



PA ENTERPRISE

DeskDemon's Magazine for Executive PAs, Office Managers and Secretaries

December 2015

**Essential Guide to
Christmas Cyber
Scams**

**Acts of Kindness
really do count**

**Top ten tips
for beating the
Christmas bloat**

**How much time do
you *really* waste?**

**Alternative 12 Days
of Christmas gifts for
office workers**



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As an office worker, where do you go for information, advice, tutorials, vital tools, training and relaxation?

DeskDemon is the world's largest resource, information and community site for Administrative Professionals, Executive PAs, secretaries, Administrators and Office Managers. Providing essential information, resources, tips, tricks, tools, quick links, templates, editorial features and best practice on all the daily tasks the secretarial community perform – from travel, meetings, conferences and events to managing technology, office supplies, people and their careers.

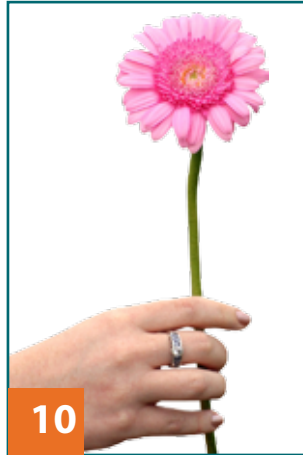




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Brits are a cancellation nation!

The average Brit makes 104 social arrangements every year – but will only actually turn up to half of them, according to a new study from Mentos.

New research has revealed the extent to which Britain has become a cancellation nation – with one in three admitting they say “yes” to every invite – whether they intend to go or not.

The majority of Brits (49%) claimed they are usually “too tired” to go out – with a further 36% admitting they would simply “rather stay in”. One in ten said they would avoid a night out if their “favourite TV programme was on”.

And it would appear honesty is not the best policy for the majority of us – with almost 60% claiming it is “easier to make an excuse” to get out of something.

Topping the list of excuses was sickness – with 60% saying they regularly use illness as a way out of an arrangement.

Other excuses included “I double booked” (20%), “I thought it was a different day” (18 percent) and “the children are poorly” (15%).

One in ten Brits have even wheeled out the old ‘I’m waiting for a delivery’ line.

The ease at which we are now able to cancel was revealed as the main reason for the “cancellation nation” – with 80% claiming it is easier to cancel in this day and age because of email, text and messaging apps.



The study also found we are most likely to blow out work colleagues (54%), with friends (28%) next in line.

Psychologist Dr Linda Papadopolous commented, “What we all have to remember is that stepping out of our comfort zone and making fresh connections is good for our physical and mental wellbeing. We all need to make the time to say yes because the simple act of getting out and connecting with new, and old friends is so important.”

It also emerged around one in three of us will happily say yes to anything to avoid hurting friends’ feelings. Fortunately though the report did reveal around six out of ten (62%) do feel guilty when they cancel.

Rather sadly, texting is the preferred method of cancellation.

A quarter of online users would continue to use a website that suffered a data breach

While more than two thirds of online users would immediately stop using a bank or retailer if the site suffered a security attack or data breach, a quarter would continue using the site, according to a survey conducted for NTT Com Security.



The poll of more than 500 UK consumers explores 'consumer trust' in online sites, including retailers, banks, social networks and dating sites, and comes in the wake of a number of major security breaches and ahead of one of the biggest online shopping periods – Black Friday and Christmas – over the next few weeks.

When asked what they would do if their online bank or retailer suffered a security attack, nearly a quarter would stop using the site and move to another supplier, and 44% would stop using it until the problem was fixed. However, 14% would only stop using the site if it suffered another security problem, while 11% would carry on using it regardless.

Other survey highlights:

- Theft of credit card information (84%) is seen as the biggest threat to privacy when online, followed by identity theft (80%), viruses (70%), scam emails (60%) and governments/companies tracking your activity (35%)
- Concerns over privacy/safety of personal information (66%) and fears over fake or fraudulent websites (69%) are the top reasons that prevent people from using an online site, while 32% worry about making online payments
- Banks are the most trustworthy websites, followed by healthcare providers (doctors/ hospitals) and insurance firms. Online dating sites are the least trustworthy, followed by social networks.

