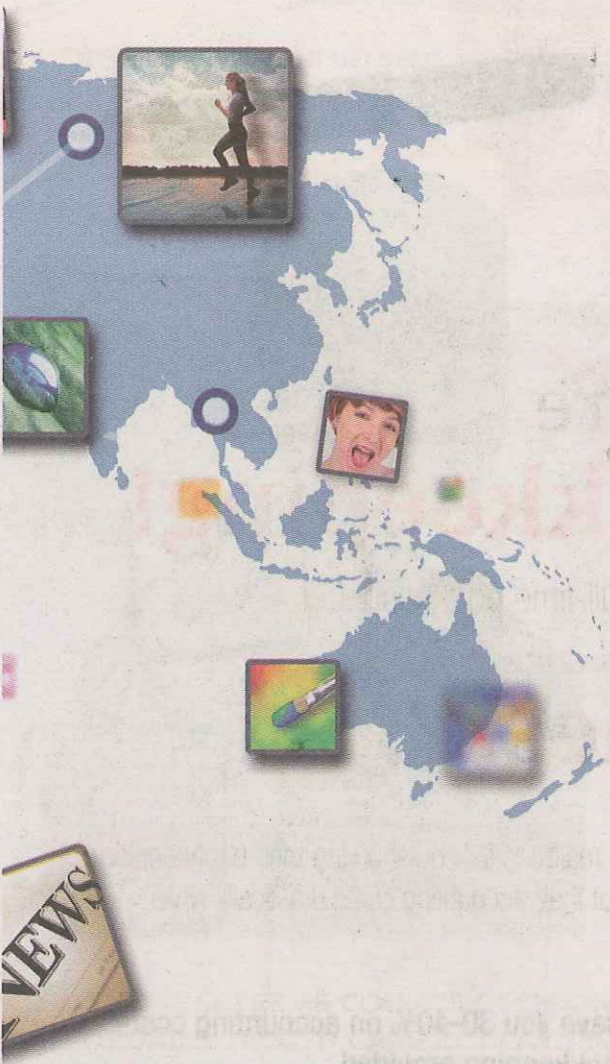


MIAMI (CBS4MIAMI.COM)



REPORTING AL SUNSHINE

Wiping Your Smartphone Memory Clean



"I WILL NEVER EVER SELL OR LET GO ANY SECOND-HAND DEVICE ON EBAY OR CRAIGSLIST. I WON'T DONATE IT. I'LL TAKE OUT THE HARD DRIVE. I'LL DESTROY IT. I'LL TAKE THAT MOBILE PHONE AND I WILL DESTROY IT."

FOR MANY, SMARTPHONES HAVE BECOME AS MUCH A PART OF OUR LIVES AS THE FOOD WE EAT.

"IT'S PRETTY CRITICAL. BASICALLY MY WHOLE LIFE IS ON THIS PHONE. IT PROVIDES ME WITH A CONNECTION TO EVERYTHING THAT I NEED."

IN FACT, WITH MEMORY SIZES GROWING, SMARTPHONES TODAY CAN CARRY AS MUCH OF OUR PERSONAL INFORMATION AS WE STORE ON A LAPTOP OR HOME COMPUTER.

"All my contacts, all my phone numbers, my Facebook so that kind of personal information too. There's a lot of passwords to the Internet and like my bank account my Facebook all on there."

That's just some of the personal kind of data that McAfee Cyber Security expert Robert Siciliano was looking into when he went on-line, scrolled through

the vast Smartphone offerings on eBay and Craig's List and bought 30 unused devices.

"I bought Androids, iPhones, and Blackberrys. I did this with McAfee and we found people's entire digital lives," said Siciliano.

Before he explains what he found, you should understand he this cyber technician was not using some CIA specialized scanning software. He just used regular tools that are available on the Internet to look for this data on these devices and he found everything. Everything as in: people's personal information, their pdf, word documents, text files, excel files, home videos, photos, and a lot of pornography. Actually, we found their entire digital lives. enough information to steal their identities, even though many sellers had tried their best to wipe their phones clean.

"Well I delete the cache and make sure I take the SIM card out."

Removing the SIM card and the SD card from the phone is vital. Both are critical storage areas. But they aren't the only virtual file drawers in Smartphones.

"The devices themselves generally have their own storage," said Siciliano.

The cell phone manufacturers will tell you to go to your settings menu and restore factory settings to clear your personal information, which Sicilian says works pretty well with Blackberry's and iPhones.

But when you reset the Android phones, the Motorola Droids, even when a factory reset is done, we still found data... enough data to easily pull off identity theft.

"Ten million people every single year have their identity stolen," Siciliano pointed out. "If you resell it for fifty bucks, is it potentially worth \$50 to sell your identity? I don't know."

Siciliano says that while you might be ok cashing in on your Blackberry or iPhone, based on what his investigation found, he won't be your competition.

"I will never ever sell or let go any second-hand device on eBay or Craigslist. I won't donate it. I'll take out the hard drive. I'll destroy it. I'll take that mobile phone and I will destroy it."