



Tread Lightly Online: How to Manage Your Digital Footprint

You can't use the internet completely undetected—but you *can* manage your digital footprint and protect your privacy. Every click, post, and sign-up leaves a trace, and over time, those traces reveal more about you than you might think. This trail of data is your digital footprint.

Even browsing in "Incognito" mode doesn't make you invisible. Online accounts like email, shopping, and social media all require sharing some information. The goal isn't to vanish from the internet—it's to be intentional about what you share and where.

Here's how to take control:

1. Ask "Why?" Before You Share

Before you enter personal info into a website or app, pause and ask yourself:

- Why do they need this?
- Is this information required to use the service?
- What's the benefit to me?

For example, a GPS app needs your location. A coupon app probably doesn't. Be selective—less shared data means less risk.

2. Google Yourself

Search your name online every so often to see what's out there. Also try plugging your email into [HaveIBeenPwned.com](https://haveibeenpwned.com) to check for data breaches.

If your email shows up:

- Change the password for that account.

If it was reused, update those other accounts too.

3. Use a Password Manager

Password managers are your best friend for managing strong, unique passwords—and they offer bonus features.

Use yours to:

- Review how many accounts you've created.
- Delete ones you no longer use.
- Update weak or reused passwords.

4. Don't Create Unnecessary Accounts

Websites love to collect data, often pushing you to create accounts. But more accounts = more exposure to spam and breaches.

If you're making a one-time purchase, use guest checkout. The fewer accounts you have, the smaller your footprint.

5. Review Privacy Settings

Some accounts (like Google, Apple, Facebook) are hard to avoid—but you can control how much data they collect.

- Review settings every few months.
- Limit what's public (like who sees your posts).
- Restrict data tracking and storage.

6. Know Your Privacy Rights

You may have legal rights to control your data:

- **California's CCPA** gives residents rights to view or delete data collected by businesses.
- **Europe's GDPR** offers strong protections for EU citizens. Stay informed—new laws may offer you more control.

From The Desk of David Snell

Ah, SUMMER!

As I write this, we are heading into a week of summer weather, and I am thrilled! Of course, there is a chance of rain on Saturday, but that's become the norm! My garden needs the water, but couldn't it be on a Tuesday?



We've given the grandkids the gardening bug. They happily followed us around several garden centers looking at flowers, herbs, and vegetable plants.

They each got flowers to plant in pots for the deck. Xander chose a red, white, and blue theme while Sarah did purples and pinks. They were SO PROUD!



Speaking of proud; you may remember George Whitcher, who assisted Pam in web design from 2007—2010. Pam and George won an Edward R. Murrow award for 95.9 WATD's website during that time.

Pam is bursting with pride as he's continued to learn and grow and is now a featured speaker at Social Media Week in Lima, Ohio. You'll find his first of many articles on page 4.

If you don't want to wait until next month for more of his insights, you can find him <https://OfficeManagersSociety.com/team-of-experts/george-whitcher>, where Pam posted his articles that educate businesses and professionals on best practices in digital marketing, web technologies, and online growth strategies.

This month, he reminds us **"Why Both On-Site and Off-Site SEO Matter."**

He recently started his own web design company, **Belknap Mountain Web Services**, and we are so impressed! We love it when previous employees spread their wings and fly!

We have another new contributor in this month's publication. Patricia Prewitt spent over 30 years in the pharmaceutical industry. Tricia is the owner of **My Personal Rx Advisor** based in Franklin, MA. A friend of Pam's from the Cranberry Country Chamber of Commerce, she is a consumer education advocate, and enjoys teaching people how to find ways to save money on their prescriptions.

Her article **"Can I safely bring my prescription medications with me when traveling internationally?"** is perfect as we start traveling for our summer vacations. You'll find her article on page 6.

We wish you a FUN and Healthy June!

Continued from front page

7. Browse and Post with Care

Prevent problems before they start:

- Use private browsing modes when needed.
- Think twice before sharing personal info or posting on social media.
- Avoid sharing things like birthdays, addresses, and travel plans.

Take Charge of Your Digital Life

You don't need to go off-grid to protect your privacy. Small, mindful steps can make a big difference in reducing risk and boosting your security. Start today—and stay safer tomorrow.

