Keep What's Private, **Private.**

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You exist in digital form all over the Internet. Thus, it is important to ensure that the digital "you" matches what you are intending to share. It is also critical to guard your privacy — not only to avoid embarrassment, but also to protect your identity and finances!

Below are some specific steps you can take to protect your online information, identity and privacy.

▸ Use a unique password for each site. Hackers often use previously compromised information to access other sites. Choosing unique passwords keeps that risk to a minimum.

   Don't just add a '1' or the next sequential number to your current password. If it needs to be changed, change it. Many passwords now are going to phrases or words with more than 25 characters.

▸ Use a password manager. Using an encrypted password manager to store your passwords makes it easy to access and use a unique password for each site.

   There are free password managers out there! LastPass, DashLane, KeePassX, Sticky Password. Check online at https://www.wired.com/2016/01/you-need-a-password-manager/

▸ There are no true secrets online. Use the post-card or billboard test: Would you be comfortable with everyone reading a message or post? If not, don't share it.

▸ Know what you are sharing. Check the privacy settings on all of your social media accounts; some even include a wizard to walk you through the settings. Always be cautious about what you post publicly.

▸ Guard your date of birth and telephone number. These are key pieces of information used for verification, and you should not share them publicly. If an online service or site asks you to share this critical information, consider whether it is important enough to warrant it.

▸ Keep your work and personal presences separate. Your employer has the right to access your e-mail account, so you should use an outside service for private e-mails. This also helps you ensure uninterrupted access to your private e-mail and other services if you switch employers.