Alternative 12 days of Christmas gifts for office workers

Business leaders would never be expected to give staff the gifts in the 12 days of Christmas song (maids-a-milking and lords-a-leaping are wholly impractical), so Sketch Studios, the UK's leading commercial furniture specialist, has come up with 12 practical tokens of appreciation employers could give.

Bring some Christmas cheer to your office with improvements which will last all year





Day 1

Better tea/coffee/refreshments

Fundamental to the well-being of every worker, isn't this what gets us through the day? Adopt the same cafe-style culture as those on the high street and invest in some decent beans/tea and equipment. It'll make staff feel valued and will draw them back to the workplace for their refuelling.

Day 2

Plants

As well as great health benefits - they generate oxygen and reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the air, aiding concentration and lifting spirits - plants are a calming influence and great to look at.

Day 3

A height-adjustable desk

One size will not fit all – it creates poor posture, a major cause of back pain, stress and repetitive strain injury.

Day 4

A decent ergonomic chair

Humans are not designed to sit all day, so invest in chairs that aid posture. It may be tempting to invest in trendy tub chairs or modular seats to spruce up the office/reception, but they will not help those who are desk-based.

Day 5

More flexible space

Today's workers are expected to multi-task so

create environments that help them do this. Tasks may include undertaking focused work, reading, attending meetings and collaborating with colleagues. Then there's a need to squeeze in a break away from work and have some social interaction. Those with a variety of spaces to choose from will be more productive (who wants to sit behind a desk all day?).

Day 6 **Headphones**

Noise can be a major irritation. It prevents concentration and adds to stress levels. If you're unable to provide appropriate spaces for the task in hand, such as a quiet room for reading/individual focused-work, these may do the trick.

Day 7 **Better temperature control**

If it's fine for men but too cold for women (as the recent gender debate suggested), set the temperature between the two and adjust to the daily outside temperature as opposed to what it should be for the season. Otherwise winter woollies will have to suffice.

Day 8 **Improved lighting**

Access to natural light is a must, particularly during the sun-starved winter season. Shift furniture to make windows more accessible and where natural light is limited, invest in office lamps to prevent eye strain.

Day 9 **A computer upgrade**

With more people using mobile technology it's easy to overlook the fixed desktop equipment, yet for those who are office-based it's their professional lifeline. A revamp will make staff more productive as they'll spend less time waiting for their machine to perform tasks.

Day 10 **More storage space**

Staff who bring in their own equipment need somewhere to put it. The same applies to those who exercise; set aside a storage area for kit, it's more secure and keeps the place tidy.

Day 11 **An office clean-up**

Initiate a tidy campaign and give staff 30 minutes or so to clear up their working areas. Office-based workers can un-clutter desks, file away paperwork, clean-out draws, move items from the top of filing cabinets, smarten up those wilting plants and remove out-of-date food from the fridge. Flexible staff may want to check the leads/chargers they borrowed for their laptop, tablet or mobile are back where they should be.

Day 12 **Pimp the small room**

Spruce up the toilets/washroom for Xmas; give them a lick of paint or re-tile, pipe in Christmas music, add a plant or two and some decent accessories. If there are high-level water tanks, turn them into min-aquariums or encourage employees to contribute to their mural.

Sketch managing director, Justin Bass, comments: "While the partridge in a pear tree, turtle doves, French hens, calling birds, gold rings etc, may be a step too far, a bit of tinsel and a tree is not enough. Even if one of our suggestions were taken on board, it would have a huge effect on the moral and productivity of staff. Although pipers piping and drummers drumming may have the same short-term effect, they would not work in the long-term."

