

Research Reveals Proliferation of Child Sexual Abuse Material on US Adult Websites

New research from VerifyMy shows that 29% of online adult content viewers in the US have accidentally come across child sexual abuse material (CSAM).

SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, January 31, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- New research from [VerifyMy](#), the online safeguarding tech leader, reveals that almost a third (29%) of US online adult content consumers have unintentionally come across child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Over 64% of these exposures have taken place within the past year. These [findings](#) reveal the proliferation of CSAM content on adult user-generated content (UGC) sites and the inadequate state of content moderation controls across many of these platforms.

More than half (56%) of users who unintentionally encountered CSAM content did not report it, primarily due to fear of possible repercussions (20%), worries about engaging in illegal activities (22%), or uncertainty about reporting procedures (14%). Furthermore, victims were reluctant to speak up because of various concerns, such as feelings of embarrassment and a lack of faith in existing reporting systems.

Among the 44% of viewers who reported encountering CSAM content, over two-thirds (69%) did so directly on the website. However, this approach has shown to be ineffective, as most websites still lack proper response and moderation controls, rendering them incapable of adequately addressing reports of illegal content. Additionally, 12% submitted reports to the police, but this method has also proven to be unsuccessful, as recent [investigations](#) indicate that law enforcement often struggles to access said reports.

Just 17% filed reports via child protection organizations. However, many respondents were unable to provide the name of the organization, which could indicate that this number is overstated.

Michal Karnibad, co-CEO at VerifyMy said: "Online Child Sexual Abuse Material is an insidious issue that often goes unnoticed amidst the vast expanse of digital content. With billions of minutes of pornography available and trillions of minutes viewed, uncovering this problem is a Herculean challenge. Unfortunately, it is an invisible problem, and as such not enough resources and efforts are directed toward it.

"Given a lack of incentives and little to no proper enforcement of rules and standards, many

websites have done the bare minimum regarding content moderation. As a result, the responsibility has fallen on the public to report and expose these issues. Instead, the onus should be on content and tech firms to put in place rules and tools to ensure extreme and illegal content never make it onto their platforms and to transparently report on how they are tackling this growing problem. In the current self-regulated environment, it is crucial to ensure these companies are 'doing their homework' correctly and taking proactive measures to maintain a safe online environment.”

Karnibad added: “We must also act to increase awareness of this issue and the best course of action for consumers, and the entire ecommerce ecosystem to ensure a healthier and more accountable digital landscape. While until recently there was no technology capable of monitoring the entire internet for CSAM content, the advent of artificial intelligence has made it easier than ever to identify and stamp out illegal content online at scale, accurately, and at a low cost before it gets published. There is no excuse for websites to not become responsible for their own actions and enhance their content moderation processes.”

ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The survey was conducted via SurveyMonkey in November 2023, across 1,413 anonymous adult individuals in the United States, spanning various demographics and genders.

ABOUT VERIFYMY

VerifyMy creates safety tech solutions designed to safeguard children and society online, by providing frictionless, trustworthy assurance, identity authentication and content moderation solutions for online platforms to maintain their integrity, protect their reputation and safeguard their customers. For more information please visit: <https://verifymy.io/>

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