ADDRESSING THE NEEDS AND SECURING THE FUTURE

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Security Solutions

Editor's Note

In recent times the human race has faced an unprecedented number of computer-generated offences, some of which have come about as a result of the effects of the Corona Virus. Due to this Global Pandemic persons have adopted various methods of social distancing and many have opted into online methods of ecommerce, meetings and general social interaction to combat isolation cause by nationwide lockdowns implemented by governments worldwide. This quarter, our newsletter will look into various methods of securing one's self when online.

Zoom has over night become a platform that most private individuals and companies use to have meetings. The increased popularity of Zoom has given rise to "zoom boomers" or people who are unwelcomed to the meeting and who have sinister agendas. These Zoom Bombers will drop x-rated items in the meeting and leave. In article one, the writer discusses how to keep them away. As mentioned earlier,

this pandemic has led to increased internet traffic as people work, socialize, and entertain themselves online, the second article highlights to the online community the challenges associated with e-commerce.

Keeping a large amount of digital information secure can be done in many ways but if you are not interested in purchasing a physical server to store your private information cloud servers can play an important role. Article three explores five reasons why using a cloud server can be beneficial to you and/or your business.

When it comes to buying and selling products or services, seller reputations are everything. A business reputation can help boost sales which is good for the company, but how accurate is this reputation? Is it polished or genuine? The fourth article discusses how to spot the difference.

With the new 'normal' being accepted throughout many aspects of life, online activity has

boomed since the start if the pandemic, however not only adults are online but children spend many hours online as well, therefore we as responsible adults must establish rules with them before they roam the internet without a 'guide' which is discussed in article five. As we step more and more into the online world other everyday items are also moving into that realm. Now we have voice activated locks which mean they can be controlled by Amazon, Google or Apple devices. Such as "Alexa" unlock the front door or "Hey Google" lock the front door, but how comfortable are you with the internet not only securing your virtual world but the physical one as well. The last article investigates this.

We do hope you find these articles and the safety methods helpful in some manner and we at **Amalgamated Security Services Limited** will continue to fulfil our commitment to provide quality service for all customers.

Regards
ASSL Marketing Team

How to Beat "Zoom Bombers" -- The New Breed of Video Hijackers

Zoombombing raids are taking place everywhere. Could you be a target? If so, we can help.

For those not in the know, "Zoom" is the name of a suddenly popular video chat app that allows multiple people to join a conversation. Few people, except for professionals, had ever heard of it before the Coronavirus pandemic. But it was an instant hit as soon as people found themselves locked down at home and in desperate need of social contact with family and friends.

And, of course, it has been a boon for employees required to attend virtual meetings while working from home.

The makers of Zoom say that they have an average of 300 million daily meetings -- that's a lot of people for the hackers and scammers to take aim at. And they're not alone in this market. Microsoft has a popular professional product called Teams, while Facebook recently joined the fray with its own version of multi-person video called Messenger Rooms.

In other words, it's a fast-growing marketplace for organizations and individuals, but Zoom was definitely out in front with the general public when the "bomb" dropped.

In this case, "bombing" refers to hackers dropping in on Zoom conversations and often disrupting them with insults and threats. In one case, they were alleged to have thrown up pornographic images on participants' screens. Hence -- "Zoombombing."

This isn't just annoying. It's a huge security issue. And since, one way or another, we're likely to be having more virtual meetings in the future -- now that we know how to do it -- we need to be able to stop the bombers.

Thanks to watchdog *Consumer Reports*, or more particularly to one of its readers who fell victim, a number of key steps have been identified that can help you thwart the Zoombombers.

The reader, Loren Ford, a former privacy lawyer and counsel for Google, told the publication: "Zoom wasn't built for its current use. It was built for business meetings, which don't have the same level of privacy and security concerns as a massive platform for connection of all kinds."

Zoom responded quickly to the disclosure of incidents by tightening up security. They were so worried that, earlier this month, the firm actually bought a security company to add another layer of protection.

