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## MIT develops Polaris, a system that loads web pages quicker

A group of MIT researchers from the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL) is working with Harvard University to develop a new system. This system, also known as Polaris, has the ability to load web pages 34 percent faster.

An article published by [MIT News](#) last March details how Polaris works and how it can be beneficial to the business world.

The researchers say that using Polaris is like having a list of every possible place you can go. In other words, upon loading a web page, Polaris automatically determines where each potential “interaction” will take you. FastCompany [describes](#) it as “pre-mapping various connections between different objects in order to figure out the most efficient order in which to load the objects.”

This process allows for a webpage to continue loading instead of stopping momentarily to seek out other objects. Or as MIT puts it, Polaris decreases the “number of cross-network trips.”

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Polaris should make the user experience more seamless – which is good news for major online retailers such as Amazon, Target, and Overstock. They tend to see a drop in sales when pages load slower. According to MIT, researches have

already implemented and evaluated Polaris on over 200 major sites such as ESPN and The New York Times.

It should be interesting to see if Polaris has a significant effect on how quickly web pages load. And even if it isn't exactly 34%, faster loading never hurt anybody.



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## How to get positive online reviews

Building up your online reviews can be a challenge. And, it can be especially challenging if you're trying to deflect negative online reviews with more positive ones.

Because it's so difficult, many companies simply choose to ignore their Yelp page or the comments they receive on social media outlets. *Maybe if I act like that comment doesn't exist, it will go away.*

This probably won't happen, though. In fact, ignoring the negative reviews (or the lack of reviews altogether) can have an undesirable effect on the way people view your business. This means it's incredibly important to pump up your online profiles with positive comments and reviews. Here are a few ways you can do this.

### Business Card

On the back of your business card, you can include a section that says "Review me" with the designated social icons displayed to the side of it. Make sure this section does not take away from any other part of your contact information. In fact, it might be a good idea to place

it on the bottom corner of your business card in a small (but legible) font size.

### Postcard

Design a half-sheet flyer or postcard that requests an online review. When you're wrapping up a successful interaction with a client, sneak a postcard into their additional paperwork. For example, a doctor hands the patient a document detailing their current visit and another document with follow-up information. In the middle of these two documents, he places the postcard or flyer.

You don't necessarily have to "sneak" the request either. In fact, it might be more effective if you verbally call attention to it:

*"Here are the documents you requested, and there's also a flyer nestled in there that directs you to my social profiles. I'd really appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to let me know how your visit went today."*

### Email Signature

If you find yourself emailing back and forth with clients, it's never a bad idea to include your social icons inside your signature block. Many business professionals already do this, but if it's reviews you're hurting for, then don't be ashamed to include the text "Review me", "Rate me", or "Talk to us."

## KeRanger Ransomware infects Mac computers

Although many diehard Apple users didn't think it was possible, Mac users have officially had their very first encounter with Ransomware.

Ransomware is a form of malware that will infect your computer and hold your data and files for ransom. The software will demand payment from you and only release your files if you pay the ransom fee. If you attempt to delete the Ransomware on your own, the malware will automatically delete your files.

Windows users have seen their fair share of Ransomware over the last few years, but this is a first for Apple. The ransomware has been dubbed KeRanger and was orchestrated using the popular BitTorrent client, Transmission.

Around 6,500 users downloaded the malicious version of the Transmission software; however, this particular version of Ransomware remains dormant for three days after the initial download. Because of this, Apple was able to take swift action and release a fix for the bug.

The users who were successfully infected by KeRanger were asked to pay 1 bitcoin, or \$400, to regain access to their data.

Transmission has since released a new version of the program, version 2.92, that works to remove the Ransomware. They posted a warning on their website that asks any users who downloaded the 2.90 version of Transmission to "immediately upgrade to and run 2.92." The warning even suggests that anyone who downloaded version 2.91 should also upgrade to 2.92.

Thanks to Apple's amazingly quick action, this Ransomware was stopped before it could do any significant damage. But, unfortunately, many credible outlets are emphasizing that KeRanger will be the first of many Ransomware attacks.

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## Technology wants to put you to bed

Sleep is essential. We all need it, but most of us don't get enough of it. However, too little sleep comes with its consequences, like poor judgement, lack of focus, and a weakened immune system.

To combat society's inability to sleep as it should, when it should, gadgets, apps, and twists on the traditional mattress have started to surface. Here are a few of those for you.

### App – Sleepbot

[Sleepbot](#) isn't just an alarm clock; it's a motion tracker and sound recorder, too. This smart app tracks your sleeping patterns to provide you with valuable insight into how well and how much you sleep. As you sleep, the app monitors your movement, as well as any noises that may affect your slumber. In the morning, Sleepbot will wake you at the most opportune moment and then present you with a detailed analysis of nighttime activities.

### Wearable – Fitbit One

Fitbit is hailed as one of the most sophisticated wearables, and [Fitbit One](#) is no different. This wearable nicely fits into a specially-designed sleep wristband to monitor you as you sleep. Much like Sleepbot, Fitbit One provides detailed insight into the when and how of your sleep, but also allows you to set sleep goals and to monitor any progress made towards achieving them. Fitbit One comes equipped with an alarm that wakes you in the morning with a gentle vibration.

### Gadget – Sense

Sense is a simple, circular gadget that wants you to sleep better. Sitting atop your bedside table, [Sense](#) monitors your sleep-time activities and will wake you at the "lightest part of your sleep cycle, but always by your set time." Its sensors will take in everything about your sleeping environment—from lights and noises to the air and humidity. And in the morning, the Sense App will tell you what's right and what's wrong with your environment, providing you with the knowledge to adjust your surroundings for better sleep.

## Snapchat fell for it. Will you?

If you think you're immune to phishing attacks, think again. During the last week of February, a [Snapchat](#) employee was duped by a malicious email. Even a company specializing in technology and smartphone applications can't help but comply with a hacker's request.

On the 26th of February, a Snapchat employee received a [message](#) claiming to be from the CEO of the company, Evan Spiegel. The email asked the employee to provide the payroll information of Snapchat employees. This information included W-2 forms, social security numbers, and benefits.

The LA Times [reported](#) that soon after the employee sent this information to the imposter, the Snapchat employee realized the request was illegitimate. After recognizing this, the staff member followed up with an email to the real CEO of Snapchat asking him to validate the email.

Luckily for Snapchat, this incident did not affect any users, but it can still entail a significant ding for the company's reputation, especially since they pride themselves in the security and privacy of their super short videos.

So what can we learn from this phishing attack? Well, Snapchat hasn't released very many details as to what the message actually looked like, but what seems to be apparent is that the email address or contents of the email did not appear to be legitimate.

It was reported that the employee quickly realized there was something wrong with the request—within 15 minutes. This could potentially mean that if the employee had taken the time to analyze the contents and the overall look of the email, the attack might have been thwarted.

To examine the contents and look of a suspicious-looking email, here are a few questions to ask yourself:

- *Why would this person need this information?*
- *Does the email come from their normal email address?*
- *Is this normally how things are handled?*
- *Is there a way to validate the request?*

Asking these questions should take you less than two minutes, but it may prevent a phishing attack from playing out in your company. You should always take the time to properly analyze the contents of an email that requests sensitive company information.



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