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WHY DIGITAL TRUST MATTERS TO US?

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Imagine downloading a new app that everyone's been talking about. You're excited to try it out, so you install it on your phone, eager to explore its features. But before you can use it, the app asks permission to access your contacts, photos, location, and even your microphone. Suddenly, you are hit with a wave of uncertainty. Do you trust this app with all that personal information? This experience is common for many people as they navigate the digital world, where the convenience of new technology often comes with questions about privacy and security. This moment of hesitation highlights the importance of digital trust, which plays a crucial role in how we interact with apps and online services. It's not just about whether the app works well, but also about whether we feel safe using it, knowing our data is protected and respected.

According to Guo (2022), digital trust refers to the relationship between a person and the independent intelligence agent existing in the digital environment. Digital trust is all about feeling safe and secure when using technology. When it comes to apps, digital trust means knowing that the app will protect your personal information, respect your privacy, and work the way it's supposed to. Digital trust refers to the confidence users have in the safety, security, and reliability of an app or digital platform. When downloading apps, digital trust plays a vital role in protecting personal information, ensuring security, and maintaining privacy.

Users, clients, and stakeholders' confidence in the safety and dependability of digital systems and services rests on a bedrock of digital trust (Chui, 2023).

Figure 1: Digital trust is crucial in digital world

Communicating digitally changes the use of non-verbal cues and emotional expressions and limits social and contextual information which can increase anxiety and insecurity about others' performance. When you download an app, it often asks for permission to access things like your contacts, photos, and location. This information is personal, and you wouldn't want it falling into the wrong hands. If you trust the app, you can feel confident that it's using your data

responsibly, like helping you connect with friends or improving your experience. But if you don't trust the app, sharing this information can be risky. It's important to only download apps from trusted sources and to think carefully about what permissions you're granting. Keeping your personal info safe starts with trusting the apps you use.

Some apps, particularly those from unverified developers, may contain malware that can steal personal information or corrupt devices. Digital trust helps users identify reputable apps and avoid those that might harm their devices or data. Before downloading any app, we should verify its authenticity by checking reviews, download statistics, and ensuring it comes from official sources. Building this habit of caution will prevent students from falling victim to cyberattacks or scams that could disrupt their personal lives.

Digital trust isn't just about security. It's also about having a good experience with the app. When you trust an app, you're more likely to enjoy using it because you know it's reliable, works well, and doesn't have a hidden agenda, like annoying ads or in-app purchases that trick you into spending money. A trustworthy app does what it promises and helps you get the most out of your time online. Trustworthy apps have clear privacy policies that explain how your data is used and give you control over what you share. They also don't collect more information than they need. If an app is

vague about how it handles your data or asks for too much personal info, it might not be worth the risk. Protecting your privacy means choosing apps that respect your data and give you the control you deserve.

As you grow up, you'll use more and more digital tools and apps, so it's important to build good digital habits now. This includes being careful about what apps you download and how you use them. By focusing on digital trust, you learn to be more mindful of your online choices, which helps you stay safe and make better decisions in the future. Building these habits early on sets you up for a lifetime of responsible and secure digital use.

In Malaysia, the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), plays a critical role in promoting digital trust in cybersecurity.

Figure 2: MCMC is one of the national cybersecurity specialist agencies in Malaysia

As the primary regulator for Malaysia's communication and multimedia sectors, MCMC'S mission is to ensure a secure, reliable, and trustworthy digital

environment for all Malaysians. In an age where cyber threats are increasing, MCMC works to protect users' personal data, privacy, and online activities from potential attacks, fostering confidence in digital platforms.

One of MCMC's main functions is to enforce cybersecurity laws and regulations. It ensures that digital service providers comply with legal standards that protect users from data breaches, identity theft, and other cybercrimes. By setting strict data protection and privacy policies guidelines, MCMC holds companies accountable for handling user information responsibility. This creates a more secure digital environment where people can trust the apps and services they use daily.

Moreover, MCMC plays an active role in raising public awareness about cybersecurity. Through digital literacy campaigns, the commission educates individuals and businesses about safe online practices, including how to recognize phishing scams, secure personal information, and avoid cyber threats. By enhancing public understanding of cybersecurity issues, MCMC empowers users to protect themselves online.

Digital trust is essential when it comes to downloading and using apps. It helps you keep your personal information safe, avoid scams, ensure a positive experience, protect your privacy, and build good digital habits. So next time you're about to install a new app, take a moment to think about whether you can trust it. By making smart choices, you can enjoy all the benefits of technology while staying safe and secure online.

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MCMC. Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Comission 2nd September 2024 https://www.mcmc.gov.my/ms/home