

Editorial

John Mitchell

In my last column I reported on my woes as a result of BT Yahoo changing the IP addresses of their Domain Name Servers without telling their customers. At that time I had only received a holding response from them in relation to my letter of complaint to Sir Christopher Bland, the BT Chairman. Since then I have had some interesting conversations and correspondence with someone designated as an 'Open World Complaints Review Executive'. A fancy title for someone who apparently does nothing else but review complaints. Nothing in the job title about resolving them you notice and that's a good job too as this guy was totally useless in not only explaining what had gone wrong, but also in not giving me any satisfaction that such a thing will not happen again in the future. Indeed, so useless was he that he provided me with incorrect information regarding the change that had caused the problem so I then had to correct him, not once but twice. I was so incensed by this lack of professionalism in a company that is both ISO 9000 and ISO 17799 accredited that I wrote again to Sir Christopher expressing my displeasure at the way my complaint had been handled. But Bland by name is bland by nature and all I received this time was a reply from yet another assistant thanking me for my views! Still I have been given three months free access, which is what I demanded when I first complained, but I only got that after querying why they were offering me only two months! To add insult to injury BT have since reduced their monthly charge by three pounds. Why is this an insult? Well, they are going to impose a usage restriction based on data transfer over the web. To someone who listens to web radio whilst they do their work as I do this will mean a reduction to my service. Hey ho, another letter to Sir Christopher perhaps?

The postal voting debacle in the recent local authority and European elections and the subsequent claims of electoral fraud will be as nothing if the Government go head with their proposals for the extension of electronic voting. I have been looking into this issue on behalf of the BCS and am greatly concerned with the various proposals being put forward by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. I have been liaising with a number of other computer societies on this issue and there is universal concern that security will just not be good enough to prevent massive electoral fraud. There is always going to be a conflict between ease of access and security, as we control professionals know, but it is important to balance the two. To my mind the Government proposals are putting too much emphasis on ease of access and not enough on the prevention and detection of electoral fraud. The use of computers invariably means that a few powerful people (in some instances perhaps only one) can manipulate the result. With the postal voting fiasco the Government ignored the advice of the Electoral Commission so I am not too hopeful that it will take any notice of the BCS, but we can try.

On to the content of this issue. Greg Krehel continues with his tips on how to conduct an investigation by examining the concepts of case analysis. This ties in nicely with the first of a sequence of articles dealing with computer forensics by Celeste Rush, our very own membership secretary, who did her MSc dissertation on the subject. Bob Ashton our correspondent from the antipodes updates us on risk and computer crime in Australia, which brings me to the unrelated area of the IRMA accounts which you can examine at your leisure. Priscilla Emery reminds us of the importance of paper in our business continuity planning and Colin Thompson, the BCS Deputy Chief Executive, does his usual excellent job of keeping us current on what is happening in our parent body.

The Summer is now over and for some of you this may be the last edition of the Journal that you receive. Unless of course you have renewed your subscription!