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Label That Laptop

By James Gaskin 3 Like 0 +1 0

July 10, 2008, 12:40 PM — People lose things all the time, including laptops. Thousands are left behind every day, in taxis, restaurants, airports, and everywhere else people go. So if you find a lost laptop in a restaurant, or your cab, how do you get it back to the owner? After all, most people are honest, and want to do the right thing, but how do you return a laptop with no return information?

Many people automatically think they'll just tape their business card, or a label with their home address, on the laptop (or smart phone or Blackberry etc.). That's OK, but if someone steals your laptop because it's so fancy, they may want to come see what they can find in your house. Do you want to give those people your address?

Enter a small group of companies creating specialized labels helping honest people return found items. In fact, one of the companies I like best is called ImHonest, because they help honest people return lost items. Other players in this market include StuffBak and StopTheft, along with many others.

Each service keeps a database linking protected equipment to a unique identifying number on every label sold. When someone finds the laptop (or whatever), they simply call the toll free number or go to the label vendor's Web site to report what they've found. The company then arranges for the equipment to be picked up, or handles the transfer some other way that requires the Good Samaritan do almost no work whatsoever.

For a few dollars per year, you can protect expensive (both in replacement cost and the value of the data within) equipment. Finders usually get rewarded with free labels from the service. Owners are rewarded by getting their equipment back, usually quickly and certainly easily.

Even in today's fast paced world, people will do the neighborly thing and return items. But your chances go way, way up when you make it easy for them. Label services make it easy for people to be helpful, a trait we should all encourage.

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James E. Gaskin writes books (Texas Hysterical Society is number 17), articles and jokes about technology and real life from ... Read more

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Our company has used the STOP plates for years and they are excellent. They are extrememly difficult to remove and even if you can get them off, they have a tattoo that burns itself into the device casing ...really cool stuff.
We have had our units recovered from Airports, hotels and even the bottom of a lake!

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