is underway as members of social networking websites demand greater control over the way their personal information is marketed on the Internet

[\[More\]](#)

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### **Another Credit Card Scam**

We dont normally pass on chain mails which report scams, but as a member of staff recently had his credit card company phone him, and he really did not check that carefully to make sure they were who they said they were, we though this tale might serve as a warning.

[\[More\]](#)

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**Still no sign of the 25 Million missing records.**

The Police still seem no closer to finding the 25 million records that went missing from HMRC, and although no evidence of criminal activity has been detected, Scotland Yard has appointed an expert in organised crime to head up the investigation.

As most of us have already heard the confidential material was stored on two CD's that were placed in the post by a junior employee at the HMRC office in Washington, Tyne & Wear, more than a month ago and has not been seen since. The breach of security led to the resignation of Paul Gray, chairman of HMRC, exposing the government to potentially the largest ID theft scam in UK history. Identity theft has become a new kind of "designer crime" and has serious implications for the victims and families. Identity theft is best described as the 'misappropriation of the identity of another person, without their knowledge or consent'. Should this information fall into the hands of fraudsters then the use of a stolen identity can aid criminal activity and even terrorism, to 'obtain goods or services by deception'

Executives from the largest high street banks fear that if the data falls into criminal hands the most damaging attack could come in the form of fake direct mail campaigns, possibly conducted over several years. "They could post leaflets that appear to come from a customer's bank, would be able to quote an account number, be correctly addressed and could invite recipients to phone a fake call centre to apply for, say, a special offer," one banker said. "Once you call, they ask for your password – and bingo." Even if the data does not reach the criminal domain, e-mail con-artists are expected to tap into an increased public fear of ID theft.

Experian, Britain's largest credit-rating agency, said yesterday that the number of visits to its website had doubled. It expects a surge of fake "phishing" e-mails that play on such concerns by asking customers to update security details in the hope of stealing them.

Jonathan Armstrong, a partner at the law firm Eversheds, said: "It is likely that even now a large e-mail campaign is being planned." One model would be the attack this year on Nordia, the Scandinavian bank that lost about £800,000 when 250 victims fell for an e-mail scam. Customers who clicked on bogus messages had their computers infected by malicious software that logged key-strokes and picked up details of passwords.

The data lost by HMRC was not enough to access a bank account or open a new one, Mr Armstrong said. "It does not provide what cybercriminals call the full deck." Opening accounts on the high street has become harder as a result of measures taken to combat money laundering.

Banks require new customers to present a full passport, national ID card or a tax letter from HMRC in person at a branch. However, such hurdles are regularly cleared by serious fraudsters, experts say. "ID thieves work closely with credit-card cloners and forgers," said Graham Cluley, of the technology security group Sophos. If the lost data were to be secured by sophisticated criminals it might be parcelled out and sold on viablack-market brokers.

A package of the HMRC information for one person could fetch between £20 and £100. If the victim holds a sensitive position, such as a security-related job, the price could rise to several hundred pounds.

**Simple Security Measures.** In view of the potential for identity theft to be connected with the 25 million lost records now is probably a good time for you to adopt some simple measures to help protect yourself from being a victim of this crime. These include:

- Alert your bank and/or building society\* if you are the victim of fraud involving a credit or debit card, a cheque or online banking
- Keep a record of all correspondence relating to the fraud
- Acquire a copy of your credit report (Equifax, Experian or Call Credit) and check it for discrepancies
- Contact any organisation that the fraudster has purchased goods and services from in your name
- Inform the police where necessary. Some organisations may require you to do this before they can investigate and will ask for a crime reference number
- Investigate the possibility of registering for protective registration through CIFAS - the UK's Fraud Prevention Service (CIFAS). This will place a 'Fraud Alert' against your address
- Notify Royal Mail if you think your mail is being tampered with

\*Since 1 April 2007 victims of credit or debit card, cheque and online banking fraud should report the matter directly to their bank or building society and not to the police (ACPO, 2006)



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## Struggling To Keep Up

As anyone who has ever lived or worked in Japan or Korea can attest, coming west is a drag. The broadband infrastructure in Europe and North America is simply not up to speed on this side of the world.

I was reminded of this last month while travelling through Seoul and Tokyo, hearing a fair number of references to 100 megabit-per-second (Mbps) home connections. I kept quiet: I poke along at about 5Mbps here in Rome for a service that Telecom Italia advertises as 20Mbps. Grumble, grumble.