To find out more about Sketch visit
www.sketchstudios.co.uk

Today's Teens Running on Empty

- 30% of 16 year olds go more than six hours without food
- 24% of teens don't have energy for after-school clubs
- 40% feel under pressure to perform in and out of school

Head to the Sun-Pat Facebook page for tempting Sun-Pat snacking suggestions: www.facebook.com/SunPatOfficial



choose their own snacks, yet 60% don't agree with their food choices.

New findings show 24% of teenagers feel they lack the energy needed to take part in after-school activities, according to the peanut butter manufacturer Sun-Pat®.

As part of its Spread the Energy campaign, Sun-Pat uncovered the mounting expectations on today's teenagers to perform. 40% of 16 year olds feel the pressure to do well at school and in after-school activities, while 26% of parents would like their children to be more active.

Despite long days and added stress, teens' tanks are running on empty. 30% of 16 year olds claim to go more than six hours without food between lunch and dinner, leaving them with low energy and enthusiasm to take part in after-school sports activities.

Nutritional snacking is high on any parent's agenda, though they don't always have involvement in their children's choice of snacks. 47% give their teens the freedom to

The survey reveals that 24% of hungry teens would reach for pre-packaged snacks if they needed extra energy. Surprisingly 14% admit they don't know the best foods to keep energy levels sustained.

Nutritionist Dr. Sarah Schenker comments:

"In real terms, it's not so much that teenagers lack the energy but that they misread the signs telling them they are hungry. For teenagers with an active lifestyle and restricted traditional mealtimes, embracing the after-school snacking occasion could be the perfect solution to keep energy levels maintained.

"Interestingly, the survey found that almost a quarter of parents (23%) believe snacking still has negative connotations that need to be overcome - which I fully support. Introducing convenient and nutritious foods can overcome the stigma of snacking and help us all to become more active and healthier."

Acts of Kindness really do count

New research has revealed that nearly three quarters of men and women (73%) say that whenever they are on the receiving end of a good deed, they will then carry out one for someone else. The average Brit typically carries out eight good deeds a month



The study shows the typical person will do 1.27 good acts every time someone helps them out and a quarter will pass on a good deed at least twice.

The average Brit typically carries out eight good deeds a month, with four in five of us saying that we have carried out an act of kindness at least once a week.

The research commissioned by GALAXY Hot Chocolate also revealed that four in ten people say that the feel good factor of doing an act of kindness makes them keen to do it again and 68% of us say that they feel better about life when they receive a little act of kindness.

Sadly, one in ten Brits say that they don't receive any acts of kindness at all during a typical month.

While, a lucky third of us receive an average of five acts of kindness during the same period.

Britain's most common act of kindness is holding a door open for others – something 89% of us have done in the last three months and which 66% would reciprocate for someone else.

Giving directions to someone who is lost, stopping to let someone cross the road and letting someone with very little shopping go ahead of you in the queue are other common good deeds.

The research showed that two thirds (68%) of the nation have never given up their time to volunteer despite almost the same number (65%) saying that they really admire people that give up their time to volunteer.

Interestingly people would rather give a tenner to charity than undertake an hour's voluntary work, which may explain why one in five people are giving a little more to charity than they were five years ago.