But for now, users, especially meeting organizers and not just of Zoom, may be exposed to bombers just because their own sense of security is not as sharp as it should be.

Ford offers the following tips aimed at organizers to counter the bombers:

- Tell your participants not to publicize the meeting, especially with links, on social networks.
- Be cautious and aware of all meeting participants. Make sure you know them and why they are there.
- Don't allow participants to join the meeting before you do -- or to hang around afterwards.
- Use the software's "waiting room" feature that allows you to review participants before virtually opening the door to them.
- For meetings where not everyone is known, don't allow users to use virtual backgrounds (downloaded from the Internet) because intruders might use them to post insulting messages. Another feature allows you to put a would-be participant

on "hold" and unable to take part until you've established their credentials.

- Be wary about how you name meetings. Zoombombers are good at guessing them and sneaking in, especially if you use family or business names. Zoom has its own mechanism for generating meeting names. Use that instead.
- Consider using entry passwords. They're a must for meetings that include children, says Ford.

Once meetings are in action, there are several controls available to organizers including the ability to mute one or more participants, turning off whiteboard sharing and disabling file transfers during chat, to prevent bombers from sending malware to others taking part.

For the full *Consumer Reports* article, visit https://www.consumerreports.org/video-conferencing-services/how-to-prevent-zoombombing/

Also, review Zoom's own security pages here: http://www.zoom.us/security

Reprinted from Scambusters.org

3 Ecommerce Challenges & Solutions for Tough Times

By [Susan Friesen](#) | *Submitted On April 23, 2020*

How to Start Selling Online More Effectively

To call these "tough times" may be a bit of an understatement to you, or perhaps you've pivoted your marketing strategy nicely and aren't negatively affected by the COVID-19 crisis.

There's no arguing this pandemic has led to increased internet traffic as people work, socialize, and entertain themselves online. Distribute, a company that buys wholesale access to Rogers Communications Inc.'s internet backbone, has seen a traffic increase of about 50%.

But an increase in internet usage doesn't necessarily translate into increased sales for your small business. Many consumers are hesitant to buy, either because they aren't sure when they'll be able to use the

service you sell, or because they've been laid off or have had their hours reduced.

That's why I'm sharing 3 eCommerce challenges and solutions to help you maintain and even grow as an entrepreneur during this crisis.

The Challenge: Making Your (eCommerce) Business Essential

Many entrepreneurs are panicking because they don't have a traditional eCommerce business model, or an eCommerce website. And, many worry they don't have an "essential" enough product or service to offer online, like grocery stores do. (According to Apptopia, downloads of Instacart, the Walmart Grocery app and Shipt have increased 218%, 160%, and 124% compared with a year ago.)

Okay, so chances are you don't sell groceries. But you can still be essential to your customers. Are there certain products or services you can focus on that will better serve your target audience? For example:

- If you have a clothing store: fabric face masks, casual outfits for working from home
- If you offer financial, life, or other counseling services: 30- or 60-minute mental health sessions; many people are feeling lonely and isolated because of COVID-19
- If you sell entertainment-related items: create short

videos highlighting games, crafts, or puzzles that will be fun for bored kids or adults
While it's not possible for every small business to pivot this way, the reality is that if you don't adjust to this "new normal" as much as possible, your small business will suffer.

Changing your marketing strategy can be tough, but it's amazing how a bit of creative thinking can transform your situation and increase your web presence.

The Challenge: More Customer Questions & Complaints

While having a phone number on your website and in your Google My Business results may have been enough pre-pandemic, your customers need your support now more than ever.

More people online means an increased number of questions, comments and complaints could be coming your way. I'm sure you've been incredibly frustrated at one point after being put on hold for ages, or not getting an email back when you inquired about something. Don't let your customers have a similar experience on your website.