When I left Asia I was determined to find out just how far behind we are running in the West? It's worse than I thought.

According to the [Information Technology and Innovation Foundation](#) (ITIF), the Japanese zip around the net at an average speed of 61Mbps. The Koreans clock in, on average, at 45.6Mbps.

In Europe, the speediest countries are Finland, Sweden and France, with average broadband speeds of 21.7, 18.2 and 17.6Mbps respectively. Across the Atlantic, Canada rings up 7.6Mbps and the United States, in the middle of the pack, comes in at 4.8Mbps. And what about Britain? Near the bottom, with a plodding 2.6Mbps.

That's the bad news.

The good news is that in the next 18 months to two years much of rest of the developed world should catch up with Japan and South Korea. Well, many of us, anyway.

Market by market, telecoms and cable TV providers are investing in next-generation data networks. In many neighbourhoods, the last of the old copper lines are being replaced by shiny fibre-optic cable capable of carrying voice, data and video. The speedy new lines will run either straight to the home or relatively nearby, to a kerbside cabinet.

Worldwide, the deployment will run to tens of billions of pounds in capital expenditures. Richard Allan, head of government affairs for Cisco Systems in Britain and Ireland, says that 70 per cent of the cost of wiring up a community comes in just "digging up the roads." Unless, you live in Paris. The City of Light, he adds, has a commodious sewer system enabling rival broadband providers to cheaply string their fibre through the subterranean network, giving the French capital an edge on most European cities.

In Germany, Deutsche Telekom's roll-out of a nationwide IPTV service is relying on a technology called VDSL, Mr Allan points out. They will run fibre to a central box that delivers a 50Mbps broadband connection to a number of homes on the street. VDSL uses the old copper lines that run the last few metres to the home, but the new kerbside configuration will generate a theoretical maximum speed that is twice as fast as the ADSL2+ line common today.

In the United States, AT&T is rolling out a version of VDSL too. Its biggest rival, Verizon, is more ambitious, opting for direct fibre to the home.

“We can currently expect to have in most urban areas new fibre being laid down over the next 18 months to two years. We will have massive deployment across much of Europe,” says Mr Allan, “but the UK is still a bit of a question mark.”

Britain is a unique market in that it has a relatively high broadband penetration rate, but at speeds considerably slower than its neighbours. That’s because of two factors, Mr Allan says. The civil infrastructure costs (the tab for digging up roads) is higher than in just about all other countries. And, there is a relatively large percentage of the rural population who would like a proper broadband connection but live too far from the nearest exchange. Once you move out of city and suburban areas, you have few options other than a 70-year-old copper phone line running to your house.

But there is some help here too. A host of wireless technologies such as WiMAX are being rolled out (though not as quickly as first hoped) to bring speedy connections to ever more remote areas. Also, if your community has cable TV service, you may be in luck with another promising technology called DOCSIS that supercharges the existing cable infrastructure. DOCSIS is being deployed by the UK cable provider Virgin Media.

Mr Allan says that Cisco has been working with Dutch cable TV provider UPC on DOCSIS-3 deployment trials in The Netherlands. Recently, in a series of tests Cisco and UPC achieved speeds of 120 mbps.

“The tests show this technology is ready to go. Now it is just a matter of figuring out the business sense,” he adds.

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Story by Bernhard Warner from The Times



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## Right to Reply

"If I had a pound for every senior manager who knows nothing about IT, I wouldn't have to work again. They keep their default passwords, demand that security controls are circumvented when it doesn't suit what they want to do, or it's inconvenient, and generally act like children. There is where the blame lies for this.

Please don't just slag off "civil servants" - there's a world of difference between the senior Sir Humphreys and the poor donkey workers at the bottom just trying to keep their heads above water and the service to the public decent while their jobs disappear all around them. Meanwhile £££s are spent on consultants to tell us what we already know.....

We caught a senior manager the other week taking 4 minutes to figure out why he couldn't make the guillotine work....he had it upside down!

The Peter Principle is most definitely alive and well."

Extract from The Register



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**Net gridlock by 2010 study warns**

US analyst firm Nemertes Research predicted a drastic slowdown as the network struggles to cope with the amount of data being carried on it.

Such gridlock would drastically affect how people use the web and could mean the next Google or YouTube simply doesn't get off the ground, it said.

