

Stop, thief! CSI secures business and personal information

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Information security is a topic that should be on everyone's mind. In today's world of identity theft, hackers and a cut-throat business environment, it's crucial to protect precious business and personal information.

In the tradeshow industry it's vital that we also anticipate trends to foresee what lies ahead and prevent new problems before they arise. CompuSystems, Inc. (CSI) is a tradeshow registration contractor leading the way in the fight against theft of electronic information before, during and after tradeshow events.

With new computer viruses and vulnerabilities constantly being discovered, it's a challenge to keep systems updated against attacks. All businesses that conduct commerce over the Internet or wireless connections should know of Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance. PCI compliance is a requirement of the credit card industry, in which major credit card companies jointly developed standards for protecting information. CompuSystems was the first registration contractor to receive PCI compliance earlier this year.

The process of becoming PCI compliant is made up of two steps, the first being a self-assessment questionnaire.



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To be compliant, one must be able to respond positively to an extensive list of questions regarding data security. The second is a third party vulnerability scan of all computerized systems. In most cases, outside security providers are contracted to perform scans checking for vulnerabilities. These scans may also include software updates to prevent new types of attacks.

The industry also needs to take every precaution to protect exhibitor leads, as they are its livelihood. Leads are as important to the contractor as they are to the client organization, so it's clear there's a need to go above and beyond to protect them.

CSI is a frontrunner in information safety for the tradeshow and meeting environment. Most registration vendors are not yet PCI compliant, but will eventually follow CSI's lead. High-profile security breaches have created concerns from consumers regardless of the industry. In this aspect, the tradeshow industry is no different than any other. It transmits and stores credit card information as well as other sensitive data, including exhibitor sales leads generated on the tradeshow floor.

CSI takes crucial steps both to protect credit card data and to secure exhibitor leads. Since both sets of information are housed in the same databases, most procedures used to protect credit card data are also applied to exhibitor lead data. For example, protection includes carefully configured firewalls, intrusion prevention, intrusion detection systems and encryption applications. CSI challenges the rest of the industry to do the same, creating a safer tradeshow environment for everyone.

The challenges to information safety in the tradeshow industry are very much like those we see at home or in the office and will continue to become more complicated as technology develops. There will always be the threat that personal or business information will fall into the wrong hands. Therefore, staying ahead of the curve is a must and businesses need to prepare for the challenges ahead.

Using data security techniques to protect exhibitor and client information is certainly one of the most significant issues the tradeshow industry faces in the coming years so it is critical to continue to set ever higher standards for security.

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