CRIMES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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IV.I. INTRODUCTION

While sitting behind a computer screen is widely regarded as much safer than wandering the streets at night asking people for their opinions in 140 characters or less, computer crimes are becoming increasingly common. Additionally, in recent years, social media sites have even become hotbeds for crime, and police are getting wise to it.

Computer Crime

Computer crime describes a very broad category of offenses. Some of them are the same as non-computer offenses, such as larceny or fraud, except that a computer or the Internet is used in the commission of the crime. Others, like hacking, are uniquely related to computers. Read on to find out what kinds of activities are considered computer crimes and how to prevent them.[175]

Examples of Computer Crimes

Computer crime laws in many states prohibit a person from performing certain acts without authorization, including:

- Improperly accessing a computer, system, or network;
- Modifying, damaging, using, disclosing, copying, or taking programs or data;
- Introducing a virus or other contaminant into a computer system;
- Using a computer in a scheme to defraud;
- Interfering with someone else's computer access or use;
- Using encryption in aid of a crime;
- Falsifying email source information; and
- Stealing an information service from a provider.[176]

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[175] https://criminal.findlaw.com/criminal-charges/computer-crime.html, last visited on 24/12/18

[176] Ibid 1

IV.II. FORMS

There are various sources through which there can be a crime can take place on a social media and in various different forms, some of them are as follows:

1. Online Threats, Stalking, Cyber bullying

The most commonly reported and seen crimes that occur on social media involve people making threats, bullying, harassing, and stalking others online. While much of this type of activity goes unpunished, or isn't taken seriously, victims of these types of crimes frequently don't know when they can call the police. If you feel threatened by a statement made online to you, or believe a direct threat is credible, it's probably a good idea to consider calling the police.

2. Hacking and Fraud

Although logging into a friend's social media account to post an embarrassing status message may be forgivable between friends, it, technically, can be a serious crime. Additionally, creating fake accounts, or impersonation accounts, to trick people (as opposed to just remaining anonymous), can also be punished as fraud depending on the actions the fake/impersonation account holder takes.

3. Buying Illegal Things

Connecting over social media to make business connections, or buy legal goods or services may be perfectly legitimate. However, connecting over social media to buy drugs, or other regulated, controlled or banned products is probably illegal.

4. Posting Videos of Criminal Activity

As smart phone and social media technology continue to improve hand in hand, more and more criminals are posting videos of their crimes on social media. While this sounds somewhat horrifying, it really is just short-sighted as more and more police departments and prosecutors are able to rely on these videos to arrest and convict these criminals.

5. Vacation Robberies

Sadly, one common practice among burglars is to use social media to discover when a potential victim is on vacation. If your vacation status updates are publicly viewable, rather than restricted to friend groups, then potential burglars can easily see when you are going to be away for an extended period of time.

IV.III. WAYS OF PROTECTING ONESELF -

Losing a computer or a web account due to cybercrime can be very damaging, especially as we continue to rely more and more on these networks to conduct business. There are, however, certain things you can do to help protect yourself.

First, much of cybercrime is fraud involving the use of a computer. Learn the warning signs of fraudulent behavior and wire fraud. Be extremely careful when giving out sensitive personal information such as social security numbers and bank account access codes over the Internet.

Otherwise, take basic precautions for keeping your data private. Use passwords that are difficult to hack and change them frequently. Don't conduct financial transactions on public computers or over unprotected networks. You should also install a good anti-virus program on your computer and keep it updated. Finally, be careful about downloading software from disreputable websites as it can contain spyware, viruses, or other malware.

IV.IV. INFORMATION REGARDING THE CRIMES AND THEIR FORMS

- **Social Network, Cybercrime and Internet Sex Crimes**

While bullying, sexual harassment, and child pornography are long standing crimes and societal problems, the Internet and social network sites have introduced a whole new arena for predators to practice their trade.

Cyber bullying
Cyber bullying is aggressive harassment that occurs using electronic technology, including cell phones, tablets, and computers using social media sites and chat-sites. Cyber bullying includes the sending of unwanted, abusive text messages, photographs, personal information, defamatory and libelous allegations and rumors, and the creation of fake profiles intended to harm victims.

Victims should report the crime to parents, network providers, schools, and law enforcement. Hate crimes are the most heinous of the various cyber bullying crimes,

and they carry their own distinct set of penalties in most states, including additional jail time and sometimes mandatory prison time if connected to another felony. Hate crimes also peak the interest of the FBI, who prosecutes hate crimes and maintains statistics on the proliferation of hate crimes and other forms of civilian terrorism.

Child Pornography and Preying on Minors

Child pornographers and child molesters have unfortunately found the Internet to be a useful tool to prey on children as well. The Department of Justice has a special task force devoted to catching these predators, and if your child has been targeted, you should contact law enforcement right away. The Department of Justice has published a Citizen's Guide to Child Pornography to outline the laws and your remedies.

IV.V. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the crimes happening on the social media has a larger impact on the present generation rather than the crimes that used to happen earlier. People are committing suicides and various other things to harm themselves. With the rise in technology and advances people are getting more and more indulged in the crimes happening in their surroundings. Law and order have taken many steps to eradicate these crimes and new provisions are now being inculcated in them. The crime rate has been increasing day by day these days and cyber plays a vital role in the same.

People should be aware of all these crimes so that they can safeguard themselves from the same, even they should be well-versed with the steps and provision that can be taken for the same.