

4 Ways to Protect Your Online Commerce

Establishing an online business whether it's based in retail or services can be extremely fruitful as the Internet and shopping platforms allow for businesses to reach more customers.

Of course, this equates to many customers purchasing products using an online checkout where they will have to share some sensitive details related to personal identification, billing and shipping addresses, and banking information. Unfortunately, this is the data hackers and scammers are often trying to steal.

Another risk an online business can face is a different company using its business name to create and sell identical or similar products or services. This can be detrimental to your business as it can devalue your product and brand image by confusing customers leading to fewer sales.

There are a multitude of security threats facing online businesses, but don't worry too much as you can take action to bolster your online security, which you can read about below in this article.

Picture 1 of 4 Ways to Protect Your Online Commerce

1. Trademark Your Business Name

When using a business name without a registered trademark from the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) your business will still have some rights, however, it is advisable to get more vigorous protection from trademark infringements by registering with the USPTO.

As a trademark attorney in Boston said, having a registered trademark will help protect your brand image and business as a whole. Despite this, incidents of copying trademarked business names still occur, when this occurs, a business may need assistance from trademark litigation lawyers like those at Revision Legal to assist with legal proceedings. Sometimes, this can be the only way to protect your intellectual property and ultimately your hard work.

If you are starting a new online business, then you also need to be aware of trademarked business and product names. Fortunately, you can research which names have been used on the USPTO website.

2. Choose a Trusted E-Commerce Platform

You have two choices of where to sell your products or services online, either through your website or on the plethora of third-party platforms such as Amazon, Spotify, Etsy, and eBay.

The things to consider when choosing an e-commerce platform are the volume of users and customers, the level of technical support provided, and the effectiveness of its security features.

One advantage of using a third-party e-commerce platform is that they provide a secure check-out and payment system. It is important to remember that sellers, as product and service providers have a responsibility to protect the personal data of consumers. When using e-commerce platforms a lot of this worry is removed as they must ensure they are storing information correctly and keeping all security measures up to date.

3. Don't Store Too Much Private Information

For marketing and sales purposes, businesses need to know some details about their customers such as their name, billing address, email address, and phone number. This kind of information is labeled as Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and your business has to decide which information to store along with admitting a responsibility to store it safely. In the case of a data breach and information is stolen, your business may be liable to pay damages to affected customers.

When selling products on your website, the one piece of information should never be stored in the customer's credit or debit card details. This is where the issues of compliance with e-commerce laws come into play. The rule of thumb is if you don't store sensitive data then it can't be stolen.

4. Check the Security of Your Website & Platforms

Overall e-commerce platforms are built to handle large volumes of sellers and customers at the same time as guaranteeing security. It is still a good idea to monitor your store's activity or emails for anything suspicious which can then be reported back to the platform.

Picture 2 of 4 Ways to Protect Your Online Commerce

However, if you are creating your website then you must ensure some basic security features are installed and best practices are followed. There are many applications and tools you can add to your website including those to prevent viruses and malware.

Checking your website's connection to see if it's secure is worth doing before launching your store and taking online payments. You can check this by looking at the address bar on your browser. A secure site will have an address starting with 'https://' and have a padlock icon next to it. This is technically called a Secure Socket Layer (SSL) certificate and any website selling goods online should have one.

Selling goods and services online, whether that be through your website or an e-commerce platform, can be a great little earner for individuals or small businesses, and it can be hugely profitable for some companies. That being said, the risks of cyber attacks, data breaches, and trademark infringements are very real, although fortunately for businesses and consumers, there are effective ways to protect your online business.

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