

Spring Clean Your Data

Clean up old logins & records so your
information is protected and secured online.

Business System Solutions
is your IT Service Partner who
provides peace of mind
through guidance, education,
and responsive support.
We are the Caretakers
of Your Productivity.



With Offices in:

North Central Indiana
(765) 742-3440

Middle Tennessee
(615) 819-0600

West Michigan
(616) 776-0400



info@bssconsulting.com

"Do your best to present yourself to God
as one approved, a worker with no need to
be ashamed, because he straightforwardly
handles the Word of Truth."

2 Timothy 2:15

by Anisa Williams, BSS Staff

Your forgotten data lurks in dark corners until it starts a journey of exposure: a data broker scrapes it, adds it to their databases, and sells it to third parties on the dark web. An old account may still be active even though you haven't logged in for years. It comes down to trust: does the company that holds your account information have the right security measures in place to prevent a hack or exfiltration of your data?

It can seem like an overwhelming task to clear out your data "closet." Schedule a time (or times) to review, update, and remove your data from unused accounts to guard against your information being sold or exploited. Use this checklist as a starting point or sign up for a paid service to remove your data from the web.

Where does your data live?

Start with a review of all the places your information could live and note it in a secure spreadsheet or document:

- Cloud storage – Google Drive, iCloud, OneDrive. In other words, where do your devices sync your data online?

- Your computers and tablets (especially any that are no longer in use).
- Cell phones – look at Files, Downloads, Accounts, Apps, and Gallery screenshots.
- Accounts on apps or websites that you haven't used in a while (did you ever delete your MySpace, Vine, or LiveJournal accounts?).
- Don't forget about that "someday" pile of Paper documents!
- Businesses or organizations that you no longer visit, like a dentist's or doctor's office.

Your Digital Footprint

Reviewing all these areas, especially if you've been online for a decade or more, will take some time and sleuthing. There are some excellent DIY opt-out guides on the web (links below) or you can subscribe to a removal service like DeleteMe or Incogni to remove personal or business listings.

Websites & Applications

- Delete data and logins for unused accounts across the web.
- Medical – have you stopped seeing a doctor or dentist and never transferred your records?
- Request removal from Public Record and People Finder aggregate sites.
- Remove personal info and delete accounts from old blogs and social media.
- In your Google or Apple account privacy settings, remove any third-party access to your account.

Devices

- Delete files from Downloads, Documents, and Desktop.
- Empty your Trash/Recycle Bins, and Restore (if using Microsoft).
- Uninstall apps you don't use.
- Review app data policies in the Google and Apple stores.

Email

- Check email privacy settings to ensure no other applications or services have access to your account.
- Unsubscribe from emails you no longer read.
- Mark unsolicited emails spam and block senders.
- Empty your spam and trash folders regularly.

Photos

- Download then bulk delete images from your social media accounts.
- Untag yourself in other's photos.
- Use an EXIF scrubber app to remove location and personal info before uploading to social media or sharing with others.
- Delete any blurry and duplicate images.



- If you are syncing photos to an online photo library like iPhoto or Google Photos, delete them off your phone.

Turn Paper into Digital

It's good to perform an annual or semi-annual purge of your paper records. Those piles can add up! Decide where you are going to keep your data that starts hardcopy: do you have a secure location in your home to store documents, or would it be better to scan and save them digitally?

- Scan documents you need to keep when physical copies are not required.
- Store scanned documents onto an external hard drive or secured computer.
- Shred everything that you won't keep or have scanned in.
- Keep critical physical documents & digital files (on a hard drive) in a fireproof safe.
- Purge both paper and scanned documents once they hit their retention deadlines. Check state, local, and industry guidelines for best practices.

Going forward: Secure and Safe

Now that you've cleaned up your data, keeping it clean is even easier:

- Turn on MFA for every account (this prevents threat actors from gaining access to your account if they get your password).
- Use a password manager app to manage your passwords and secure records.
- In your browsers: Enable privacy and Do Not Track; restrict personal info sharing & ad personalization
- Scan documents in that you need to keep right away, then shred the paper.
- Review data and privacy policies before downloading an app or signing up for a service.
- In applications, check for an opt-out feature and a way to remove your data from the company before installing.

Your hacked and stolen information can be sold to the highest bidder. Take your power back and keep data safe by knowing where your personal information is stored. □





Return Address:
601 3-Mile Road NW, Suite C
Grand Rapids, MI 49544

The BSS ADVISOR

info@bssconsulting.com

North-Central Indiana Office

1211 Cumberland Avenue
West Lafayette, IN 47906
(765) 742-3440

Middle Tennessee Office

1026 West College Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
(615) 819-0600

West Michigan Office

601 3-Mile Road NW, Suite C
Grand Rapids, MI 49544
(616) 776-0400



ELECTRONIC WASTE RECYCLING DRIVE



Accepting ALL
electronics FREE*
computers, phones,
cables, monitors,
servers, etc.

*\$20 Fee for CRT
Monitors & TVs;
\$30 for Big Copiers
CASH ONLY

APRIL 16 & 17, 2025 | 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
1211 CUMBERLAND AVENUE, WEST LAFAYETTE, IN

FULL LIST OF ACCEPTED MATERIALS AND DETAILS AT: www.bssconsulting.com/ewaste