Thanks to the National Cybersecurity Alliance for this information! <https://www.staysafeonline.org/articles/tread-lightly-online-how-to-check-and-manage-your-digital-footprint>

Why Pay for Cybersecurity Training?

What if I told you your biggest cybersecurity risk isn't some shadowy hacker in a hoodie... but Steve in accounting who just clicked on the wrong email?

It happens every day. Good people make small mistakes that open the door to big problems. I'm talking ransomware, wire fraud, data breaches—the stuff that can grind a small business to a halt.

That's why we're offering a simple solution: engaging, animated cybersecurity training for just **\$3.75 per user per month**.

Because one click by the wrong person can cost you everything. Here's what you get when you train your team the right way.

- **Fewer Oh-No Moments:** Employees learn how to spot shady emails before they click—so you don't get blindsided by a fake invoice or urgent request from "the boss."
- **Cheaper Than a Breach:** A solid training program costs less than a single hour of cleanup after a ransomware attack. It's insurance that actually teaches people something.
- **Fewer Calls to IT:** When folks know the basics, they stop accidentally locking themselves out or downloading junk. That saves time and headaches.

- **Your Reputation Stays Intact:** One breach can tank customer trust. Training helps protect the good name you've spent years building.
- **Keeps You Compliant:** If you're in healthcare, finance, or just taking credit cards—training helps you stay on the right side of the rules.
- **You Sleep Better at Night:** You'll know your team isn't the weak link anymore. That's peace of mind money can actually buy.

Cybersecurity training isn't just another box to check. It's how you keep honest mistakes from becoming business-ending disasters.

You don't need to be a tech expert. You just need to make sure your team knows what to watch out for.

And with training this affordable, it's a no-brainer.

ACTSmartIT.com/training



Why Both On-Site and Off-Site SEO Matter

In today's digital world, SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is more important than ever. Whether you're a small business trying to reach local customers or a growing brand aiming to expand your audience, your visibility on search engines like Google can make or break your online success.

But SEO isn't just about sprinkling a few keywords into your content—it's a multi-faceted approach that includes both **on-site** and **off-site** tactics. Understanding how they work together, and how to use your data to refine both, is the key to staying competitive and building long-term organic visibility.



What is On-site SEO?

On-site SEO refers to the strategies and techniques used directly on your website to improve its visibility in search engines. This includes optimizing your content, HTML source code, and site architecture. Here are a few core components:

- **Keyword optimization:** Ensuring you're targeting the right keywords in your titles, headings, meta descriptions, and content.
- **Content quality:** Creating informative, engaging, and original content that answers your audience's questions.
- **Mobile responsiveness:** Making sure your site looks and performs well on smartphones and tablets.

- **Page speed:** Faster sites offer better user experience and are favored by search engines.

Internal linking: Helping search engines and users navigate your site more easily. Think of on-site SEO as the foundation of your website. Without a solid technical and content base, everything else you do won't be nearly as effective. A site that's easy to use, well-organized, and loaded with useful information naturally ranks better—and keeps users coming back for more.

What is Off-Site SEO?

Off-site SEO involves actions taken outside of your website to improve its authority and credibility. It's primarily about link building and reputation management. Key components include:

- **Backlinks:** Earning links from reputable web sites that point to your own. These act like "votes of confidence" to search engines.
- **Social signals:** Mentions, shares, and engagement on social media platforms, which can indirectly impact your visibility.
- **Online reviews:** Positive customer feedback on platforms like Google, Yelp, and Facebook increase trust with both users and algorithms.

Local SEO: Directory citations, Google Business Profiles, and local backlinks help boost your presence for nearby customers.

Off-site SEO helps build your website's reputation. The more quality backlinks and positive signals you have, the more trustworthy your site appears to search engines. Over time, this improves your ranking for competitive keywords and increases your chances of attracting high-intent traffic.

Why Data-Driven SEO is the Game Changer

Here's the truth: Even the best SEO strategy won't work if you're not measuring your results. SEO is not a one-and-done task—it's a process that requires constant monitoring, analysis, and adjustment.

