



Article By Jim Roskopf, Technology Practice Leader

Pokémon Go is Fantasy, but Cyber Risks and Life Safety are Real

As if texting and e-mail weren't enough to distract people as they are walking or driving, now Pokémon Go is creating yet another reason to take your eyes off the road or not watch where you're walking.

The game allows players to explore a fantasy world as they look for unusual creatures which can appear anywhere — on someone's shoulder, along a walkway, or in a local bakery shop.

The app was created by Niantic Labs and can either be downloaded from the Pokémon website or through Google Play which gives the app access to all of a users' Google-related information such as Gmail, Google Docs and Google Photos, or through iTunes for the iOS platform.

Life Safety

Geolocation – This game presents a danger to adults and children as the geolocation service on your phone can be used to track your whereabouts.

Don't drive and play – You are putting yourself and innocent bystanders at risk with distracted driving.

Dangerous places – Pokémon gamers are so intent on their game, they may not pay attention to their surroundings and may be willing to go into unfamiliar areas. The Texas Department of Transportation posted a warning on its Facebook page to remind players to be alert to who and what is around them.

Inappropriate places - Gamers are venturing into places where it is inappropriate to play, such as cemeteries, museums and churches. A number of state institutions have asked players not to search for Pokémon creatures in their locales.

Watch where you walking - pedestrians have been injured by walking into manholes, trees or tripping over curbs and other obstructions. However, getting injured at work while chasing a Pokémon probably won't qualify as a workers' compensation claim.

Cyber Risks

- **Information Sharing and Data Aggregation** – People seldom read the download permissions in third party apps and children will click “ok” just to access the app. Even small bits of data freely given away can be aggregated to create a comprehensive picture of a person.
- **Malware** - Because the Pokémon game is so popular, versions with malware embedded in them have flooded the market. This can create vulnerabilities in a phone and allow hackers access to any information the owner accesses with his or her phone.
- **BYOD** – Employees who play Pokémon with their personal devices connected to your network or with their company owned devices are another portal into your network for potential data breaches.
- **Privacy, not likely** - This game requires your location and a data connection (either WiFi or cellular data), so don't expect your privacy to be secured while playing. Consider creating a new gmail account with limited data strictly for purposes of playing Pokémon.

At INSURICA, we strive to keep you informed of new trends in safety and risk management. Being aware of these potential exposures could help you avoid being compromised.

For more information find an INSURICA location near you.