

Ribb "IT" Review

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started."

-MARK TWAIN

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New Intel Vulnerability Named Foreshadow Found

Intel has had a tough time of things so far this year. The most recent trouble stems from yet another newly discovered security flaw in the company's processors, bearing the inelegant name of "L1 Terminal Fault," or "Foreshadow" by those who have discovered it.

The attack can take one of three different shapes (so far), and ultimately allows a hacker to access sensitive data stored in the computer's memory or on third-party cloud-based storage services. This sensitive data includes passwords, pictures, other sorts of data files, and encryption keys.

The three variants of the attack have been grouped into two distinct categories, known as Foreshadow and Foreshadow NG (Next Gen).

The standard Foreshadow variant (Reference CVE-2018-3615) targets Intel's Software Guard Extensions (SGX), which is new technology designed by intel to help keep user data from falling into the wrong hands, even if the whole system comes under attack.

As the researchers who discovered it describe it:

"Foreshadow enables an attacker to extract SGX sealing keys, previously sealed data can be modified and re-sealed. With the extracted sealing key, an attacker can trivially calculate a valid Message Authentication Code



(MAC), thus depriving the data owner from the ability to detect the modification."

The Foreshadow: Next Generation attack (reference CVE-2018-3620 and CVE-2018-3646) targets virtualization environments like those used by large cloud-based service providers like Microsoft and Amazon.

From the researchers again:

"Using Foreshadow-NG, a malicious program running on the computer might be able to read some parts of the kernel's data. As the kernel has access to data stored by other programs, a malicious program might be able to exploit Foreshadow-NG to access data belonging to other programs.

Foreshadow is different from Meltdown as it targets virtual machines and SGX, in addition to data stored in the operating system's kernel (which was targeted by Meltdown)."

According to Intel, none of these attacks have been seen in the wild, but of course, that's just a matter of time now. No word from Intel yet on a timeframe to address these issues, but stay tuned.

Two Things that Will Stunt Your Business' Growth

The only purpose your company has is to grow. This doesn't always mean gaining customers the fastest, but it does mean that building your brand name and community influence, taking more of the market share, or making more money. There are tons of things that mean "growth" to a company. The only way to really grow is to innovate – either you create something new or you market to new audiences. That's it! Everything else is fine print.

"Growth" seems like such a simple word, but it's not an easy thing to do. In fact, there are tons of things you can do accidentally that will hold your company back. However, there is light at the end of the tunnel. Avoid the following issues to avoid misery and painful lessons.

Being Ambitious – But Incapable

People love to tell Google's story. It goes something like this: Larry Page and Sergey Brin were just a couple of young men working out of a garage in Palo Alto. With dedication, drive, and ambition, they managed to found Google, which everyone recognizes as a successful company today. No one ever mentions that both of these young men were doctoral students at Stanford University. Both also worked in the Human-Computer Interaction Group, a prestigious unit of professors and students spanning multiple disciplines at Stanford. The same goes for Steve Jobs and Benjamin Franklin – all of the well-known stories passed around about these people overlook years of painful experience and far above-average brilliance.



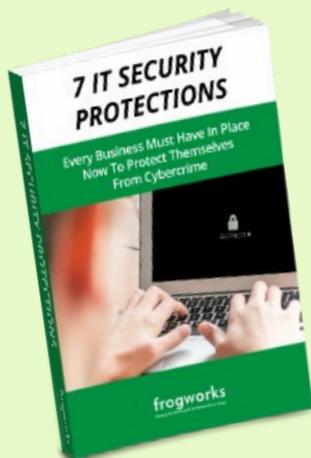
If EVERYONE could think of the ideas these people think of, they absolutely would. But they can't. Most people need the help of experts that have years of work under their belts. If you can't afford the expert team, then don't base your strategy on goals that depend on you having an expert hand. Base it instead on what you and your team are capable of.

Listening to the Wrong Customers

Let's consider Research in Motion for a moment. RIM started the smartphone wave, and they sustained it for a significant amount of time, too. But instead of watching the market closely and keeping up with the times, they listened to their small – but loyal – group of customers instead. They focused on pleasing their dwindling customer base rather than glancing sideways to see Apple and Android emerge from the mists.

Having an increasing share on a dwindling market is a pretty horrible growth strategy. It's easy to favor those who love your company over those who are already looking for the next big thing. Unfortunately, it just doesn't work most of the time. You have to follow the customers who move first – not those who stay with you until the end.

Have you ever lost an hour of work on your computer?



After working with dozens of small and mid-size businesses in the DC Metro area, we found that 6 out of 10 businesses will experience some type of major network or technology disaster that will end up costing them between \$9,000 and \$60,000 in repairs and restoration costs on average.

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Is On-page SEO or Link-building a More Powerful Tool for Marketing?

When you have a tight budget for SEO management, sometimes you have to make valuable sacrifices – one of those sacrifices being the choice between on-page SEO and link-building, since both take a large amount of time to set up and both are incredibly beneficial. The answer to knowing which tool should be invested in lies in understanding what both can do for your website and what you really expect from SEO management.

So – What is on-page SEO, anyway?

On-page SEO is incredibly different for any number of people who refer to it, but for the duration of this article, we're talking about the basics like writing good title tags and proficient internal linking.

When we talk about link-building, we're just talking about good old fashion link-backs.

So, Which is Better? What Should I Spend My Money on?