The report said billions needed to be spent upgrading broadband networks.

It put the figure at around \$137bn (£66bn) globally.

For users, the slowdown could see a return to the bad old days of dial-up, the report predicts.

**Stifling innovation**

"It may take more than one attempt to confirm an online purchase or it may take longer to download the latest video from YouTube," the report cited.

But it is the knock-on effect for new services that could be the real problem, report authors think.

"The next Amazon, Google or YouTube might not arise, not from a lack of user demand but because of insufficient infrastructure preventing applications and companies emerging," the report warned.

The demand for bandwidth-intensive applications shows no sign of abating.

Nearly 75% of US internet users watched an average of 158 minutes of online video and viewed more than 8.3bn video streams during May, according to research by measurement firm comScore.

The financial invested required to "bridge the gap" between demand and capacity would range from \$42bn (£20bn) to \$55bn (£27bn) in the US, Nemertes estimates.

The report is part-funded by the Internet Innovation Alliance (IIA) which campaigns for universal broadband in the US.

"We must take the necessary steps to build out network capacity or potentially face internet gridlock that could wreak havoc on internet services," said Larry Irving, co-chairman of the IIA.

Story from BBC News





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## A Cracking Invention

### A closer look at the Colossus computer

An amateur cryptographer has beaten Colossus in a code-cracking challenge set up to mark the end of a project to rebuild the pioneering computer.

The competition saw Colossus return to code-cracking duties for the first time in more than 60 years.

The team using Colossus managed to decipher the message just after lunch on 16 November.

But before that effort began Bonn-based amateur Joachim Schuth revealed he had managed to read the message.

"He has written a suite of software specifically for the challenge," said Andy Clark, one of the founders of the Trust for the National Museum of Computing at Bletchley Park where Colossus is sited.

News of Mr Schuth's success reached Bletchley Park on Thursday night, said Mr Clark.

The target messages, enciphered with a Lorenz S42 machine as used by the German high command, were transmitted by a team of radio enthusiasts in Paderborn, Germany.

However, radio reception problems throughout the day on Thursday meant that the British code-cracking team did not get a full copy of the enciphered message until after 1700 GMT.

"For that all credit must go to Milton Keynes Amateur Radio Society," said Mr Clark. "They worked tirelessly yesterday."

A copy of the ciphertext in the messages was loaded onto the re-built Colossus at 0855 GMT on Friday morning, said Mr Clark.

At 1315 GMT on Friday Colossus managed to work out the message, he said - though there was a slight delay as two valves blew just as the final run was being carried out.

"We've got all the wheel settings," said a delighted Mr Clark, adding that there was spontaneous applause when the announcement of success was made.

At the same time as Colossus cranked through the messages a separate team used a virtual Colossus on a laptop to read the scrambled messages. That too beat Colossus and deciphered the message mid-morning on Friday.

The ciphertext from the messages will also be placed on the museum's website so amateur code-crackers who do not have access to radio can have a go at breaking the signals.

Colossus is widely recognised as being one of the first recognisably modern computers in that it could be programmed. It was the size of a small lorry and used more than 2,000 valves.

Tony Sale led the 14-year Colossus re-build project and it took so long because all 10 Colossus machines were broken up after the war in a bid to keep their workings secret. When he started the re-build all Mr Sale had to work with were a few photographs of the machine.

In its heyday Colossus could break messages in a matter of hours and, said Mr Sale, proved its worth time and time again by revealing the details of Germany's battle plans.

"It was extremely important in the build up to D-Day," said Mr Sale. "It revealed troop movements, the state of supplies, state of ammunition, numbers of dead soldiers - vitally important information for the whole of the second part of the war."

This, and the other information revealed by the code-cracking effort at Bletchley, helped to shorten the war by at least 18 months, said Mr Sale.

The Cipher Challenge is also being used to mark the start of a major fund-raising drive for the fledgling National Museum of Computing. The museum will be based at Bletchley and Colossus will form the centre-piece of its exhibits.

Colossus has a place in the history of computing not just because of the techniques used in its construction.

Many of those that helped build it, in particular Tommy Flowers, went on to do work that directly led to the computers in use today.

The museum said it needed to raise about £6m to safeguard the future of the historic computers it has collected.

Story by Mark Wark from BBC News



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**Operators Defy Regulators**

European commission plans to force the EU's telecoms operators to follow BT's lead and separate their networks from the rest of their business will endanger investment required to create fibre networks, leading operators claimed yesterday.