(and How Data Can Supercharge It)

Using tools like Google Analytics, Search Console, and other SEO platforms, you can track:

- Which keywords are driving traffic.
- Which pages have the highest bounce rates.
- Where your backlinks are coming from.
- How long users stay on your site.

Conversion rates and user engagement metrics. This data helps you identify what's working and what isn't. For example, if a page is ranking well but has a high bounce rate, it may need better content, a clearer call-to-action, or improved user experience. If your off-site efforts aren't resulting in backlinks, it might be time to rethink your outreach strategy or content promotion tactics. Data turns guesswork into growth opportunities.

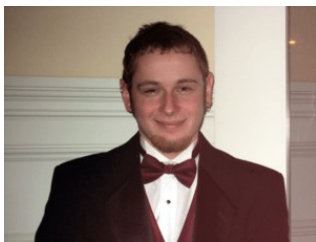
Final Thoughts

On-site and off-site SEO are two halves of the same success story. When they work together — backed by smart, data-driven decisions — your visibility, credibility, and conversions can soar. And in a digital landscape where competition is fierce and attention spans are short, you can't afford to ignore either side.

Whether you're launching a new site or optimizing an existing one, investing in both sides of SEO (and watching the numbers) is a must. Remember: effective SEO isn't just about showing up in search results — it's about showing up for your audience in the right way, at the right time.

At **Belknap Mountain Web Services**, we don't just implement SEO — we analyze and improve it over time. We use real-time insights to guide your strategy so your site keeps growing, adapting, and staying ahead of the competition. Whether you need a full SEO audit, fresh keyword research, or help fixing technical issues, we're here to help.

Need help understanding where your SEO stands? **Let's talk strategy** — and turn your site into a search engine powerhouse with Belknap Mountain Web Services.



Clients of record may recognize **George Whitcher**.

We are so proud to say that George worked here at ACTSmart IT from 2007 – 2010 as our lead web developer.

Since then, George, the perpetual student and driven professional, has made his mark. He has been at the forefront of web development since **2006**, holding **lead development positions** and crafting high-performance web-sites, applications, and digital strategies. His expertise spans **website development, mobile app development, and server management**, making him a well-rounded and highly sought-after professional in the industry.

George Whitcher, Belknap Mountain Web Services
support@belknapmountainwebservices.com

Beyond his technical skills, George is also an **accomplished public speaker**. He has shared his insights at industry events such as **Social Media Week Lima**, where he has educated businesses and professionals on best practices in digital marketing, web technologies, and online growth strategies. His ability to break down complex technical concepts into actionable insights has made him a valuable speaker and mentor in the tech and marketing communities.

We are thrilled to add him to our Team of Experts!



Can I safely bring my prescription medications with me...

... when traveling internationally?

Traveling internationally requires advance planning when it comes to health-related needs, including prescriptions, not only for any required vaccinations. Your personal provider can help you obtain the needed documents for a particular country, or you may choose to utilize a private travel clinic such as Passport Health. So before you head to the airport, make sure you've thought about traveling safely with your prescriptions.

Here are some tips:

Check with the foreign embassy of the country you are visiting or passing through. Check to make sure your medications are allowed, particularly prescriptions for medical marijuana. You may need an import license or permit to travel with certain medications. A **Schengen Certificate** may be required.

- **Bring plenty of medicine for your trip.** Include a few extra days' worth in case of delays.
- **Carry a letter of necessity from the doctor.** It should describe your medical condition, and list prescription drugs with their generic names.
- **Keep medications in their original, labeled containers.**
- **Bring the prescriptions with you in a carry-on bag** to avoid loss or delay for checked baggage. (Check TSA guidelines)
- **Be aware that entering a country with a prescription medication,** even if legally obtained in the US, could be result in your detention or arrest overseas if it is not allowed in the country being visited.
- **It is also recommended to carry a copy of your official immunization record** when traveling abroad.

Additionally, there are certain medications to be particularly aware of that might cause problems. I was surprised to learn that some over-the-counter (non prescription) products are banned in some countries!

