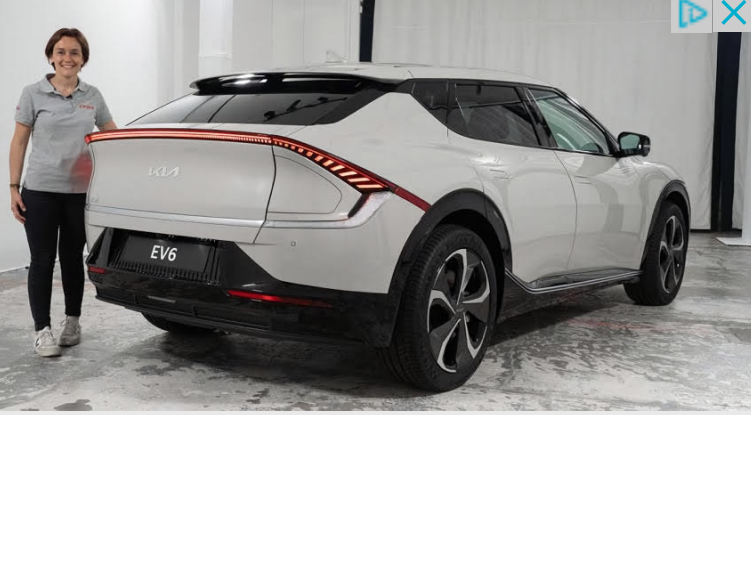




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SASKATOON News

## Sask. woman gets thousands in credit card charges after hackers lock her out of Facebook page



03:11

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Rory MacLean

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Updated March 29, 2023 2:19 p.m. CST

Published March 27, 2023 4:49 p.m. CST

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An Outlook woman has been locked out of her online business' Facebook page for months and she says she's starting to lose hope.

Rochelle Annala first realized something was wrong on a Saturday in November when she logged into Facebook to make the first post of the weekend on her page, Bibs and Boots Fabric. The page didn't look right. She couldn't access the admin controls.

"I couldn't get in to post. It made it look; made my business page look like I was a visitor," said Annala.

"And then I got, like, virtually within minutes, I got two notifications on my phone that someone had charged thousands of dollars on my Visa."

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Annala says it looks like they may have gotten access to her personal account, added themselves as an admin on her Facebook page and then kicked her off.

The charges to her Visa were for Facebook ads, and she says she's got no information from Facebook as to what ads were purchased, nor can she see who's now the admin of the page.

Annala emailed Facebook's parent company Meta to tell them what was going on. Getting the money refunded was easy, but getting access to the stolen page has been a frustrating journey.

"I tried every email that I could find for them ... same answer every time," she said. "It's been a long, arduous process, and stressful, right? Because I can't see when customers message me. I can't see when they comment or anything."

Her Instagram is linked to her Facebook account, so she says her posts still end up on the Facebook page, but she's worried about what else this hacker could do now.

Having a security breach like this can be really harmful for a company, says Saskatoon-based software developer Chad Jones.

"Because people can post as you, they can pretend to be you," he said. "It can damage your reputation."

It's possible the hackers are using the account to try to exploit other Facebook users, Jones said.

"So once they hack your account, the standard practice is they will probably send messages to everyone you know, trying to get them to click on links in order to get access to computers, things like that, right?"

Judging by a message Annala received on Monday, the hacker may have access to some customer emails as well.

"This lady messaged and said, 'I think someone's hacked your account, because I'm getting emails from people about your business.' Oh my god, I didn't even think of that."

CTV News reached out to Meta for comment on Monday. A media spokesperson took her information and said they would look into it.

If Meta does restore her access to the page, Jones suggests Annala should go over the security settings very carefully, and make sure two-factor authentication is set up on all her associated accounts.