Last week Viviane Reding, EU media and IT commissioner, proposed the BT Openreach example as the model for all operators. But Alfredo Acebal, chairman of the European Telecommunications Network Operators Association (ETNO) and an executive at Spain's Telefónica, warned that Reding's plans would jeopardise EU efforts to catch up with the US, Japan and others and raise broadband speeds to 50MB a second by 2010. The organisation says the plan would put €20bn (£14.4bn) of investment at risk.

Michael Bartholomew, ETNO director, indicated that it has gathered enough support from MEPs and governments to scupper the plans. "Openreach has been in existence for just over 20 months and the model has never been tried by anyone else in the world and cannot simply be imposed by regulators."

Story by David Low From The Guardian



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## Pressure to Increase Speeds

A high-powered body of broadband industry policy wonks, watchdogs, and politicians has ramped up the Westminster debate over our creaking internet infrastructure ahead of a key government meeting next week.

Discussions around high speed next-generation broadband infrastructure assume that laying a new national fibre to the home network would cost about £15bn. The South East-centric Crossrail project, an infrastructure investment which will link East and West in London, is set to cost at least £16bn, Ericsson CTO John Cunliffe pointed out at the Westminster eForum event yesterday.

The cost of new fibre could be spread over 50 years, he said, as currently lab-bound passive optical network technology would manage data growth into the hundreds of gigabits per second for decades to come.

While countries like South Korea and France have pressed ahead with installing the infrastructure, it's very early days for the UK.

An array of issues will need to be resolved before a metre of new fibre is laid. Among dozens of sticking points, delegates asked vague questions over wholesale models, sources of funding, BT's role in investment, wireless alternatives, and provision in rural areas.

Several speakers agreed that simplifying the planning red tape that has to be negotiated before installing new lines and cabinets should be a top priority for the government.

Lib Dem MP Dr John Pugh said all the major parties had a "policy vacuum" around the future of access to the internet economy, however. The government has been quiet on concrete proposals. Pugh said the Competitiveness Minister Stephen Timms might have a plan, "but he's certainly not going to tell *The Register*".

The Westminster eForum event acted as a dry run for next Monday, when the Department for Business, Employment and Regulatory Reform (BERR, formerly known as the DTI) will host a summit aimed at plotting the UK's next generation network investment.

Peter Phillips, a high-ranking Ofcom regulator responsible for its strategy policy, told the eForum that the UK had done "quite well" in the current generation of broadband, but that the lessons learned must be applied to future markets.

"BT should not have an unfair advantage in retail markets in order to persuade it to upgrade its network," he said.

There was concern from several quarters, including Ofcom, over how to open the debate and engage the public. Stephen Timms' office at BERR has told us that journalists are banned from attending the summit next week. Which isn't a very good start, is it?

Original story By Chris William from The Register



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## Facebook is facing a backlash organised by the US based online democracy watchdog MoveOn

Following weeks of discontent on group discussion boards on Facebook, one of world's biggest internet sites, it is facing a privacy backlash organised by the US-based online democracy watchdog, MoveOn.

Thousands of American Facebook members have signed a petition calling on the website to remove a new advertising program called Facebook Beacon, which can be used to track the spending habits of Facebook users on external websites.

On Thursday, Britain's information watchdog warned millions of young people of the dangers posed to their privacy by using such sites. It found that 4.5 million people aged 14 to 21 had posted information on the internet which could make them vulnerable to identity fraud or blight their future careers.

Confidence in the Government's ability to protect sensitive information suffered a blow this week when the Treasury was forced to admit that HM Revenue & Customs had lost two computer discs containing the banking and personal data of 25 million people.

Concerns about the privacy of information kept on government databases have also been raised by the European Commission. A commission report published yesterday warned public bodies that they needed to do more to ensure the trust of their citizens, who are being encouraged to use online government services.

Ten companies, including the entertainment group Blockbuster and STA Travel, have signed up to the Facebook scheme, which advertises their brands by exposing details of purchases made by Facebook members to friends who are also members of Facebook.

Facebook has said the scheme can be used outside the US, depending on which countries the partner company wishes to advertise in.

Unlike most Facebook applications for which users have to "opt in", Beacon works automatically unless a user clicks on a pop-up box to refuse consent for their details being released.

