



How website security can harm your firm's marketing efforts

On the weekend of April 13, 2013, widespread reports of a WordPress attack spread throughout the internet. The story got traction on mainstream publications like Forbes, Information Week, and NBC News, putting some website owners in a panic.

SEO | Law Firm's parent company, Adviatech, whose servers host hundreds of websites for law firms throughout North America, woke up staff members in Florida and California, and coordinated with their server administrators in Texas to execute an emergency plan which heightened security on all of their websites built on the WordPress CMS. Eighteen hours later, long after the sun had set on both coasts, every website had been carefully reviewed, secured, updated, fitted with additional brute-force protection, stripped of all old administrator accounts, and prepared to weather out the storm.

Having prevented their clients from withstanding an attack, Adviatech assigned several people to closely monitor the servers' activity throughout the rest of the weekend. Monday morning, Adviatech's clients were mostly unaware of what had taken place to protect them over the weekend – which is exactly how it should work.

Why should a legal marketing company have emergency protocol in place for internet threats? Because weak website security can harm your search engine ranking.

Online marketing goes beyond keyphrase reports, news releases, link building, podcasting, ebooks, blogging — even staying up-to-date with the latest Google Penguin 2 update. If everything is executed perfectly and then your website is hacked, your web traffic can lose 99 percent of its traffic because of one sentence that displays in Google: “This site may harm your computer.”

As Google crawls and indexes websites, it scans them for known malware and viruses. It's a way to help make the internet a safer place. If your law firm's website was hacked and a virus or malware application was installed on it, Google will not immediately remove it from their index, but instead, your search engine listing will display a warning that says, “This site may harm your computer,” effectively stopping virtually all click-through traffic.

[Example Web Page](#)

www.googleexamplewebpage.com/

[This site may harm your computer.](#)

This is an example web page. You have reached this page by typing in examplewebpage.com or examplewebpages.com ...





Once a site gets the “harm your computer” label, the process of getting it removed involves detecting and fixing the security problem, then submitting the site for reconsideration within Google. They will then (at some time) review your site and decide whether or not to remove the label.

The damage could already be done. While your site had the label, it was delivering thousands of first impressions of your law firm name that stated, “This site may harm your computer.” There is no way to submit a first impression for reconsideration.

Fortunately for the law firms that work with Adviatech’s SEO | Law Firm for their website and legal marketing, they put their trust in a company that not only employs some of the most creative designers, talented writers, and experienced search engine marketing minds in the industry, but they also have security-focused developers, server administrators, and crisis plans for the various threats that may come their way.

Marketing is fun and getting a law firm’s website ranked at the top of page one feels great. But a legal marketing company doesn’t have the luxury of just getting a website well-positioned; it also has to protect the website from outside threats.

Let’s Build a **Bigger Law Firm™** Together

To learn more about [lawyer websites](#), [law firm marketing](#) and [legal marketing](#) by visiting [SEO | Law Firm](#) or call 1.800.728.5306.

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