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The survey, commissioned by cybersecurity and VPN provider NordVPN, involved 10,800 participants from 11 countries, including 1,000 Canadians. It found that 36 per cent of Canadians would "delete themselves" from the internet if they could. (Pexels)

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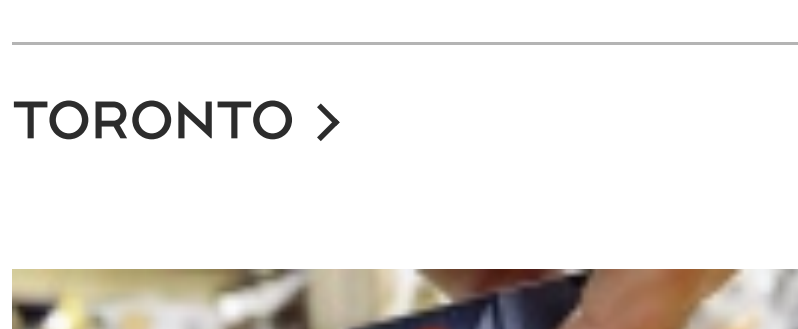
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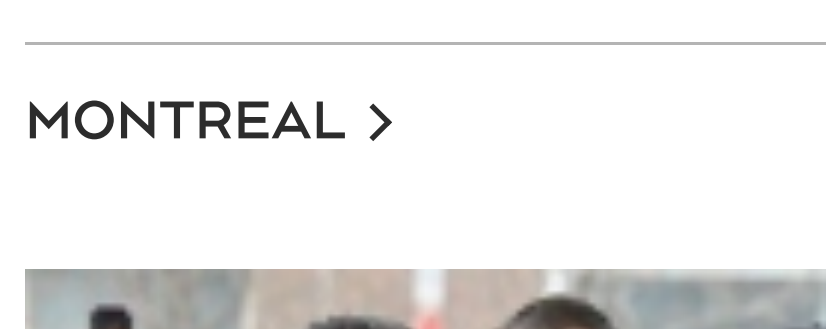


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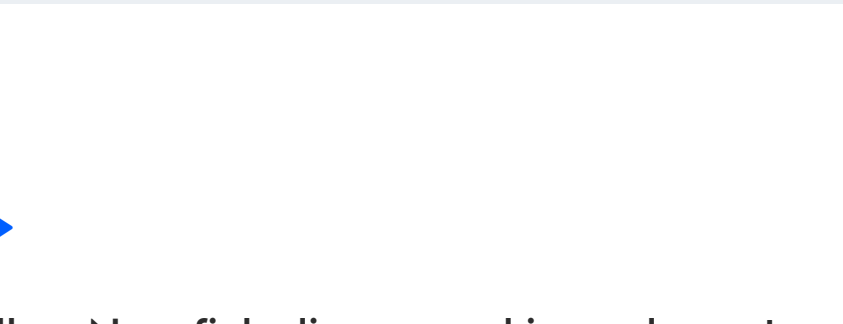


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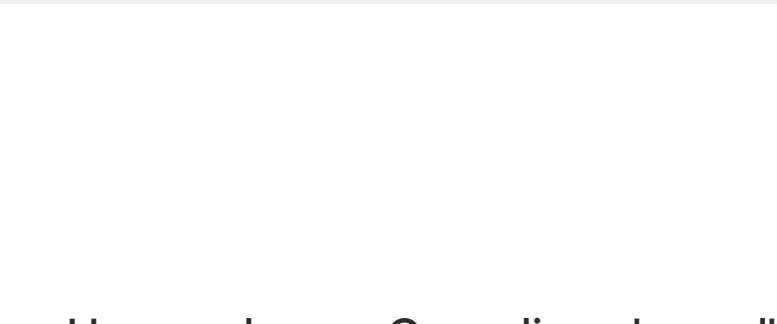


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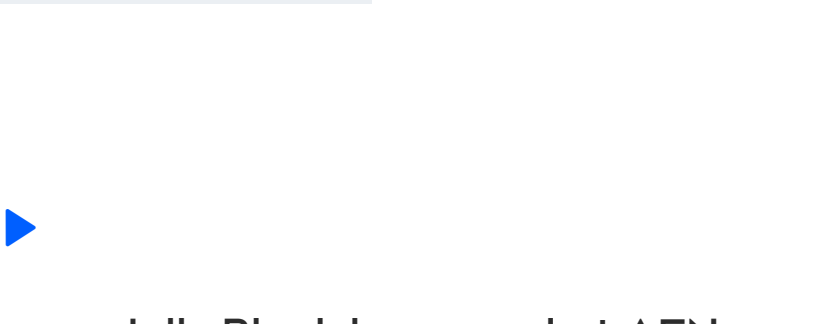


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