If you don't have the capacity to manage customer service, consider implementing a chatbot to increase your web presence. A chatbot allows business owners to provide responses and solutions-and even generate leads and sales-24/7 through automated customer service live chat.

According to IBM, up to 80% of routine customer service questions could be answered by a chatbot. While not every query can be tackled by a chatbot, it could take on the easier, yet still time-consuming, questions your customers might have.

The Challenge: Website Tech Issues

Let's say you already have an eCommerce site for your small business. If you have a broken link, 404 page or slow loading times, your visitors will go elsewhere. (This is true all the time, not just during COVID-19). Even a clever 404 page can't save you from losing visitors (and potentially sales).

Also, you're not going to build trust among your audience with a poor user experience. Nobody is going to enter their contact or credit card info if they don't trust your website. Not to mention, an unkempt website is a target for hackers.

Remember: You're not only responsible for protecting your own data, but also for your visitors'. Security requirements are always changing, and no small or large business is safe.

That's why it's essential to monitor for glitches, update your software and back up your site regularly for an optimal user experience.

Now, what if you have to start selling online in response to COVID-19? While there are sites out there that let you start an eCommerce website yourself, remember that your website is your number one marketing tool.

From calls to action to the font type and images on your pages, how you present your small business to the world makes a big difference to how you're perceived. Also, you're not going to have the same customization options if you go the DIY route.

A professional web development company will understand not only the technical aspects of the build, but also the best ways to get your message across to your target audience.

READ: "17 Strategic Business Pivots to Make in the Time of COVID-19", on our website.

Just like that we woke up in a different world! The coronavirus epidemic has completely changed our lives

and transformed the way we do business.

For many, this can be an incredibly frightening time to be a business owner. You worry about the health of your employees and the business, the bills that keep coming, your income and family obligations.

But rather than let worries overwhelm them, smart small business owners can use this opportunity to plan and prepare for future growth and success. We've created a COVID-19 checklist to help you make the most of this uncertain time.

Whether you have to start an eCommerce website from scratch or adjust your existing marketing strategy to increase your web presence, now is not the time to sit back and wait for the pandemic to blow over.

Right now, your target audience is "living" online, so you're going to have to tackle eCommerce business challenges as quickly and smoothly as possible. Be proactive, pivot your marketing strategy, and learn from this journey!

To Your Business Success

About the Author

Susan Friesen, founder of the award-winning web development and digital marketing firm eVision Media, is a Web Specialist, Business & Marketing Consultant, and Social Media Advisor. She works with entrepreneurs who struggle with having the lack of

knowledge, skill and support needed to create their online business presence.

As a result of working with Susan and her team, clients feel confident and relieved knowing their online marketing is in trustworthy and caring hands so they can focus on building their business with peace of mind at having a perfect support system in place to guide them every step of the way.

Visit http://www.ultimatewebsiteguide.ca and download your FREE "Ultimate Guide to Improving Your Website's Profitability - 10 Critical Questions You Must Ask to Get Maximum Results".

Article Source: https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Susan_Friesen/260293

Amalgamated Security Services offer a full range of security service solutions which are inclusive of the following:

Response Services
Alarm Monitoring
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Electronic Service
Courier Services
Assess Controls
Data Services
Cash Services
Investigations

5 Benefits of Using a Cloud Server

By Dong Wong

In life, there are things that you can't replace, such as the first painting of your kid or family photos. All of these things are special and irreplaceable. But at times, we end up losing these things in accidents. Today, we store our beautiful memories in the form of pictures in our computers. However, the sad fact is that our personal machines are not that reliable. Therefore, we use a better alternative, such as a cloud server. Given below are some primary benefit of using a cloud server.

1. Security

Storing important data in a cloud server protects it against malicious activity and loss. Cloud storage allows you to use the secure systems that can protect you against cybercrime as well. Although you still need to apply your protection systems, the data stored on cloud computers is much safer.

Besides, data stored on these remote computers is under the supervision of experienced engineers. These professionals install special security tools in order to provide extra security layers, such as 2-factor authentication.

