

Internet Security Concern – everyone needs to understand!

Did you hear on the news recently that online retailer Zappos web site was hacked? The company downplayed the news release saying that the hackers only got the last credit card 4 digits - so not to worry. The new report said that hackers also got the user name and login password. O.K., so why should I care if a hacker wants to long in to my Zappos account? It's not like I'm concerned she will find out my shoe size.

WRONG! Many people should be very concerned.

The hacker did not want the credit card numbers – she wanted the user ID and Login password. Why? Because many people still use the same user ID and login password for multiple applications. So a hacker could take the user ID and password list and try to log in to AOL mail accounts. Surprisingly – a significant percentage of the Zappos user IDs and Passwords will log in to AOL (or YAHOO or whatever) mail accounts.

If you used the same User ID and password for Zappos that you also use for AOL mail – then the hacker has been reading your mail account!

Once in to your AOL mailbox, the hacker can steal your contact list, search email messages for other login updates, credit card or bank data, etc. **AND** until you change your AOL login, she can return again and again and again.

Have you recently received an email from a friend's AOL email that looked kind of strange? Why would John be calling me darling? Why would he want me to view a gambling website in China? Why would he invite me to send him my contact list? Could it be that John's AOL email account was hacked? Could it be because John used the same Login for Zappos and his AOL mail? Hmmmmm

Would a fraudulent mass marketer pay big money for a list of email addresses and the associated friend's name so that emails which appear to be sent from John will most likely get opened and trusted?

Do you get the picture? I'll bet most people reading this note have received emails looking like they were from a friend – but obviously fake. Trust me – your friend isn't doing it – but someone [*a nefarious jerk*] is using the email information which they connected to AOL with a hacked Zappos user ID and Password.

O.K. so what can we do about it?

1- It's too late to tell John to close the barn door. The hacker already got my email address from John's account and she [*the hacker*] sold it to an email spammer [*idiot, jerk and someone I'd like to meet in person just to explain what I really think*]

2- If you have the same passwords on **ANY** of your email, AOL, Yahoo, Google, social networking or sensitive web sites – **CHANGE THEM ALL** immediately. Don't wait until the cows leave – they will never come home. [*Obviously change them to all be different from each other*]

3- Stop using the same passwords in multiple applications. Find and start using a [password manager](#) . Set up strong and unique passwords for each web site or application. [Here's a list of places to start](#) looking for password management software. [FYI – I use [Roboform](#)]