Top 25 Acts of Kindness

1. Holding the door open for a stranger

2. Giving directions to someone who looks lost

3. Stopping to let people cross the road

4. Letting someone with very little shopping go ahead in a queue

5. Putting money in a collection tin

6. Buying your partner their favourite food as a treat

7. Picking up something that someone has dropped

8. Letting a car out of a junction or driveway

9. Complimenting someone who isn't your partner on how they look

10. Giving spare change to a charity collector

11. Taking a spider outside instead of killing it



12. Telling someone about a great deal they could benefit from

13. Buying a gift for a friend or relative when it isn't their birthday

14. Telling a friend or relative you love them spontaneously

15. Offering to pick up items from a shop for someone else

16. Saying Keep the change

17. Helping people reach for things high up on a shelf

18. Giving lifts without expecting payment

19. Picking up litter that someone else has dropped

20. Picking up clothes off the floor in shops

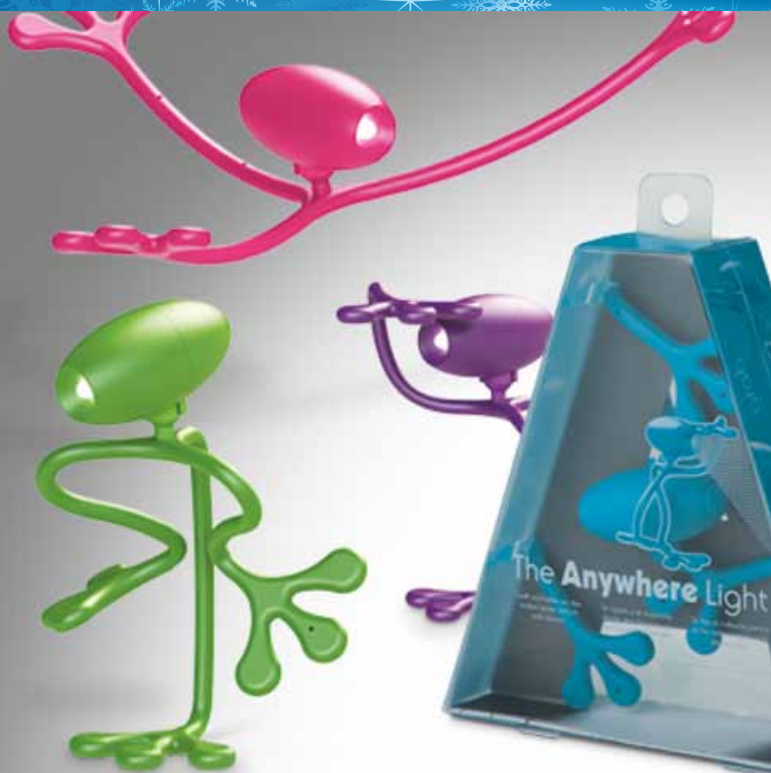
21. Offering a tissue

22. Giving a friend a lift to somewhere you weren't going

23. Putting the bins out for a neighbour

24. Telling someone there is something on their face/teeth

25. Picking up the bill as a treat



Exotic Tipples from around the world delivered to your door!

Exotic Tipples has launched with a new concept of drinking experience in the UK. Each month, a unique selection of handpicked spirit and cocktail tipples from a specific country are delivered free to the door of tittle and travel-loving subscribers.

Arriving in a stylish presentation box, the ready-bottled drinks aim to transport subscribers to a destination, a memory or an experience, through aromas, taste and texture. This is the ultimate way to experience the rare, unique drinks from around the globe and enjoy them just like the locals do.

Exotic Tipples offer a range of hampers to suit each taste: The Expert Hamper is designed for barmen or mixologists – perfect for building up a taste repertoire. The Premium hamper – a great choice for anyone wishing to try something new – it contains four unique drinks, a free gift and tittle tasting guide. The Grand Host hamper is perfect for anyone wishing to share their drinks discoveries as each hamper contains enough tipples and gifts for a friendly tittle-tasting party. www.exotictipples.com

Your Friend For Light: The Anywhere Light

The agile Anywhere Light will grip, grab, hook, hang, cling and clasp where other lights just can't!

With its bendy arms and legs, and 'can-do' attitude, the agile Anywhere Light will grip, grab, hook, hang, cling and clasp where other lights just can't.

Batteries come pre-fitted and there are four funky shades available to choose from: Boldly Blue, Ego Green, Posey Pink and Positively Purple. Wherever you choose to use your new soft-touch flexible friend - have fun!

The perfect Christmas gift!

RRP £12.99

www.thatcompanycalledif.com



White Hot Gift Sets: great gifts for people with grey hair

White Hot has three gift sets to choose from: Shine, Brighten and Treat, all beautifully presented in a sheer organza bag, which will make the perfect gift for any friends or family who have embraced their grey.

