

Summary



GHOST CONTRACTORS, GHOST WEBSITES

[Exercises 1 thru 4 – Week of July 1-5, 2019]

In an age of hi-technology with residents increasingly using the internet as a major information resource for “contractor shopping,” there are inherent risks for making disastrous choices.

[These exercises are presented for personal strategic value in relation to residents’ voluntarily being ready and willing within their abilities towards related self-empowerment]

**Edited with special assistance from F. Hansen*

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[This is a brief summary of Exercises for “Ghost Contractors, Ghost Websites” July 1 thru 5 with omission of July 4, 2019]

Monday July 1 – Exercise 1

- The overriding reason for offering this exercise is to encourage residents to take personal and active interest in doing research on internet ads boasting able contractor availability.
- In the final analysis, residents must decide for ourselves when we must take action and how we will go about it for best decision-making.
- Residents who take the initiative to do this exercise are reminded that posts have “points-of-origination.” These are the websites they are posted from.
- Through this exercise residents are also reminded that posts using the phrase “*Best Contractors*” rarely have active lists or connections with “the best.”

Exercise Moral: Ads online of “*Best Contractors*” have questionable credibility.

Caution: Whenever we are online, our risks for being defrauded are astronomically increased. The internet is inundated by dishonest contractors with only smatterings of the truly best. This is a reason we START with learning WHO’S DOING THE POST?

Tuesday July 2 – Exercise 2

- In this exercise residents are encouraged to resume the online search using the phrase “*Best Contractors.*” The reason for revisiting is for us to once again identify the post by WHO’S BEHIND IT [website] and to “run it” using the BBB for complaints.

[An option is to forego direct inquiry with the BBB and generalize the search for “Complaints” against targeted websites for “Best Contractors.”]

- This nature of search regularly garners a staggering number of complaints against those which have been posting for more than a year.
- Some who advertise “*Best Contractors*” have not been in business long enough to amass registered complaints. We may want to be cautious there. Absence of complaints does not necessarily mean they are not detrimental.

Exercise Moral: It is always wise to check websites for complaints against them, especially the “*Best Contractors.*”

Wednesday July 3 – Exercise 3

- Website safety. In this exercise, emphasis is on checking “*Best Contractors*” websites (one or more) for the .
- We are all now aware that the presence of this symbol at the Upper-Left of browser indicates that it is a safe website. However, we can easily be deceived into believing this means the owner or manager of the website can be trusted.
- This is often a reckless motive for deciding to do business. Although the best also have safe websites, it may not be wise to attribute this, alone, for the basis of our decisions.
- ***Exercise Moral:*** Not such a good idea to make decisions as crucial as selecting contractors based on their having secure websites.

Friday July 5 – Exercise 4

- When we click into practically any business website then click the “About Us” hoverlink, what do we see? Answer: Accountable People. Whether it is the President, Senior Manager, or Staff, we see people.
- This was an exercise in knowing where else to look once we have clicked into a “*Best Contractors*” or other contractor’s Website.

- The presence of building materials, purported successful home projects, testimonies, or anything other than an accountable person or people, is typically a red flag.

Retrospect

Some time ago, while inspecting the website of a contractor company, a volunteer noticed that the “About Us” page was loaded with bright, colorful pictures of homes. No people. Not a single person. This volunteer peeked in because it appeared to be a new website. What a discovery!

Through scouring publicly accessible sources online, it was discovered that it was operating under the name of another contractor company in a different state.

The other contractor firm being imitated had rave reviews everywhere.

In short, the “imposter” made the mistake of using an address traceable to an organized criminal contractor element which was legally shutdown on a few occasions – using names or initials of notable businesses.

Then about a few months later, it was in the news for its evil deeds. It was connected to the same people. We may want to be sure to check the “About Us” hover link. WHO’S ACCOUNTABLE for this “*Best Contractors?*” ad?

Conclusion

The given exercises we given piece-meal since we have tendencies to brief through what we read to get on with something else. By splitting these into four separate exercises, residents are enabled to focus on only one thing at a time. Also repetitious exposure to same things aids perfect memory. An example to this effect is *‘Best Contractors.’ It follows that when we see this phrase in search engines, we will remember to:*

- a. Beam in on the point-of-origination [website]
- b. Run an immediate web search for any complaints against it/them.
- c. Check to see if whether or not these are “safe” websites.
- d. Inspect the “About Us” and equivalent hover links of each one for evidences of accountable person(s) or of persons “in hiding.”

Through doing these things we are able to ascertain the credibility of the these websites and of the contractors or contractor agencies behind them.

This is our basis for discovering if whether or not we would should go farther to look into other things about them like: licensure and/or registration to do business in our state or locality as contractors, reputation in our neighborhoods (who in the neighborhood has used their services, results), easy-payment plans, etc.....before contacting for an interview).

- We may want to be cautious against giving any of our personal, location, or other information about our homes online. The major reason is that once any of this information is released online to contractor firms or contractor agencies, we have no control over how it will be used or if whether or not it will be sold to the highest bidder. Then to another. This could go on for years without our knowledge.
- Another significant factor for not entering even our zip codes in these websites is that by so doing we are implying that it is okay of share it with unknown persons. But if we do not know anything about people, especially online, would we give them our address?

To learn more about how we can be even more knowledgeable and self-empowered for making the safest and wisest contractor hiring decisions, we are cordially invited to down this very special series of free guides:

[4 Crucial Phases To Effective Contractor Screening](#)

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