

Motion

INFORMATION, TECHNOLOGY AND GENERAL SERVICES

Cybercrimes are not a new type of crime; however, they are rapidly increasing in scope and threat. With the ubiquity of digital technology, people of all ages are targets for criminals inside and outside of the City of Los Angeles. From social media to commercial operations our private data, well-being, and financial assets are at risk of exploitation. The FBI Internet Crime report notes that California, in 2017, was the top target nationwide with 41,974 reported internet crimes. The same report indicates that nearly 20,000 reported crimes occurred on social media. Many more crimes which take place over social media and internet platforms go unreported and often unnoticed.

As new social media platforms, online forums, trends, and opportunities to connect individuals arise, so too do the opportunities for bad actors to abuse these. The threats to individuals and society are hastened by the pace at which criminals can acquire new technology or knowledge to exploit social media platforms. The average consumer neither has the time nor the wherewithal to learn and implement the most up-to-date cyber-protection information. Furthermore, the terms of service and content guidelines are often changing, leaving uncertainty for individual users. As the report from the Information Technology Agency (Council File 15-0965) explains, there are limitations imposed under the First and Fourteenth Amendments which preclude many of the regulatory actions the City of Los Angeles could take. Since the report, the social media platforms studied have begun to change their content guidelines to address concerns over violence and exploitation.

Nonetheless, the current array of default privacy and data protection on social media platforms leaves users with a patchwork of unclear and unspecific expectations. The landscape of self-regulating platforms, when the user base expands exponentially to include millions, often result in limited human oversight. It is a proverbial 'Wild West' of internet interaction where community members are at the mercy of misinformation and criminal actors.

The current and expanding landscape of social media platforms is a mix of communities where bad actors and criminals can exploit everyone. The young, elderly, and those from disadvantaged communities, in particular, are most vulnerable. The rate of change for best-practices online and on social media is constantly changing and people are often uninformed. Worse yet, criminal elements purposely prey on the good faith and trust of community members to commit heinous actions such as human trafficking and lure others into violent situations.

The role of an online crime reporting tool is one that empowers many community members to seek justice when they otherwise may be subject to retaliation or further victimization. Currently, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) has an electronic police report system called the Community Online Reporting Service. This service increases the likelihood that community members will engage with LAPD to report non-emergency crimes including harassing calls, lost property, theft, and vandalism. This online reporting system also has the potential to serve as a means for community members of all backgrounds to report cybercrimes if it is expanded to include prominent cybercrimes. Some prominent cybercrimes include hacking, theft, network intrusion, denial of service attacks, and unlawful access to computers. Other crimes, because of the ubiquity of social media and internet access, are now crimes with a digital fingerprint such as credible threats of violence, abuse, and trafficking.

At this time the Community Online Reporting Service is limited to those over the age of 18. While this may be responsive to youth privacy concerns, this limitation inhibits the vulnerable youth

populations from engaging with law enforcement. Expanding the online reporting tool to accommodate the needs of those under 18 years old will allow vulnerable youth to engage with law enforcement safely and privately. Foster youth, children of abusive households, and those neglected are at higher risk of victimization because an in-person police report can be identified or prevented by a criminal.

The utility and accessibility of the Community Online Reporting Service may be enhanced through integration or linking with MyLA311. The MyLA311 app, used for city service delivery from reporting homeless encampments to requesting tree trimming, has had a high rate of adoption and usage by the public since its introduction. Now known as a primary conduit for the public to engage with the City, this platform can be expanded to aid in the fight against cybercrimes and promote social media safety. The effort to fight against cybercrimes and improve social media safety can be enhanced by allowing community members to select an option to file an online police report via MyLA311 and be redirected to the Community Online Reporting Service. Further enhancements can be to integrate the online police reporting into MyLA311 so that a community member can file an online police report on the MyLA311 app, which is subsequently routed to the LAPD.

The ability of the LAPD to respond to and investigate cybercrimes can be enhanced by making the appropriate tip lines more prominent on apps used by the community. Integrating a tip line into MyLA311 can help aggregate tips about criminal red-flags useful to the LAPD.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the LAPD report on the feasibility and opportunities to expand the Community Online Reporting Service to include cybercrimes.

I FURTHER MOVE that the LAPD and City Attorney's office report on the on the feasibility of allowing those under the age of 18 to file a police report.

I FURTHER MOVE that the City Council the LAPD to work with the Information Technology Agency (ITA) to report on the feasibility of linking the MyLA311 app to the Community Online Reporting Service in such a way that a community member can be redirected from MyLA311 to the Community Online Reporting Service, or integrated so that a community member can make a police report on MyLA311 which is then sent to the LAPD.

I FURTHER MOVE that the LAPD and ITA report on the feasibility of expanding MyLA311 to include a crime tip line that will allow community members to log reports on cybercrime red-flags.

PRESENTED BY:



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SECONDED:



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