For lustrous flex and dazzling shine, the **Shine Gift Set** (£20) contains Glorious Shampoo and Luminous Conditioner which nourishes and moisturises grey hair, giving it added bounce and shine.

The **Brighten Gift Set** (£20) is the perfect present to keep hair bright and white as it contains Brilliant Shampoo and Intense Lustre Mask, which lights up grey hair and banishes dull or brassy yellowy tones.

Or why not really spoil someone with the **Treat Gift Set** (£65) which contains the full collection of White Hot products, designed to brighten, cleanse, condition and add shine and definition to grey and white hair. It also includes a luxurious white towelling headband as an extra special treat, making this the perfect gift for a loved one this Christmas.

White Hot is a capsule collection of shampoos, conditions and styling products formulated especially for the needs of white and grey hair. White Hot believes that age and experience is a beautiful thing and there should be no age limit on enjoying beauty products, that's why we've created a luxurious range of haircare products to make grey and white hair look and feel its very best.

White Hot's new limited edition Christmas gift sets are available exclusively to buy at www.whitehothair.co.uk



Christmas Dinner isn't just for Christmas Day

Pubs and restaurants have revealed that it isn't just the 25th of December when Brits are tucking into their Christmas dinner, as company figures shows the number of bookings made throughout December to have tripled in recent years.

