

Pakistan issues transgender passport

Peshawar

Pakistan has issued its first third-gender passport to a transgender activist, who hailed the move as a step forward for the marginalised community in the deeply conservative South Asian country. Farzana Riaz, a transgender in northwestern Peshawar city, said yesterday, "I have received my passport which mentions my gender as X and not as a male or female."



UK parliament hit by cyberattack

London

Britain's parliament shut down external access to e-mail accounts yesterday following a cyberattack. A House of Commons spokeswoman said that "the Houses of Parliament have discovered unauthorised attempts to access parliamentary user accounts. "We have systems in place to protect member and staff accounts and are taking the steps to protect our systems."



We already have two international (human rights) pacts... The idea is to create a third, for a third generation of rights -- environmental rights,"



- Francois Laurent Fabius

former French prime minister

Tips for selling products online

Effectively selling products online requires much more than just creating a product listing page and sharing it on Twitter, hoping for the sales to come flooding in. From creating product listings that are designed to sell, to increasing conversions, and creating a happy community, there's something here for everyone, no matter your business or product.

Create clear product titles and descriptions:

What is your buyer receiving? What type of value does your product provide? Make sure to list out everything a buyer would receive from purchasing your product, whether it's a digital guide to photography or a whole foods recipe ebook.

Use high quality product designs or photography:

Create product designs that are unique to your business by incorporating your logo, branding colours, and voice. If you sell physical products, a simple backdrop, bright lighting, and high quality photography (even with your iPhone) is key to showing off your item in all its glory.

Add customer reviews to the sales page:

Social proof is huge. Add positive testimonials from previous customers to your product page to encourage a potential customer to click that 'Buy' button.

Make it easy to contact you:

Always include a contact page on your website, blog, or online store. Make it easy for your customers to contact you and increase buyer confidence.

Give your buyers different ways to pay:

Not every customer has a PayPal account, and not every customer is comfortable paying with a credit card online. Give your buyers as many possible options to purchase from you, so that you don't lose out on sales because of a simple reason like not taking PayPal. (Creativelive)



Google to stop scanning Gmail

San Francisco

Google said yesterday it would stop scanning the contents of Gmail users' inboxes for ad targeting, moving to end a practice that has fuelled privacy concerns since the free email service was launched.

A Google statement said Gmail users would still see "personalized" ads and marketing messages but these would be based on other data, which may include search queries or browsing habits.

Google Cloud senior vice president Diane Greene said in a blog that the free Gmail service would now follow the same practices as its corporate G Suite Gmail.

"Consumer Gmail content will not be used or scanned for any ads personalization

after this change," Greene said.

"This decision brings Gmail ads in line with how we personalize ads for other Google products. Ads shown are based on users' settings. Users can change those settings at any time, including disabling ads personalization."

Privacy activists have long complained that the scanning of email contents amounts to unwarranted "eavesdropping" on users.

The internet giant earlier this year reached a settlement in a class action lawsuit in the matter, but a federal judge rejected the deal as inadequate.

US District Judge Lucy Koh ruled in March that the settlement was difficult

to understand and "does not clearly disclose the fact that Google intercepts, scans and analyzes the contents of emails sent by non-Gmail users to Gmail users for the purposes of creating user profiles of the Gmail users to create targeted advertising."

Danny Sullivan, founding editor of the online blog Search Engine Land, called the move a "big change" for Gmail, noting that the scanning of email contents "has been the biggest hit against the services since it began."

But Sullivan wrote on Twitter: "On the other hand, does it reassure consumers to know that Google has better info now about how to target them than by reading their emails?" (AFP)

Representational image

GM reaches deal over faulty ignition switches

New York

US auto giant General Motors has reached a settlement with hundreds of car owners in a lawsuit over faulty ignition switches linked to 100 deaths, the company's lawyers said Friday.

In a letter to a federal judge in New York, the lawyers said GM has "agreed to a private, confidential aggregate settlement" with 203 eligible plaintiffs.



GM Headquarters

The deal "potentially resolves hundreds of state court claims as well."

The parties will work to

document the deal in the next month, and "will then turn to implementing the settlement terms, which will take some time," the letter said.

The defective switches would sometimes shut off unexpectedly during driving, and have been linked to more than 100 deaths and hundreds of serious injuries.

The issue potentially exposed GM to billions of dollars in claims.