Artificial Sweeteners Still Make the Coffee Sweet

Lori MacVittie, 2007-21-03

An artificial list can still lead you to the right solution

Three days of vacation and a case of "travel interruptus" and poof! You miss all the fun. I knew "The List" was coming out, but I didn't think it would cause the uproar that it has. Half the blogosphere is mad because it's an artificially created list designed to bolster traffic to the ITSecurity site, and the other half is just happy to have been listed in the top 59 influencers in security.

Having spent over six years in the publishing industry, all I can say is that all such lists are artificially created and quite frankly all content today on any media site is designed to drive traffic. Ask me sometime about what goes on "behind the scenes" when lists like this are generated. But you'd better have a stiff drink in your hand, I'm just saying.

In any case, the list worked. People are linking to the list and to blog posts like Martin McKeay's and Mike Farnum which in turn link to the list (Mike, I am **not** getting a tattoo, but I might buy a t-shirt). Readers then go check out the list to see what all the uproar is about, and voila! An instant uptake in hits for ITSecurity.

See? I can't even talk about the issue without linking to something that provides context, which means I must link to the list or at least to posts that talk about the link to the list, which contains a link to the list.

The good news about a list so diverse as this is that people will start reading at least some of the blogs or checking out sites to determine whether the author has perhaps hit on someone that really **is** a huge influence on security. It provides a good place to start for someone looking for new ideas, data, and products that might just lead them to better security in their organizations and maybe even at home.

So while the list is artificial, the results will not be. Does it really matter whether you found **Michael Santarcangelo** and his good advice via Google or because of "the list"? No. Would you have guessed that F5 is in the security space? Perhaps not. Would you have ever visited my former colleague Jordan Weins site? Probably not. But now you might, and you might find the information you needed, before you needed it.

There are a lot of good ideas and solutions out there that may not be recognized unless you stumble upon them. This list is just one more resource that can help you safely traverse the myriad obstacles that block the road to implementing security solutions as well as identifying the pitfalls that exist for both consumers and organizations the world over.

Imbibing: Mountain Dew

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