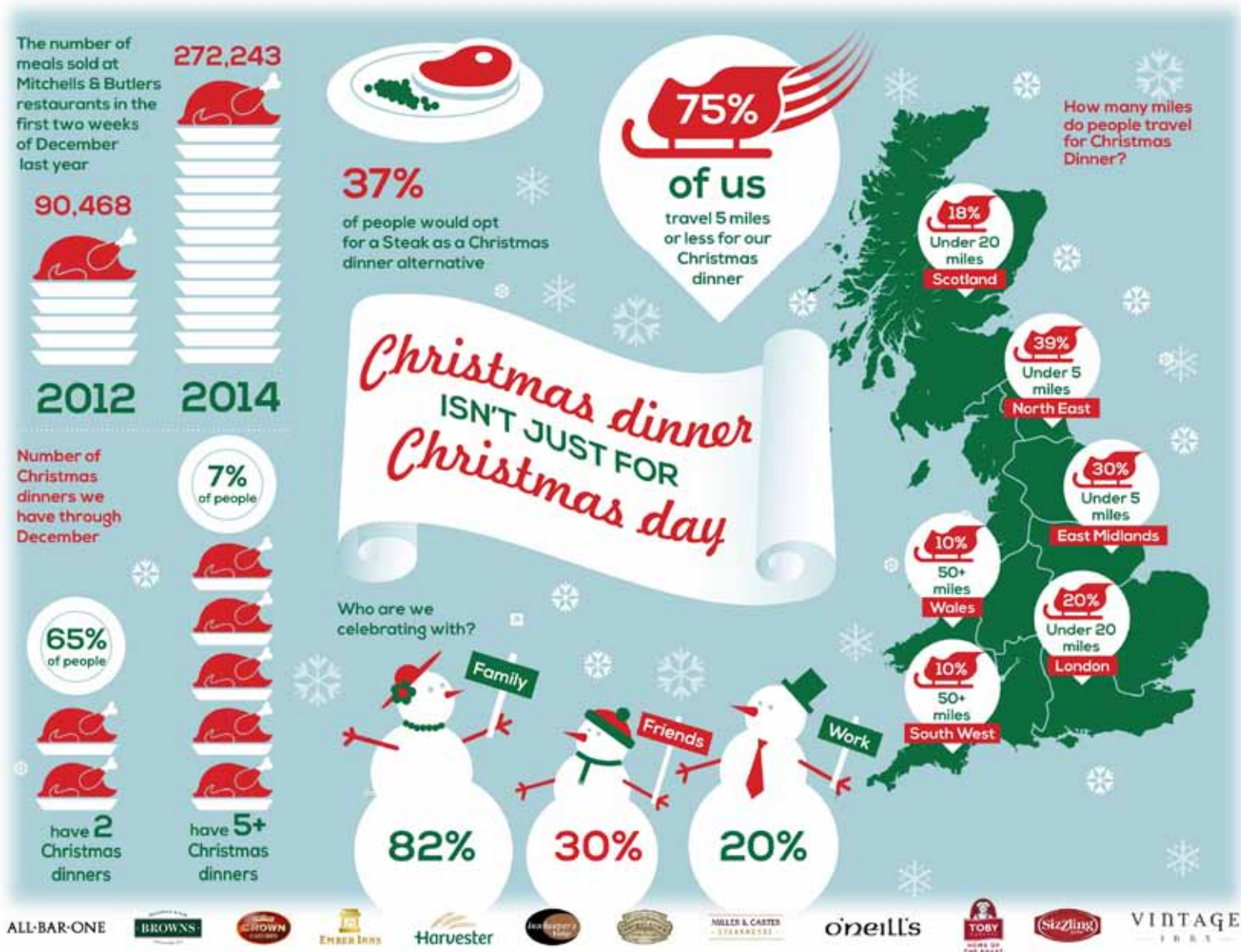


Statistics from Mitchells & Butlers, the company behind brands such as Browns, Tibby Carvery, All Bar One, O'Neill's and Harvester revealed number of meals sold in the first two weeks of December has tripled from around 90,000 back in 2012 to a turkey-gobbling 272,000 last year.

This should come as no surprise however as, in a recent consumer survey, 65% of consumers said that they would be having more than two Christmas dinners throughout December - with 7% revealing they'd be enjoying five or more.

Juggling work-dos, nights out and family time, it's easy to see how we are dining out more and more in the run up to Christmas. For instance, 82% of people are expecting to celebrate with family and 64% of us look forward to this the most. Celebrating with friends (30%) along with the office party (20%) were also high on the list and interestingly, just over 10% of us actually look forward to work parties the least.

Travel is another reason people are choosing to eat out. On a whole, 75% of us will travel less than five miles as we look to celebrate close to home. People living in the East



Midlands travel the furthest for their Christmas dinner with nearly 20% of people travelling more than 21 miles. Incredibly, over 10% of people living in Wales & the South West will travel more than 50 miles.

Other stats revealed that Scottish families will be entertaining the most guests on Christmas Day, with 14% of those asked accommodating for 15 guests or more. And if you're not tucking in to turkey, 37% of us would choose steak as an alternative.

Mitchells & Butlers Pubs include:

Sizzling Pubs - www.sizzlingpubs.co.uk
 Vintage Inns - www.vintageinn.co.uk
 Harvester - www.harvester.co.uk
 Toby Carvery - www.tobycarvery.co.uk
 Miller & Carter - www.millerandcarter.co.uk
 All Bar One - www.allbarone.co.uk
 Browns - www.browns-restaurants.co.uk
 O'Neill's - www.oneills.co.uk
 Nicholson's - www.nicholsonspubs.co.uk
 Ember Inns - www.emberinns.co.uk

Top ten tips to beat the Christmas bloat

Christmas often results in us piling on the pounds, with some stats claiming that we gain up to five! Here are the top ten tips to staying healthy over Christmas. Sam Benjamin of No.G: Too Good to Be Gluten Free, makers of gluten free food products, has compiled the best ways to avoid overindulging over the festive period.

1 Sugar

Get rid of sweet cravings by swapping sugary treats for a low calorie hot chocolate. Guilt free and still delicious.

2 Exercise

Skip a 'Home Alone' movie marathon and make the most of family time with a festive walk instead. A half an hour brisk walk will burn off 200 calories.

3 Gluten

Beat the bloat and embrace gluten free options. Many celebrities have endorsed the diet, reporting a positive impact on digestion, mood and general wellbeing.