2. Flexibility and Scalability

These systems offer flexibility and scalability, which means you can use a low-cost solution or a high-end solution that will allow you to use the entire resources of the server. If you are a business owner, for instance, you can opt for a dedicated server. This system offers more resources, such as higher storage and computer power.

3. Data Backups

If you keep your data on a cloud server, you can download the data on your computer in case your local computer fails. The good thing is that the data backups are run automatically on the same day. Therefore, you don't need to create a backup of your important data on your own computer.

4. Savings

The drawback of your local computers is that they can't maintain themselves. So, if you want to expand your business, there is no way out except upgrading your hardware. Aside from this, you need to hire more professionals to take care of your systems. This comes with huge costs, which you may not be able to pay for.

Therefore, it's better to opt for a cloud storage package instead. This will help you save tons of money as you don't need to hire new professionals to manage your in-house systems.

5. Collaboration and Convenience

If you confine your data and apps to your own computers, not all of your employees may be able to enjoy simultaneous access to the files and applications. On the other hand, cloud servers don't have these constraints. Therefore, all of your workers can get access to the data and apps at the same time, from across the globe. As long as they have the access credentials, they can use the files.

Long story short, these are some of the primary advantages of cloud servers for your business. If you want to expand your hardware and other resources, we suggest that you check out a cloud server package as it can help you enjoy all these advantages without spending a lot of money.

If you are looking for a good cloud server for your business needs, we suggest that you check out Tencent Cloud Server. Article Source: https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Dong_Wong/2659905

How to Check a Business Reputation

If you make a business or buying decision based on a firm's reputation, it better be right.

But how do you discover whether you can count on them, especially when some firms actually pay to have their reputation "polished" online? We'll give you some pointers in this week's issue.

Let's get started...

How to Check a Business Reputation

When it comes to buying and selling products or services, seller reputations are everything. Well, almost. Value has a role to play too.
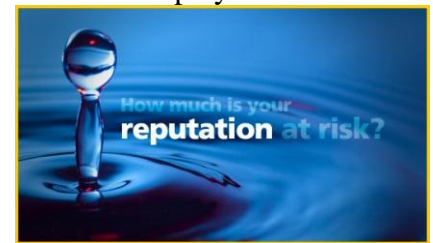
Because it's easier than ever to check out a firm's reputation, many sellers put a lot of effort into getting the best and the most compliments they can and acting quickly to respond to criticism. Even so, lots of shoppers still get caught out when buying online or in brick and mortar stores because they didn't take the time to check out what others are saying about the sellers.

As we explain below, there are some cases where you can't rely on comments and scores others have awarded. But there are some basic researches everyone should follow to get an idea of the reliability and honesty of the firms they're dealing with.

Here are the five most important actions:

1. If you don't know them, research the company by name. The bigger your planned purchase, the more important this is. Type their name into your browser, with and without the word "complaint," and see what comes up. But don't just look at the first page of returns from your search. That's where clever search engine manipulators and advertisers lurk. Scroll through a few pages.

Another neat trick is to add the letter " v " (with a space either side), which may indicate if a company has been involved in any lawsuits.

2. Check business scoring and reputation sites. These include Google, Yelp, and the Better Business Bureau. You can also check with your state or local consumer protection departments.

When looking at scores, be wary about firms that have only top scores. They may be that good but still...

3. If you're shopping locally, ask neighbors, family and

friends for their recommendations -- especially for home service contractors such as plumbers, electricians and building contractors. Then, still do your online reputation research, including whether contractors are properly bonded, licensed and insured.

You can also check the files of local newspapers or request recommendations from other users on sites like Facebook and local community forums.

reputation.com®

4. Check the websites of firms you're considering. Look for a good modern design, upfront information about privacy and trading practices. Do they give full contact details including names and addresses? Check Google's street view of the address to see if the location is genuine. Also check the firm's Facebook and Twitter postings to get a feel for how they deal with customers.

