

# THURSDAY THOUGHTS

Just about to go to print and another item appeared in the news. Isn't that just the way! It was of course too important to miss out – the accusation that the Russians have been stealing the coronavirus vaccine research with a view to producing their own vaccine ahead of those who have been developing it. There have also been large scale twitter hacks, Phishing scams with an Amazon theme and confirmation that the enormous MGM data breach last year was worse than first thought.

This week I have a few soapboxes. My first, is the lack of easy to access support for smaller businesses. It's all very well mandating a track and trace system but what businesses could do with at least one GDPR compliant form as an example of what to use. As I couldn't find such a beast I've produced one which I am happy for you to share far and wide.

My second soapbox is the prevalence of inappropriate comments on platforms such as linked in. This week I take a look at catfishing, romance scams and how to deal with the downright unpleasant individuals who think it is appropriate to treat all social media platforms as if they are tinder.

## My “Blogs of the week”

Altrincham HQ - principles of marketing

Becky Field - Is it time?

Women in Law - Good enough is the new perfection

## Cyber-attacks on companies developing coronavirus vaccines

Earlier in the week the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) published a joint advisory identifying groups with links to the Russian intelligence services as a threat to companies and organisations who are developing coronavirus vaccines. Government, diplomatic, think-tank, healthcare and energy organisations and their personnel have been targeted. This made the mainstream news at the end of the week. The accusation is that the Russians have been stealing the coronavirus vaccine research with a view to producing their own vaccine ahead of those who have been developing it. You can read more here: <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/news/uk-and-allies-expose-russian-attacks-on-coronavirus-vaccine-development> or here:

[https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/07/16/russian-hackers-attempted-steal-covid-19-vaccine-research-downing/?WT.mc\\_id=e\\_DM1266926&WT.tsrc=email&etype=Edi\\_Edi\\_New\\_Reg&utmsource=email&utm\\_medium=Edi\\_Edi\\_New\\_Reg20200716&utm\\_campaign=DM1266926](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/07/16/russian-hackers-attempted-steal-covid-19-vaccine-research-downing/?WT.mc_id=e_DM1266926&WT.tsrc=email&etype=Edi_Edi_New_Reg&utmsource=email&utm_medium=Edi_Edi_New_Reg20200716&utm_campaign=DM1266926)

## Twitter Hack – if it sounds too good to be true it probably is

On Wednesday several Twitter accounts belonging to Joe Biden, Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, Elon Musk, Uber, and Apple amongst others were breached in a huge hacking campaign. A message was placed on these accounts that urged followers to send money to a bitcoin wallet with the promise that they would double their money (as the owner of the account wanted to “give something back”). Some \$120,000 in bitcoins are believed to have been transferred so sadly a lot of people must have fallen for the scam. You can read more here: <https://thehackernews.com/2020/07/verified-twitter-hacked.html>

## COVID-19 Test and Trace and Contact Forms

Hotels, restaurants and bars have opened up and are trying their hardest to comply with health and safety as well as the new government instructions to put in place some type of track and trace system. Those who have an on line booking systems are OK but what is there for small businesses who don't take bookings? I have also heard of some unscrupulous businesses who are using the details provided for track and trace for marketing purposes. Let's be clear **you can't collect information for one purpose and use it for another**, not only is it contrary to GDPR it's just not right. Having been to a number of smaller venues who have scraps of paper that don't tell you anything I thought I'd check out what advice there was. What I couldn't find anywhere was a form that small businesses could use. There was also very few places I could find an easy explanation of what they should tell customers. So if you need one here is my offering, feel free to share.

**Coronavirus Track and Trace Contact Details**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Contact Details</b> <i>This may be a telephone/mobile number or email/home address</i>	
<b>Date and Time</b>	

\* We need this information so we can contact you if someone here at the same time tests positive for COVID-19.

\* We will keep this information for 21 days from your visit and then we will dispose of it securely.

\* We will only use this data for contact tracing and not for any other purpose.

## MGM Data Breach

The MGM data breach last summer was worse than initially thought as many more guests' details were compromised. It is now apparent that the personal records of approx. 142.5 million guests are on sale for Bitcoin or Monero. The breach came about because of a security vulnerability in one of the hotel chain's cloud servers. Hackers were able to siphon off information including names, postal and email addresses, phone number and dates of birth (fortunately no financial information) about previous guests, including Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey and pop star Justin Bieber. You can read more here: <https://www.techradar.com/news/mgm-data-breach-was-far-worse-than-originally-thought>

## The latest Phishing Scams has an Amazon Theme

New "Amazon-Themed" phishing campaigns are managing to bypass our computer security checks. Watch out for fake Amazon package-delivery notices as cybercriminals are now using "Amazon delivery" as their lure in their phishing emails. This is because they have cottoned on to the fact we are all getting lots of legitimate delivery messages and so they hope theirs will just slip through. The 2 new scams to be on the look out for are:

- A credential-phishing attempt which uses a "Amazon delivery order failure notice" which comes from a compromised third-party vendor email account.
- A voice phishing (vishing) attempt where emails about a "delivery order" include a phone number for you to call their fake 'Fraud Protection Team'.

