

Recovery Services

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RECOVERY PROCESS

How does the Recovery Team recover stolen computers?

We track the computer via its internet connection. When the user connects to the internet with your computer we begin to collect information on the user which can help lead the police to the location of your computer. There are two main types of information we use that can help us assist the police. 1) The Internet Protocol (IP) Address of the computer registers with our Monitoring Center each time the computer connects to the internet. This information can be useful in determining the location of the computer. 2) Forensic information which we can gather from the stolen computer through the use of patented Forensic Tools (which are downloaded to the computer once it is reported to us as stolen).

Can you explain the recovery process in detail?

Once a stolen computer connects to the internet, the Recovery Team is notified. A Theft Recovery Officer is assigned to the case and reviews the Theft Report. Once enough information is gathered from the computer through internet connections, the Theft Recovery Officer initiates an investigative process with the appropriate law enforcement division. The Theft Recovery Officer then prepares legal support documents to assist law enforcement. Law enforcement may then subpoena the Internet Service Provider (ISP) seeking customer subscriber records, providing this is a hard wired connection. The timeframe for the return of these records varies from a few days to 2 weeks or longer, depending on the ISP. If the connections are coming from an unsecure wireless network then the Theft Recovery Officer relies on information collected from the machine through the use of patented Forensic Tools. This allows us to collect other forms of evidence from the stolen computer in order to determine the user's identity. Using the records provided by the ISP and any other evidence obtained by the Theft Recovery Officer, the police investigator obtains a search warrant and searches the address obtained as a result.

How long until my computer calls in?

We cannot predict what actions the thief will take in any particular instance.

We can provide the customer with examples such as:

If the thief plans to use the computer themselves it could connect to the internet within a few days. If the computer is in a pawn shop it may take some time. Often the thief will sell the computer, in which case it may not be used online (i.e. will not connect to the internet) until it is in the possession of the recipient of the stolen computer.

FAQ

Are you going to update me on a regular basis?

No. You will be notified when your computer connects to the internet and when your computer has been recovered. If you have access to your account on our website, you will see the current status of your Theft Report. Feel free to contact us if you require more information, but please understand that we will be limited in the amount of information that we can provide as it is in regard to an open police investigation.

What happens if the computer never connects to the internet?

We are unable to recover a computer if it does not connect to the internet.

However, our experience has shown that most thefts are crimes of opportunity committed by opportunistic thieves looking for an easy target. The thief will use the computer to connect to the internet or quickly resell the laptop to an unsuspecting victim who connects to the internet. While it's possible that a computer would never connect, we've found that in the majority of cases it does and that's why we recover on average over 100 computers each week.

Has my computer called your monitoring center yet? Can I get a status update?

You can see the current status of your Theft Report by logging in to your account through our web portal. Below are the Theft Report statuses you may see, and their meanings:

- ***Monitoring: Awaiting 1st Post Theft Connection***
Device has not connected to the internet since it was stolen
No one has used your device while connected to the internet yet. You will be notified when the machine becomes active on the internet with an email stating what happens next for your records.
- ***Under Investigation: Researching***
Machine is actively connecting to the internet – TRO Assigned
Your computer has connected to our monitoring center and we've assigned a Theft Recovery Officer (TRO) to work with the Police. They contact the law enforcement agency that you reported the theft to with all relevant evidence collected and work with the assigned Detective. You will be notified upon a recovery.
- ***Monitoring: Awaiting Further Device Contact***
Device contact has ceased, all leads exhausted
Your computer has not connected to the internet recently and has been put into a monitoring state. The information collected from any connections that were received previously was not enough for law enforcement to proceed with. The location and/or user of the laptop have not been determined. We will receive instant notification when the computer connects to the internet again at which time, the Theft Recovery Officer will review the new connections and reach out to law enforcement when they have gathered sufficient evidence that may assist in a recovery.

How long do you track my computer?

For 1 year after the theft is reported to us.

Should I buy a new computer?

This is a personal choice. If the computer is active the average recovery time is 45 days. Unfortunately we have no way of knowing when a thief or end user will eventually connect to the internet. Also, we rely on continued internet connections to be able to gather enough information to be able to assist the police in a potential recovery.

FAQ

STATISTICS

How long does it take to get the computer back?

From the time the computer makes a post theft call to our monitoring center, the average recovery period is 45 days. However, it can take less time or much more time. Of those computers that we do recover, 95% of them are recovered within 407 days.

What is our success rate?

On average, 3 out of 4 computers that make a post theft call to our monitoring center are recovered.

CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION

Will there be criminal charges against the thief if they are caught?

Possibly, this would be up to the police department.

Can the Recovery Team provide the contact information for the suspect

No. We are not able to release any information that may compromise the criminal investigation.

What if the police say they don't know anything about LoJack/Computrace?

LoJack for Laptops is very easy to install. The installer is a standard Microsoft MSI install package.

They didn't steal the power cord. Is this important?

If the power cord was not stolen the thief may not connect to the internet as quickly. The end user of the stolen computer will need to replace the power cord in order to use it.

I had an Air card or Cell Modem stolen. What do I do?

Contact the company that provides you with your Air Card or Cell Modem and have it disabled immediately so we aren't tracking your IP address. This also forces the new user to seek their own internet account.

My computer has a password on it? How will it ever connect to the internet?

Passwords can be circumvented by thieves.

What if the stolen computer is re-formatted?

Depending on whether or not the computer was BIOS enabled, once the reformatted computer connects to the internet, the computer will still call into our monitoring center. We will still be able to track it and gather information from it.

Check to see if your computer is BIOS enabled or not at:

<http://www.absolute.com/en/products/bios-compatibility>

If BIOS Enabled – The Computrace/LoJack agent is on the motherboard as well as the hard drive of your computer and therefore, the thief cannot remove it by re-formatting the computer.

If NOT BIOS Enabled – Thieves do have ways to circumvent passwords that do not include reformatting the hard drive. However, if the thief or end user reformats the hard drive, it will likely remove the Computrace/LoJack agent.

FAQ

My computer is missing, not stolen. Can you help?

We cannot assist you in re-locating your lost computer. In order for us to track and recovery a computer, it must be reported stolen to the police. However, if you “lost” your computer and someone took it then it is considered stolen.

What happens if my computer is stolen while I’m abroad, or if it stolen and taken to another country?

We attempt to recover from any location, with certain exceptions that are listed in our [Service Agreement](#).

What information should I provide to increase the probability of my device being recovered and speed up the process?

When submitting your theft report to Absolute, it is crucial that you provide as much information about the theft as you can, particularly in the theft details section, such as:

- Location of theft or last known location of your computer
- How the device was
- Other items that were also stolen
- The full name of the police officer you spoke to and direct phone number, if available

If you are not the victim of the original offence (e.g. Break and Enter, Robbery or Auto Burglary) it is **very** important you provide the name of the victim associated to the police report in the Victim’s Name field when you submit your theft report to us.

Delays are minimized when we have all the facts. The more specific you can be about police officer name and contact details, the quicker our investigators can get evidence we gather to law enforcement. Additionally, your detailed theft report proves we are working on your behalf – the police are often more willing to work with us when we are fully informed. Overall, the more we know from you, the better we can target our investigation to help the police and improve chances for a speedy recovery of your computer.

What does the status of my theft report mean?

For a complete list of explanations, please see our list of theft report status definitions visit:

http://www.absolute.com/en/support/theft_report_definitions