

4th anniversary of Las Vegas massacre provides an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned¹

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Potential for copycats inspired by this and other mass shootings requires security to become proactive

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A memorial dedicated to the victims of the Las Vegas shooting on the Las Vegas Strip near the Mandalay Bay resort.

Four years ago, on Oct. 1, 2017, over 22,000 concertgoers were at the Route 91 Harvest festival in Las Vegas enjoying the music and having a great time when all hell broke loose. A lone gunman unleashed over 1,000 rounds from the 32nd floor of the Mandalay

¹ <https://www.securityinfowatch.com/security-executives/article/21240612/4th-anniversary-of-las-vegas-massacre-provides-an-opportunity-to-reflect-on-lessons-learned>

Bay resort onto the concert area, killing 60 individuals and wounding more than 400 others.

It was the worst mass shooting in modern American history.

Several years later, MGM **paid \$800 million** to settle thousands of liability claims stemming from the mass shooting; however, the money is minuscule to the victims' families and friends who will never forget their loved ones.

Unfortunately, there is a concern over potential lone wolves or copycats following the news media who will try to make history at the expense of others. Past shooters have had a fixation with other mass shootings that made national news. One of the most notable attacks that has inspired others in the U.S. and around the world to commit mass shootings is the Columbine High School massacre, in which two students murdered 12 of their fellow classmates and one teacher on April 20, 1999.

Recently, there were two serious incidents where six students were arrested. Last month, two Florida students were **accused of plotting a massacre** at their middle school where law enforcement determined that the students were studying the Columbine massacre. Just last week, four students in Pennsylvania were **charged with plotting an attack on their high school** on the 25th anniversary of Columbine.

Let's not forget other shootings: the Orlando night club shooting that killed 50 and injured 53; the Virginia Tech shooting that killed 32 and injured 17; the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting that killed 27 and injured 1; and the most recent shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School that killed 17 and injured 17.

At least 2,000 people have been killed or injured in mass shootings since 1999, **according to data** gathered by *Mother Jones* magazine.

Taking a Proactive Approach

Sadly, we are still being "reactive" rather than being "proactive." Until we seriously embrace a collaborative, proactive approach, we will continue to see the high numbers of deaths and injuries associated with mass shootings.

Through careful planning, it is possible for businesses and schools to develop a quality emergency crisis plan that meets their needs without breaking the budget. As a security expert, I work with business owners, school administrators and their staff, and local emergency responders to complete a thorough risk assessment to include an all-hazards approach of all their buildings, campuses, and properties.

Businesses and schools are unique and have their own individual challenges, i.e., size, age, location, design or type of construction, and other factors.

The assessment pinpoints critical areas of vulnerability and will identify the security strengths, as well as any security weaknesses. The whole process is designed to reduce

incidents and tries to anticipate any emergencies that might occur at their place of business or school campus.

The results of these assessments will be the initial phase to develop a course of action, a strategic plan, and a budget. Any plan will undoubtedly include security technology, but no single security implementation will protect a business or school; true protection comes from many layers of security protocols and processes.

Admittedly, no plan is 100-percent foolproof and every act of terrorism cannot be prevented; however, the damage inflicted by an attacker can at least be minimized if businesses and schools take the potential threat seriously and have proper security safeguards in place.

There is no way of predicting where the next shooting will occur, but businesses and schools can and must be prepared to take preventative measures to mitigate damages and protect their workplace, including employees, staff, students, and visitors.

I have always stated that prevention costs less than reaction. A serious incident of violence is actually 100 times more expensive than taking proactive measures to prevent the incident from occurring.

The psychological, social, and economic consequences of an active shooting incident may last decades, even a lifetime.

About the Author:

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