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**Tracking hackers**

**REPORTER:** David Richardson  
**BROADCAST DATE:** May 1, 2003



Alex Servinska is a victim of hacking.

**Cyber crime is the boom crime of the 21st century and the weapon of choice is in eight out of every 10 homes - the computer. Business student Alex Servinska is one victim who is speaking out.**

Ms Servinska and her husband thought they had done everything to protect their personal banking details from hackers.

"I knew there were people doing nasty things on the Internet but I didn't know how easy they would be able to get to the average Joe Blow," she said.

They were wrong.

"We had never made a purchase on the Internet, we had never done any Internet shopping and still somebody accessed our credit card details and managed to access some expensive American porn sites," Ms Servinska said.

They got away with around \$700 but that amount could have been in the thousands if Ms Servinska had not checked her Visa statements.

What she found shocked her: dozens of porn sales on her card.

"It's much too easy for a hacker or for anybody who's basically a thief; if they want to they'll access it," she said.

Lex Taylor was also a victim of a cyber hacker but it was a shock for Mr Taylor as he's a computer whiz.

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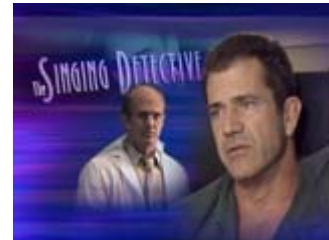
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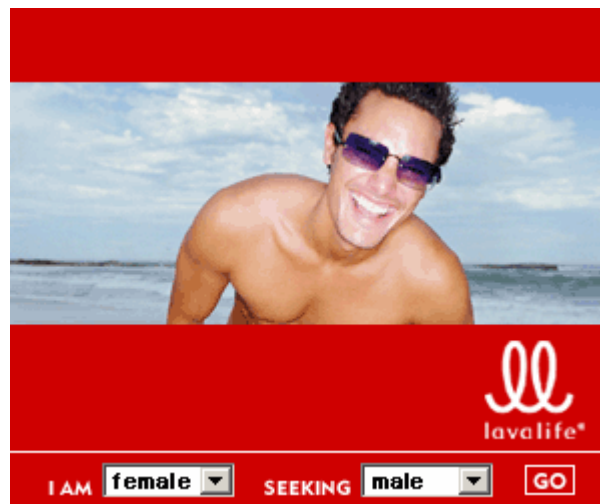
PREVIEW: Sonia Kruger spoke with Mel Gibson about his latest movie - The Singing Detective.

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He now works out ways to beat the cheats and says it's almost impossible to catch them.

"It's done silently," he said.

"There is really no invasion on that person at that time - no physical invasion - but at the rate it happens now something has to be done to stop it."

Mr Taylor showed us a couple of ways the hackers can break into your home desktop computer systems using password crackers, Trojans, worms and borers - technical terms for tools hackers can simply download off the web.

And the way in is through an email account.

"An email account is a goldmine once you get hold of one," Mr Taylor said.

A password won't stop a hacker as an infected email could open your account to the world - everything from personal emails to banking details.

"You open that file ... as long as it's configured right it instantly starts to email the information back to people..." Mr Taylor said.

"You type in your Internet banking accounts and your password - even if companies want you to put a PIN number in you're still going to see what the PIN number is.

"It's going to come straight through to me - or whoever else has got it - and your account will be fleeced before you know it."

Prime targets for hackers are Internet cafes; they install a program that re-directs every computer user's details to them, open the files and every aspect of the user's life is exposed.

Robert McAdam runs purehacking.com.au, whose employees are paid to hack and attack company systems and find the loopholes.

"We'll do an attack on their system so that they know their real risks," he said.

"And by knowing those real risks, they can then take an action plan against those and then they are working towards being safe against these hackers."

Jackie Brian, from Visa, claims the company has tightened up its security with a new password system called Verified by Visa, where you must have a password to make a

purchase.

"I think it's foolproof," she said.

"As I said, it's exactly the same as using a PIN number at an ATM, so very simple."

And Jeff Portelli says MasterCard has a new system called SecureCode, another version of an online PIN designed to protect you.

"This new technology is going to make it safer for consumers to shop on the Internet," he said.

"It is in fact an electronic signature and this is going to enable the consumer to shop safely and securely and confidently."

But Mr Taylor doesn't believe the new measures go far enough, saying it's just another hurdle for smart hackers to jump.

So how do you stop it?

Mr Taylor says you should install anti-virus software and keep it updated.

**To contact Robert McAdam call (02) 9662-2626 or visit [www.purehacking.com.au](http://www.purehacking.com.au)**

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