If you read testimonials, be cautious. Site owners naturally want to present the most positive image and may filter out negative reviews. And does the firm say that testimonials are available for inspection?

Also, check their Internet website registration. This is quite easy by checking registration websites using the term "whois lookup."

Another useful source of company information is the free-to-use Electronic Data Gathering (EDGAR) service operated by the US Securities and Exchange Commission. It's a huge database of information about listed and public companies. Start here: https://www.sec.gov/edgar/search-and-access

5. Watch out for red flags. There are lots of simple things that can signal caution when you're considering doing business with a company that's new to you, For example:

- Have you -- or anyone else for that matter -- ever heard of them before?
- Is the company based abroad, notably in China or certain African countries?
- Is the deal they're offering too good to be true -- in terms of value and quality (e.g. brand names that are normally expensive)?

But Beware...

There are a couple of important issues to bear in mind when you're checking out a company's reputation.

First, there are firms that offer companies a service they call "reputation management." More bluntly, as one of them says, they can "bury negative content," and "make the best things about you prominently

visible to others."

This is perfectly legal and all businesses naturally want to emphasize what's good about them. Nevertheless, when you're doing your research, you should be aware of this as a possibility when you're investigating them.

Second, it's also true that most people who are perfectly happy with products or services they bought don't bother to write positive reviews. But many people who are unhappy can't wait to share their grumbles.As Benjamin Franklin said: "It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation and only bad one to lose it."

This means there could be, unfairly, a lot more negatives than positives in certain online reviews. There's not a lot you can do about this. But where review sites have a scoring system, it's a good idea to check those in the middle -- the three-out-of-five-star reviews for example. Here you'll most likely encounter fair and honest experiences. Reprinted from Scambusters.org

Internet Safety Facts and Rules to Establish With Your Kids

By <u>Terry Phong</u>

Perhaps you are the guardian or parents of some young children who has just recently begun making use of the world-wide-web. When a youngster gets to middle school usually around the age of 12 or 13, they'll start to depend on the internet a whole lot more, especially with school work. However, as their parent or guardian, it's essential to keep in mind that school work is not the only thing they'll be using the web for. Unfortunately, many kids including teenagers will make use of the web as a simple means to connect with their close friends or perhaps to even meet new acquaintances.

The capability to utilize the internet to make new friends as well as connect with existing ones seems quite cool initially, however, it's important to keep the following in mind. The Internet can be a very dangerous place and filled with child predators and they want to target your unsuspecting and innocent kids. These predators usually hide behind a computer screen and pretend to be

someone else. This is why it's crucial to educate your children with some Internet Safety Facts and Rules for when they are browsing the world-wide-web.

You can simply begin by letting your kids recognize the importance of protecting their personal information as well as yours while they are online. Make your kids understand that there's really no need for them to divulge any kind of important information such as their address, phone numbers, or social security numbers. They should never give this important personal information to anyone online and that they need your permission if someone happens to ask for it. The reason being, people lie to commit fraud or even worse, child predators wanting more information to get to your kids.

You'll want to further educate your kids about the importance of posting personal images or videos online too. It's sad to say that this is something kids like to do without even giving it a second thought. For example, just visit any one of the popular social media sites such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok,

Twitter, YouTube and etc., you'll quickly notice just how many kids and teenagers are posting their personal images and videos of themselves online. This can be a very dangerous practice especially when details like a city or school are being revealed in the background. The predator now has a better idea of where your child is from and it just makes it easier for them to find and target. If your kids still really want to publish images or videos of themselves, make it a rule for them to get your approval first.

Make certain that your child understands that they are never permitted to meet someone in person whom they have only met online. This is a crucial point because it's how many kids and teenagers become victims of these child predators who are lurking online. If indeed an in-person meeting must take place for a school assignment or something along that line, make sure you accompany your child, tell others of the meeting, and make it a public place.