MoveOn described the scheme as a "huge privacy violation". It has paid Facebook to advertise a "protest group" on the site, and an online petition to encourage the company to change its policy. More than 10,000 Facebook members have already joined the protest group.

"Facebook users across the nation are outraged that the books, movies and gifts they buy privately on other sites are being displayed without permission to lots of people. Facebook needs to reverse this massive privacy breach," said a spokesman for MoveOn.org.

"Facebook and similar sites have the potential to revolutionise how we speak to each other in our society. When people see their privacy violated, it sullies the entire thing." Facebook rejected the claims,

saying the group was "misrepresenting" how Beacon worked. "Information is shared with a small selection of a user's trusted network of friends, not publicly on the Web or with all Facebook users," it added. "Users also are given multiple ways to choose not to share information from a participating site, both on that site and on Facebook."

STA Travel said it had no plans to use Beacon in Britain, while Blockbuster declined to comment.

On Thursday, the office of the Information Commissioner warned computer users not to give personal information to social networking and other sites. David Smith, deputy commissioner at the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) said: "Many young people are posting content online without thinking about the electronic footprint they leave behind. The cost to a person's future can be very high if something undesirable is found by the increasing number of education institutions and employers using the internet as a tool to vet potential students or employees."

ICO researchers found that a third of young people had never read privacy policies on social networking sites and did not understand how they could manage their personal information. Yet an overwhelming 95 per cent of respondents to the survey said they were worried about website operators using their details to target advertising at them, or to pass the data to other websites or companies.



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## Another Credit Card Scam

One of our employees was called on Wednesday from 'VISA', and I was called on Thursday from 'MasterCard'.

The scam works like this:

Person calling says, 'This is (name), and I'm calling from the Security and Fraud Department at VISA. My badge number is 12460. Your card has been flagged for an unusual purchase pattern, and I'm calling to verify. This would be on your VISA card which was issued by (name of bank) did you purchase an Anti-Telemarketing Device for £497.99 from a Marketing company based in London ?' When you say 'No', the caller continues with, 'Then we will be issuing a credit to your account.'

This is a company we have been watching and the charges range from £297 to £497, just under the £500 purchase pattern that flags most cards.

Before your next statement, the credit will be sent to (gives you your address), is that correct?' You say 'yes'. The caller continues - 'I will be starting a fraud investigation. If you have any questions, you should call the 0800 number listed on the back of your card (0800-VISA) and ask for Security.'

You will need to refer to this Control Number. The caller then gives you a 6 digit number. 'Do you need me to read it again?' Here's the IMPORTANT part on how the scam works the caller then says, 'I need to verify you are in possession of your card.' He'll ask you to 'turn your card over and look for some numbers.' There are 7 numbers; the first 4 are part of your card number, the next 3 are the security numbers that verify you are the possessor of the card.

These are the numbers you sometimes use to make Internet purchases to prove you have the card. The caller will ask you to read the 3 numbers to him. After you tell the caller the 3 numbers, he'll say, 'That is correct, I just needed to verify that the card has not been lost or stolen, and that you still have your card. Do you have any other questions?' After you say, 'No,' the caller then thanks you and states, 'Don't hesitate to call back if you do', and hangs up.

You actually say very little, and they never ask for or tell you the Card number. But after we were called on Wednesday, we called back within 20 minutes to ask a question. Are we glad we did! The REAL VISA Security Department told us it was a scam and in the last 15 minutes a new purchase of £497.99 was charged to our card.

Long story - short - we made a real fraud report and closed the VISA account. VISA is reissuing us a new number. What the scammers want is the 3-digit PIN number on the back of the card. Don't give it to them. Instead, tell them you'll call VISA or MasterCard directly for verification of their conversation. The real VISA told us that they will never ask for anything on the card as they already know the information since they issued the card!

If you give the scammers your 3 Digit PIN Number, you think you're receiving a credit. However, by the time you get your statement you'll see charges for purchases you didn't make, and by then it's almost too late and/or more difficult to actually file a fraud report.

What makes this more remarkable is that on Thursday, I got a call from a 'Jason Richardson of MasterCard' with a word-for-word repeat of the VISA scam. This time I didn't let him finish. I hung up! We filed a police report, as instructed by VISA. The police said they are taking several of these reports daily! They also urged us to tell everybody we know that this scam is happening . Please pass this on to all your family and friends. By informing each other, we protect each other.

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