You can read more here: <https://threatpost.com/amazon-phishing-campaigns-security-checks/157495/>

## Calling out inappropriate behaviour on social media

I am sorry to get on my soap box but there is a group of individuals who think it is appropriate to mix business with inappropriate comments even on professional networking platforms. Such behaviour is not acceptable. I saw a post this week that made my skin crawl. What started with an innocuous conversation moved quickly to more personal comments “are you happily married” and a request to chat off the platform which was given a firm “no” but the individual persisted. It happens to men and women alike and sadly can be a weekly occurrence for some users. Surely in 2020 the LinkedIn algorithms should be able to spot and block these individuals. I believe that these platforms should be a safe space where it is not assumed that everyone is looking for a partner. Did you know there is a block button on LinkedIn ... I didn't. You will find it in that person's profile (click the More... button below the member's profile picture and select Report/Block from the list).

## Have you heard about Catfishing?

This is when someone creates a new identity online using someone else's images and information (and sometimes even their name). These new social media accounts can then be used to damage the reputation of the true owner of the identity or used to form a relationship online. Catfishing is most often seen among adults on online dating platforms but there are some who go to extreme lengths to create fake identities which includes creating other social media accounts to enhance their catfish profile. This link explains more: <https://www.cybersmile.org/what-we-do/advice-help/catfishing>

## Romance Scams on LinkedIn

Many would think LinkedIn is the last place to go to if you were looking for love. But as one of the top three social media sites in the world, there have been increasing reports of scammers browsing this site for victims. If you receive a connection request from an unknown person who then proceeds to compliment you on your looks or a requests you provide an alternate means of contacting them outside of LinkedIn then you should be doubly wary. You should be very suspicious if your new contact requests money even if it seems like a legitimate request. These are often money laundering or other scams. You can read about one such case here:

<https://www.csoonline.com/article/3400082/how-to-stick-it-to-linkedin-romance-scammers.html>

## Networking events

I went to the excellent Alex and His Sisters networking event again this week where the amazing Sally Penni was the guest speaker. I could have listened to Sally for hours she has such energy and positivity. The conversation covered the law, race, gender, tokenism, education and writing books (including one about a unicorn). One the things I found quite shocking was that organisers of events still think its acceptable to “seat” minority groups together whether this is a table at a formal dinner or break out room on Zoom. Yes in 2020! Statistically the chances of this happening randomly are so small so it has to reveal the prejudices of the organiser! I learned a new term “Double Deficit” but you'll have to watch the interview to hear what it means if you don't already know!

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHUGhKvzOlw>).

## Is Privacy a customer experience issue

Gabe Morazan explores whether “Privacy” is a customer experience issue. We know consumers want personalized experiences and are more likely to purchase from a retailer that sends them appropriate promotions or remembers things they have done/had before. This personalization needs data but marketers often see compliance with regulations that surround this date as someone

else's problem. However, if you don't have the right data you cannot deliver the personalized experiences customers want. The solution as Gabe sees it is to create a Privacy-Focused Customer Experience. You can read the whole article here: <https://www.cmswire.com/customer-experience/accepting-privacy-as-a-customer-experience-issue/#:~:text=Why%20Privacy%20Is%20a%20Customer%20Experience%20Issue&text=Marketers%20need%20to%20take%20privacy,to%20access%20valuable%20personal%20details.&text=It%20is%20about%20protecting%20data,the%20consumer's%20knowledge%20and%20consent>

## Apps and their privacy statements

Does anyone read the privacy statements on the apps they download. Most find the wordy expansions of how the app accesses and uses your personal data hard to follow. But in this technological world it is no longer acceptable to trust something because you did not understand it. Just because something is fun and everyone else is using it is not a reason for you not to do your own checks. If it clearly said **this app scrapes your contact list, home IP address, all the data you have on your phone and your photos** you probably wouldn't agree to it. But many apps (especially free ones) do just that. How else can they offer something for free? This brings me back to TikTok. There is a reason why increasing numbers of countries are banning it. The data it gathers on our children is frightening. Would reading their privacy notice have stopped them downloading the app?

## Blogs of the week

### Altrincham HQ - principles of marketing

In his blog Alex explores the ethics of marketing. As someone who very much "gets" the need to interact on a human level Alex calls out businesses who have been "spamming, hard selling, putting out content that adds noise, but not value". The principles of marketing haven't changed and businesses who understand these principles will not need to change their behaviour. However those who never understood the principles in the first place will need to change, and not Marketing! You can read the blog here: <https://altrinchamhq.co.uk/social-media-insight-the-principles-of-marketing-havent-changed/>

### Becky Field - Is it time?

This blog from Becky shares why it is OK to walk away from people, places and situations that affect your wellbeing. I was interested to hear about a book called The Four Tendencies by Gretchen Rubin which can help one understand our own "tendency". This helped Becky to understand how to set up situations in a ways to make it more likely to achieve her aims. You can read the blog here: <https://westfieldcoaching.co.uk/is-it-time/>

### Women in Law - Good enough is the new perfection

I'm not a lawyer but I happened along this piece as I was looking at Sally Penni's Women in the Law website. This blog talks about the pressure we all face in life to be "perfect" and how often it feels like others have it all sorted. There are some really great take aways:

- Be kind (to yourself and others).
- Look for progress rather than perfection.
- Ditch 'good or bad' thinking
- Treat life as a series of wonderful problems.
- Switch off the noise.

Most of all though we need to remember that we are enough just the way we are. You can read the blog here: <https://www.womeninthelawuk.com/good-enough-is-the-new-perfection/>