A very popular place that child predators like to hang out online is in chat rooms. This is why very important for you to set rules and guidelines for the use of these websites. As a parent or guardian, it's your decision to whether or not allow your kids to use them, granted some online education classes do require the use of such platforms. If that's the case, it's your decision to either monitor your kids or home-school them. If you do choose to allow your kids to use the chat rooms and social media websites, the very least you can and should do is to set their profile page to private so that only their classmates can enter the chats. It's also suggested that you routinely monitor the websites your children visit to make sure your personal information has not been compromised.

Believe it or not, one of the biggest problems that many parents and guardians face is having to check-up on their kid's online activities. It's no big surprise that kids these days are a lot more tech and computer savvy than their parents are. The parental control can become quite the challenge, especially when your kids know how to erase their online history and you don't. If this becomes the case, it just may be worth your while to further educate yourself and invest in some software that'll give you more control. For example, some porn filter has the ability to block certain websites and restrict your kids from visiting them too.

By adhering to these simple Internet safety facts, rules and guidelines, you can rest assured that you've taken a big step in educating both yourself and kids to prevent them from becoming just another statistic of an online predator. Should your child or teenager encounter anything they're not sure of, like being harassed or have inappropriate comments being made, make sure they understand that they should come to you and not simply ignore or delete the message. You should then take action to save the message as evidence and report it to the authorities. Bullying and threats shouldn't be tolerated and protection may be available to you from your local police department.

As a final point, see to it that your children recognize all the rules and guidelines not only apply to their personal computer but should apply to every computer they use both at home or at public places such as schools and libraries.

For more Online Safety and Parenting Tips, please visit: http://kidprotectors.com

Article Source: https://EzineArticles.com/expert/Terry_Phong/283420

Voice Activated Door Locks

By George Uliano

We are all seeing more Voice Activated Door Locks bring advertised and being sold. By Voice Activated I mean they can be controlled by Amazon, Google or Apple devices. Such as "Alexa" unlocked the front door or "Hey Google" lock the front door. So how do these devices work?

The basic lock is remarkably similar to electronic locks, which I have discussed in past articles. The difference is that these locks have built in capabilities to communicate with voice activated controllers. They will usually communicate with either Bluetooth, Wi-Fi or both. Bluetooth will be used to open or lock the lock; it will be controlled by your smart phone. Like all smart or electronic locks installation is particularly important. It must be installed so the mechanical action is exceptionally smooth and there is no binding. The motor inside these locks are not as strong as your hand as was the case in all mechanical locks.

These smart locks can be set up to temporally allow someone in on a one-time basis, such as a cleaning service. They also have a tracking capability with history, so you can determine who entered your house and at what time. Great for making sure your teenagers come home on time!

For controlling the lock from your smart controller this will usually use Wi-Fi. You could set up a routine where if you said goodnight "Alexa" a routine would start that shut off the lights, locked the doors and maybe give you a weather report. It is endless on what your routine could be. All of this controlled by your voice.

Controlled by your voice can also be a problem. So, if a burglar came to your front door and said "Hey Google" unlock the front door, would that door unlock? It is particularly important that for any device such as a thermostat, door lock, alarm system, etc. that they can only be controlled by your voice or the voices that you authorized. Another way would be to set up a secondary authentication like a security code that the smart controller would have to hear before activating. Most of these have the capability to learn voices and only respond to those voices.

Voice activated locks are an evolving industry, as they get smarter, they will become more secure and will be able to more closely communicate with your smart controller. You will also see (AI) artificial intelligence play a bigger role in household security.

George Uliano is a security professional with years of law enforcement and security experience. He earned a Bachelors Degree in Criminal Justice and Business graduating with honors. George holds three U.S. patents on different locking principles. This combination gives George and His Company Locking Systems International Inc the unique ability to provide its customers with the correct security at an affordable price.

For additional information or to purchase Locks go to http://www.lsidepot.com