

I Wake Up and... the Website Is Gone

Every year more than one million websites are defaced, according to Zone-H (zone-h.org), the most authoritative source for reporting online cyberattacks. On that site, attackers compete to replace as many homepages as possible with their own message.

Did a new homepage replace yours overnight? Self-styled hackers, crackers and lamers, the many "web bullies", enjoy blocking other people's sites and replacing the main page with a souvenir of their own. The reasons vary: fraud, spite, or simply a wish to show off their computer skills.

The answer is only one: prepare in time. Damage can be serious: lost sales, blocked business and a trust relationship with customers that was built with effort and may now be compromised. Even major protected sites are sometimes breached, but not every hacker or cracker is a computer genius. Prevention is better than cure, and a timely audit by professionals can prevent many problems.

If the damage is already done, three watchwords guide the response: restore, recover, reassure.

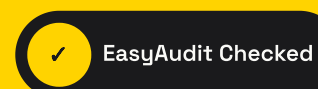
- Could the server be compromised? Move to a backup server, restore normal operation as soon as possible from a safe backup, and change every password.
- Were the site and database damaged? Never restore files and data directly online. Copy them for later analysis and rebuild orders from received emails.
- Was your image with customers damaged? There is nothing shameful in suffering a cyberattack. What matters is informing everyone as soon as possible and ensuring a quick return to normality.

Have you ever suffered a cyberattack, or do you know someone who has? If it happened to you, would you be ready to respond quickly?

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