4 Sleep

Adopt hibernating habits and say no to late night partying. Catching up on some zzz's will improve your overall health and wellbeing.



5 Alcohol

Fend off the hangover, and the calories, by switching to non-boozy cocktails. Or stick to lower calorie drinks, such as gin and slim line tonic (drink responsibly)!

6 Sanitise

Christmas often brings an unwanted gift to many- the flu virus. Keep your hands clean by frequently washing or sanitising them and ensure nasty germs are kept at bay.

7 Turkey

Embrace tradition and have turkey for your Christmas dinner. It's leaner than other meats, high in protein, naturally gluten free and has low saturated fat content, making it the perfect choice.

8 Desserts

Christmas pudding is full of fibre, B vitamins, potassium, iron and calcium making it a relatively guilt free dessert (just make sure you stick to one portion). Or knock the lid off your mince pie to lose a third of its calories!

9 Breakfast

Trade bucks fizz and croissants for a more nutritionally filling alternative. Smoked salmon and poached eggs or a bowl of hearty porridge will keep you satisfied until dinner is served.



10 Cleanse

Reduce your consumption of pasteurised fruit juices and swap to cold pressed alternatives. Cold pressed juices give you a higher content of vitamins and antioxidants, without having to consume as much.

Sam Benjamin of No.G said: "We're all guilty of over indulging over the festive period but with these tips you can still embrace the Christmas treats without increasing your waistline."

Essential Guide to Christmas Cyber Scams

As the new holiday cyber crime season rolls in, it's a good idea to look at the scams of last year, which will be recycled with a few small updates. Plus it is always important for IT departments to give employees a refresher course on what to look out for. Here are a few scams to keep an eye out for this holiday season.

Free Tablet

Watch out for the too-good-to-be-true coupons that offer free phones or tablets on sites all over the Internet. Don't fall for it. Make sure the offers are from a legitimate company.

Parcel Deliveries

Be vigilant for alerts via email or text that you have just received a package from DHL or Parcelforce for example, which then asks you for some personal information. Don't enter anything. Think Before You Click!

Fake Refunds

There are often fake refund scams going round that could seem to come from Amazon, a hotel or a retail chain. It claims there was a "wrong

transaction" and wants you to "click for refund" but instead, your device will be infected with malware.

Malicious E-card Greetings

Happy Christmas! Your email has an attachment that looks like an e-greeting card, pretty pictures and all. You think that this must be from a friend. No. Malicious e-cards

are sent by the millions, and especially to work email addresses – never open these as they might infect your workstation.

Fake Gift Card

Cyber criminals promote fake gift cards through social media but what they're really after is your information to be used for identity theft. A typical example could be to



award a free £200 gift card to the first 1000 people to sign up on a (fake) John Lewis Facebook page.

Copycat Websites

Cyber criminals build complete copies of well-known websites, send emails promoting great deals, sell products, take credit card information, but never deliver the goods. These sites are only live for a few days and the money usually goes abroad. Your credit card company will refund the purchase, but apart from not getting your gift(s) your card number is now compromised and will be sold and used by other cyber criminals. A recent variation of this example has been the Dartford Tunnel payment website where you think you are paying the toll, but it is to a copied website – see: <http://www.theguardian.com/money/2014/dec/20/dartford-crossing-toll-invitation-scammers>

Charity Tricksters

The holidays are traditionally the time for giving. It's also the time that cyber criminals try to pry money out of people that mean well. Watch out for any communications from charities that ask for your contribution, (phone, email, text, and tweets) and make sure they are legitimate. It's a good idea to contact the charity to make sure the request did in fact come from them.

Direct Message Scam

You tweet about a holiday gift you are trying to find, and you get a direct message (DM) from another twitter user offering to sell you one. Stop – Look – Think, because this could very well be a sophisticated scam. If you do not know that person, be very careful before you continue and never pay up front.

