

Escape room shines light on cyber security issues

A new escape room experience is set to open this summer in Aurora's downtown core, providing an immersive dip into the world of cybersecurity.

The Cybersecurity Escape Room is a joint initiative between the Town of Aurora, Emerging Aurora, and siberX, which will power the experience. It is designed to give business owners and residents alike a fun and free experience that will, according to organizers, take you through a series of thrilling scenarios designed to boost your cybersecurity skills.

You will navigate through a meticulously crafted home, office, and hacker's den, each filled with challenging puzzles and realistic simulations, they say of the experience, which will open in a former dental office on Yonge Street, just north of the Aurora Public Library. Learn how to defend against brute force password attacks, understand the dangers of ransomware, and sharpen your awareness of phishing scams. This experience is perfect for anyone looking to enhance their cybersecurity knowledge in a fun and engaging way.

Lisa Hausz, Aurora's Manager of Economic Development, says she and her department were looking at how they can best educate businesses on cybersecurity and get through threats facing their operations.

We wanted to come up with an interactive way to engage them and train them at the same time, says Hausz. The [idea] was to open up the Cybersecurity Escape Room training centre that is free for Aurorans, free for our local businesses to come through, and it's right in the heart of the downtown on Yonge Street next to the Library, so we're pleased about that.

Some businesses don't really understand some of the nuances [of cybersecurity] and how hackers can kind of live on their server for many months, and then all of a sudden surprise them with an attack later on. [The question was] how do we train them on that to recognize the threat? The other part of the experience, through training, is they will know what phishing is, how to identify false emails, how to double check that if someone is sending an invoice that it isn't a fake invoice, how to verify your vendors, and watch for your vendor connections.

Work continues behind the scenes to make sure all the details of the experience are just right, but Hausz says the Escape Room will first put Town employees and lawmakers through their paces, then businesses and the community at large. For more information, including how to book your time, visit www.siberx.org/escape.

One of the fun things about it is you'll get an experience not only from an office environment, but you also see some of the nuances of what a hacker would view, or some of the vulnerabilities you might see when you go back to your business, says Hausz.

By Brock Weir