Unfortunately, the answer to this question really varies depending on who you ask. Talk to a link-building company and see if they don't say 'link-building'...and then talk to a content creator and ask if they don't say 'on-page content.' The fact of the matter is, both are incredibly important, and both are worthy pouring resources into and both should truly be considered and squeezed into any budget.



But the mix between the two is delicate, and if you have too much of one or the other, you often wind up with websites that are built for the wrong purposes and are attempts at 'beating the search engine'. While your content AND website should be built for the customer – Google tells us whenever they have a press release – your back-linking can be excessive if not done correctly. You may think that a lovely 50/50 mix may be the best for you, but in most cases, that may not work. Neither will a 30/70 mix, or a 20/80 mix, or an 80/20 mix – the ways of the Internet are constantly and forever changing, which means you should be constantly changing as well. Leaving your SEO on autopilot is a bad idea, simply because there is so much to be gained from ebbing and flowing with the market.

It also kind of depends on where you are in web development. If you were to sign up for Vertical Axion, for example, your website would be up in a few weeks, so you wouldn't have to worry about being just on-site for months while your website was built and designed from scratch. If you're building a website that's meant to throw stories out to the public, then maybe you will be more balanced towards content – but if your

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MICROSOFT IS KEEPING CLASSIC SKYPE, FOR NOW

Microsoft recently found itself on the receiving end of more than a little user rage when they made significant changes to Skype, with the release of version 8. The company's original plan was to model Skype 8 after several different social media services, but the users found the new interface to be both annoying and frustrating.

On the face of it, Skype 8 boasts a number of impressive enhancements, enabling users to screenshare inside calls, connecting with up to 24 users simultaneously and sharing up to 300MB of files via the Skype application itself. Plus, it offers free HD video.

Unfortunately, users weren't pleased with the fact that the redesign relied on a single window. This makes it impossible to multitask with separate conversations occurring in different windows. Some of the new features lacked professional polish (like emoji's and @mentions). These features would be fine for a consumer grade app, but the desktop version of Skype is something that businesses rely on heavily, and those features are of little value there.

It caused such an uproar in the Skype user community that the company abandoned their plans to end support for Skype 7 on September first, and re-branded it as "Skype Classic," leaving it in place for the time being. Ultimately, the feeling is that "Skype Classic" will be killed off at some point, but for now, Microsoft has chosen to listen to their user base and continue offering support for it.

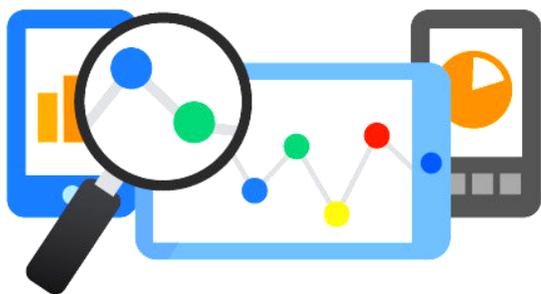
The future, however, is uncertain. While the temporary stay is useful, it is not yet known how long that will hold. The company might intend to go back to the drawing board where Skype 8 is concerned and re-think some of their design decisions to make the new version more palatable to Enterprise users. Time will tell.

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website is meant to sell things and prove that your services are better than others, then you'll be more balanced towards back-linking after your basic website is up and running and your blog is running, too.

So really, the point is, go with the flow. Depending on your situation, one may be more important, and the week after tomorrow, the other may be. Long-term, work on unique content, solid on-page structure (including titles and keywording), and an overwhelmingly excellent social presence. Short term, see what you need at the moment but keep your eyes on the future as this is the best way to safeguard your SEO efforts.

How Analytics Can Help Your Business



Most business owners, large and small, are aware that their customers have started heading online. Business websites need to be attractive now, and should help customers solve their problems without requiring a phone call. But how do you measure the success of your website? How do you know if what you're doing is actually working, and that you're connecting with the people who visit your site?

Answer: Analytics. Web Analytics can help you figure out exactly what is happening on your website. If you don't have an analytics platform running – Axion SiteSpy and other Analytics are included in our higher-end packages – then you're missing out on a valuable opportunity to help your business thrive. How, you ask, can a simple program make such a big difference? Read on to find out.

Turn Visitors into Customers

The best thing that Analytics will teach you is your visitors' patterns on your website. You will start to see the pages they visit the most, how long they stay on those pages, and how often they buy something on those pages. Sometimes you can even view where that person was before they came to your site, and you'll find that a certain review website is directing the most traffic to you. You can even see if that traffic turns into conversions. You may even find out they're coming in via your blogs and not through your landing page. All of this information will help you perfect your website so it's more user friendly (and gets you more conversions).

Insight on Page Quality

When you tap your Analytics, you'll see which pages are contributing to the success of your business...and which aren't. Your pages should all direct your visitors, eventually, to your sales page. Analytics will help you understand which pages people like and which pages people shy away from quickly. Pages that are found to send visitors off-track can be rewritten to direct traffic the way it should be going. Since your Analytics program highlighted the problem, you can fix it.

Contribute to Offline Success

Believe it or not, not everything your company does happens online. Hopefully you're going to tradeshows or otherwise participating in your community offline. Maybe you're advertising on television or distributing brochures at local car shows. Whatever it is, your Analytics can help you. Not convinced? Think about it for a second: you put an ad on the radio. Then you put one in the newspaper, only you use a slightly different URL in both forms of media. Now when people visit your website because of those ads, you'll know which advertisement generated more traffic for your company because you installed Analytics. This will help you understand which audience you should be targeting offline and what works for your company.