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Liking On Facebook May Cultivate More Than Friendship

These days, "Liking" on Facebook may get you more than you bargain for; it could get your page plagued with ads and offers that you don't want and, at worst, could put malware on your computer or provide your personal data to unscrupulous scammers.

It's called Like-Farming. It often begins with spreading a positive message, or similar effort and then uses all the "Likes" to spread to other's Facebook feeds.

How Does it Work?

What the "farmers" want is to gather as many Likes as possible in whatever way they can. Have you ever Liked or shared any of these scenarios?

- A tug at your heart-strings post. A small child is pictured with no hair. "Sally" has (fill-in-the-blank) disease. "Please like this page to show you think she's beautiful and help lift her spirits".
- This government policy stinks! "Share" if you agree!
- An inspirational message to help your friends have a good day.
- Played one of these quick games such as name a fish that doesn't have the letter "T" in it or some such --Post your answer below.

PRIZES PRIZES PRIZES

Not all Like-Farmers rely on appeals to emotion. Others offer valuable prizes to people who "Like" or "Share" a post. You've seen these posts promising the chance to win a free MacBook, the latest iPhone, free chain-store gift card or some other valuable freebie--these are pretty much guaranteed to be scams. Anytime you see a Facebook post offering free items in exchange for "Likes" and "Shares," you're almost certain to find a similarly scammy Facebook page behind it. (*Do you really think MacBook would be giving away free anything?*)

Since Facebook places a high value on popularity, these highly liked and shared pages begin to appear in your friend's Facebook feed and then begins to be seen by other Facebook users. No matter if you liked it, shared it, or agreed with it, once the page has a sufficiently high popularity rating, the Like-Farmer either removes the page's original content (just the picture of the poor little girl is enough) and replaces it with something else (usually malware or scam advertising), leaves the rest of the page as is and uses it as a platform for continued Like-Farming in order to spread malware, collect people's marketing information or engage in other harmful activities. Or, just because they are scammers, they may just outright sell the highly liked site to cybercriminals in a black market web forum.

Have you ever received a feed showing how your friend 'Likes' something like a Bank or a particular type of sunglasses and thought to yourself "*Huh?*" Blame Like-Farming.

In the future when left to decide to Like or not.. think of good old Dr. Seuss and 'Green Eggs and Ham'

I do not like them
in a house.

I do not like them
with a mouse.

I do not like them
here or there.

I do not like them
anywhere.

I do not like green eggs and ham (or fake sites)

I do not like them, Sam-I-am

Feel free to forward this to a friend's email box.



THINK YOU'VE BEEN SCAMMED?
**If you suspect you've been scammed or
exploited, call our
Fraud Hot Line to report it.
720-913-9179**

SCHEDULE A SPEAKER

If you would like a Word document version of this newsletter, I'm happy to send along, just email with a request.



Interested in learning more about scams happening in Denver? Do you want to know how to protect yourself from identity theft? Maro Casparian is available for speaking engagements with faith-based organizations, neighborhood associations, PTAs, schools, rotary clubs, etc. Call or email me to schedule a presentation.

And, as always, feel free to forward this email to others to spread the word.

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