Not surprisingly, controlled substances such as stimulants (like Adderall or Ritalin), opioids (such as oxycodone and hydrocodone), benzodiazepines (such as Xanax, Valium, or Ativan) are controlled substances in many countries; those often require special documentation. When traveling with these medications you must carry a valid prescription with you and potentially a *Schengen Certificate* or similar documentation.

Find information about the Schengen Certificate here:

www.schengeninsuranceinfo.com The certificate is generally good for 30 days of travel in the Schengen area, which includes 29 countries.

Even certain over-the-counter medications like pseudoephedrine and products with codeine are legal in the US, but banned in some European countries like Greece and Belgium. Medical cannabis regulations vary widely among countries.

Check TSA <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips> for specific guidelines about traveling with medications.

Consider enrollment in the *Smart Traveler Enrollment Program* (STEP) at <https://travel.state.gov> to receive email updates from the local US embassy or consulate.

It's a free service that can alert you to travel advisories for the country you are visiting.

Again: Check the website for each country you will be traveling to, or through, to verify any special requirements for traveling with your medications.

Have a safe and enjoyable trip!



Patricia Prewitt is a local Massachusetts resident who spent over 30 years in the pharmaceutical industry. Tricia is the owner of **My Personal Rx Advisor** based in Franklin MA. Tricia is a consumer education advocate, and enjoys teaching people how to find ways to save money on their prescriptions.

Additionally, Tricia offers employee education on this topic to small business owners at an affordable one-time price. Readers of this newsletter are encouraged to book a complimentary 10-minute consultation on the website:

<https://mypersonalrxadvisor.com/resources/>

Are you familiar with the words known as “homophones”?

They're the most difficult kinds of words to easily recognize because they may sound exactly or almost the same.

And spellcheck is NO help with these: A correctly spelled word will be allowed.

So, (to / too / two) test (your / you're / yore) knowledge, (hear / here) are a few sentences with choices to make (and with answers at the end).

1. Mark had to (poor / pour / pore) over the material to be sure it was (rite / right / write).
2. The glass was filled up (to / two / too) (it's / its' / its) very top.
3. Are you (sure / shore) (you're / your) going to find (joust / just) (to / too / two) of them?
4. How did that (effect / affect) (your / you're / yore) work today?
5. Sally (road / rode) (buy / by / bye) the office quickly.
6. (It's / its / its') a surprise, (so / sew) (dew / do / due) (knot / not / naught) (peak / pique / peek)!
7. I have three (pares / pairs / pears) of (knew / new / gnu) sandals!
8. Are (yew / you) confused yet (about / abut) this quiz?
9. Is the (principle / principal) available?
10. Are (they're / their / there) any (more / moor) (cents / scents / sense) to know / no about?

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Grammar Goddess Communication

I will help you look and sound as smart as you are.



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Annual Reports — Blogs — Business / Nonfiction
Books — Podcast Transcriptions — Websites

Never ask: How smart is that person?
Always ask: How IS that person smart?

June 2025—In This Issue:

- Tread Lightly Online: How to Manage Your Digital Footprint
- Why Every Local Business Needs a Google Business Profile
- Can I safely bring my prescription medications with me when traveling internationally?
- Are you familiar with the words known as “homophones”?

*This newsletter was thoughtfully edited by
Susan Rooks, the Grammar Goddess,
so we can look and sound as smart as we are.*



Susan Rooks

The Grammar Goddess

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/susanrooks-the-grammar-goddess/>

Your biggest cybersecurity risk isn't some shadowy hacker in a hoodie... but Steve in accounting who just clicked on the wrong email!

It happens every day. Good people make small mistakes that open the door to big problems. I'm talking ransomware, wire fraud, data breaches—the stuff that can grind a small business to a halt.

That's why we're offering a simple solution: engaging, animated cybersecurity training for just **\$3.75 per user per month**.

This isn't boring corporate stuff. It's quick, story-driven content your team will actually *enjoy* watching. Picture short episodes that play out like a Netflix series—but instead of dragons or courtroom drama, they teach your staff how to spot phishing scams, create strong passwords, and keep your systems safe.

It's not about scaring anyone. It's about making your people smarter, faster, and more confident online.



ACTSmartIT.com/training