

**Consumer Education**

Federal Trade Commission:  
Empowering Consumers  
Against Online Threats

**Background**

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace. Consumers are now exposed to Internet fraud attempts that threaten consumer confidence in e-commerce. Online scammers, hackers, and identity thieves seek to access personal computers and personal information to perpetrate new crimes. Because the FTC believes educated consumers are empowered consumers, the agency launched its most ambitious effort yet to educate Americans on the dangers lurking on the Web.

**JDG's Solution**

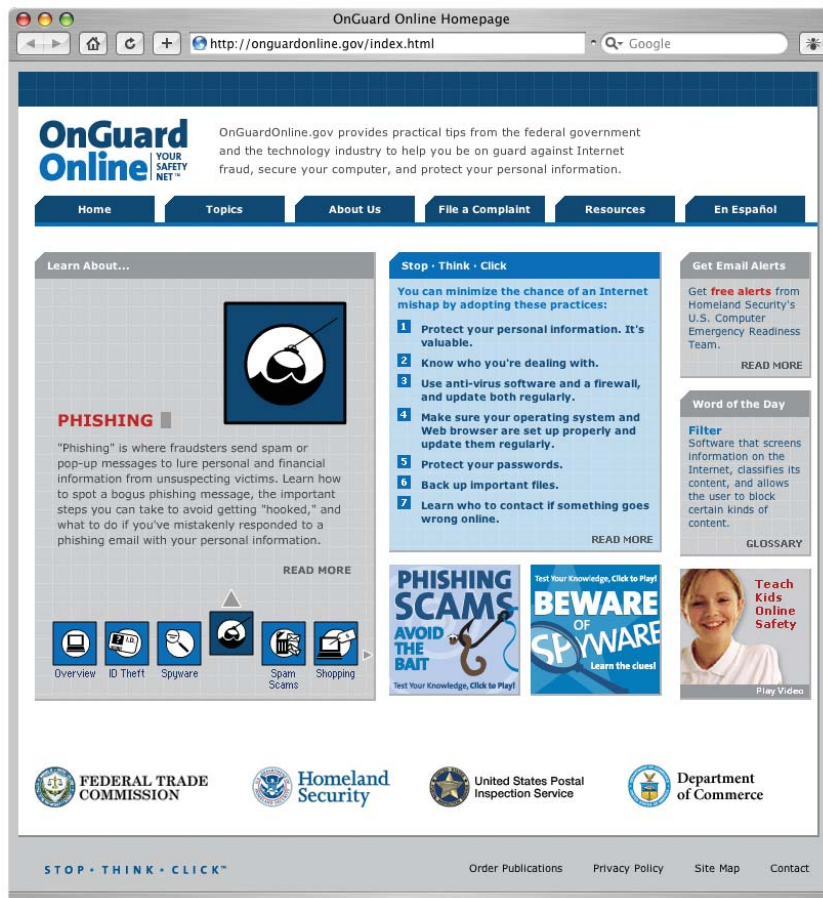
The research phase began with a series of interviews and message workshops with internal FTC staff

# OnGuard Online

**YOUR SAFETY NET™**

and FTC partners in commercial, nonprofit and government organizations. During the research process we worked to uncover the overarching messages that would alert consumers to the dangers of Internet fraud without creating a sense of fear and alarm. The goal was to inform consumers on the steps they could take to guard against Internet fraud, secure their computers, and protect their personal information.

Focus group testing identified the campaign name that most effectively communicated the key messages as "OnGuard Online: Your Safety Net." The FTC chose the call to action tagline "Stop. Think. Click" to raise a caution flag in the consumer's mind and encourage the practice of safe computing habits. JDG created a distinctive campaign logo that was formed by combining the key messages. The brand identity created a focal point



for all the tactical elements developed to create awareness including the website, banner ads, safer computing tips brochure, tradeshow booth and bookmarks.

The website OnGuardOnline.gov was designed to be both informational and educational. It features engaging interactive quizzes with music and Flash animation that test users' knowledge. At the website launch press conference FTC Chairman Deborah Platt Majoras said:

"Like the Internet itself, OnGuard Online has been designed to be a flexible, adaptable education platform: it is the next generation of consumer education. Our goal is to use technology to share important and empowering information

with consumers across the cyber-sphere. The site includes seven tips about online safety that will remain relevant even as technology evolves, as well as modules with specific information on topics such as phishing, spyware, and peer-to-peer file-sharing, and a structure that will facilitate frequent changes and updates. It includes articles, videos, and quizzes. And it provides information about where to get help, ensuring that consumers know that they are not alone as they travel through cyberspace. I think you will agree with me that the content and the structure are as dynamic and relevant as the subjects they focus on."

**Results**

Within the first two weeks after the website launch, the FTC reported that the site was getting 10,000 unique visitors per day. The FTC received partnership support from major players in government, non-profit and corporate sectors including: The Direct Marketing Association, The National Consumers League, National Cyber Security Division for the Department of Homeland Security, Truste.org, The Internet Education Foundation, The U.S. Postal Inspection Service, EBay and Microsoft. The enthusiastic participation and campaign support from these and many other partners has significantly helped to extend the reach of this campaign to empower consumers.