Extra Holiday Money Fraud

People always need some extra money during this time, so cyber criminals offer work-from-home scams. The most innocent of these make you fill out a form where you give out confidential information like your National Insurance number which will get your identity stolen. The worst of them offer you work where you launder money from a cyberheist.

Search Term Trap

Cyber criminals do their research and find out what people want. They then build a site that claims to have the desired item. They push that site high onto the search engines and you might click on that link. But the site contains malware and will infect your PC. Make sure that your web-browser is always fully updated, and will warn you if it sees that the site is unsafe.

Evil Wi-Fi Twin

You may bring your laptop/tablet/smartphone to the shopping centre to search for gifts and check if you can get it cheaper somewhere online. But the cyber criminals are there too, shopping for your credit card number. They put out a Wi-Fi signal that looks just like a free one you always use. Choose the wrong Wi-Fi and the hacker now sits in the middle and steals your credit card data while you buy online.

**Remember to Stop. Look before
you Click. And stay safe this
Christmas.**

How much time do you waste each day doing routine things?

By Marc Weiner

So what is time management? Well, it is basically how you organize your time. It involves planning your day out and allocating certain times of the day and a certain amount of hours or minutes to doing an activity. We all have daily time wasting habits. Here are examples of actual (and funny) ways that we waste time each and every day - how many apply to you?

Toilet Training

That's right! Going to the toilet, is a really huge time waster. Now, obviously you have to go to the toilet! But, most people take much longer than they need to, and do we really need to say it - yes, women are the main culprits unfortunately! The constant hair and make-up checks, primping, preening sessions actually cause you to spend much longer in the bathroom than you need to.

Bathrooms are also great places for daydreaming! Men and women take longer in the bathroom because they often sit (or stand) and day dream, thinking about anything other than work. You might be thinking about what to do for supper, the awesome weekend you have planned, and more.

Here is a quick tip! Allocate no more than 5 minutes to each bathroom break. If you need to go to the bathroom for a longer break, then allocate the shortest amount of time you would normally need, minus all the daydreaming.

Coffee, Tea or ?

It is hard to believe, but coffee and tea breaks are time wasting habits. Think about how often you get up and make yourself a cup of coffee or tea during the day. This is far more often than you need to, and aside from wasting time, actually distracts you from your work. Aside from that, you are likely to run into someone and chat for a few minutes here and there. Or, you might be eyeing that yummy piece of cake you were going

to keep for later and decide to have a quick snack. Coffee and tea breaks are notorious time wasting activities that usually involve more than just getting your cup of coffee and heading straight back to your desk.

The solution? Limit the number of tea and coffee breaks you take. Aside from improving your work productivity, you will also improve your health, as well all know how bad it is to drink too much coffee. Plus, curbing this time wasting habit will help you with the first one, as you will not require as many bathroom breaks if you drink less. Other than limiting breaks, keep a bottle of water on your desk to sip instead. Much healthier and more productive!

Sign ... Sign Everywhere A Sign

Many people read their horoscope every single day. This wastes valuable time that could be spent doing something more constructive - if it is being done at the wrong time of the day. So, what can you do? Well, for starters you can keep your horoscope reading for your free time. Note: The "secret" here is to do "low energy" type tasks during your "low energy" time of day.

I Coulda Been A Sports Star

This one is predominantly for the men! Think about how many times you get into the office

and start talking about the game. This can take anywhere from 10 minutes to an hour depending on the game and which teams everyone supported. Aside from getting quite heated, this obviously wastes so much time. You cannot change the outcome of the game, and everyone is entitled to their own opinions, so what is the use? OK, so it is fun banter, but this can wait until later when you meet for a drink after work.

Facebook Is Your Life

This one has made such a huge impact on work place productivity that most offices have prohibited employees from checking their Facebook at work. Why? Well, this social site is simply too addictive with people spending hours checking messages, chatting to friends, liking posts and pictures and checking out pages. So, what to do? Allocate 10 minutes to check your Facebook in the morning before work, perhaps check it once during your lunch break, and check it again in the evening when you get home from work.

