



**Thawte Extended Validation
SSL Certificates Help
E-Commerce Site Increase
Conversions and Fight Security
Costs as Business Grows**

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Headquartered in Garnerville, New York, KarateDepot.com is one of the largest online retailers of martial arts equipment, uniforms, and other karate supplies in the United States. KarateDepot.com is owned by S and A Industries, a small e-commerce corporation that operates several other sites that sell fighting sports gear – including BoxingDepot.com and EliteMMA.com – as well as ScrubsGallery.com, a website that offers nursing scrubs and medical uniforms, and a magazine subscription site, MagsDirect.com.

Challenge

PROTECT E-COMMERCE TRANSACTIONS COST-EFFECTIVELY

When Aaron Rubin founded S and A Industries in 1999, the idea of selling products online was still relatively new. Despite this fact, Rubin still understood that SSL security would be essential to help ensure the success of the company's first e-commerce website, KarateDepot.com. "I have a background in web development, so I knew that taking an order online without using an SSL certificate simply wasn't an option," he says. "We had to protect our customers' private information or they would never trust our site."

In addition to securing KarateDepot.com and building trust with customers, Rubin also needed a solution that would allow S and A Industries to launch additional sites while keeping the cost of SSL security low. "When we started selling martial arts supplies online, we could see that there was a lot of potential to expand into other sports and product categories," Rubin says. "We wanted to find an SSL solution that could help us control costs as we grew and launched more e-commerce sites."

Rubin viewed SSL security as an absolute necessity, but he wanted to find a cost-effective technology that offered brand name recognition and the flexibility to meet the changing needs of his business.

SOLUTION SUMMARY

Industry:

- Retail and wholesale sales of martial arts equipment and uniforms

Key Challenges:

- Help ensure customers' online credit card transactions are secure
- Build trust in website by protecting customer data
- Enable company to expand and launch new sites while keeping the costs of SSL security low

Solution:

- Thawte® SSL Web Server Certificates with EV

Results:

- Increased transaction rates by placing the Thawte seal on web pages
- Controlled costs as the business grew and launched more e-commerce sites
- Established customer confidence by using visible EV SSL security backed by a strong brand



"After we implemented Thawte SSL certificates, we placed the Thawte seal on our sites and we definitely saw our conversion rates go up. When people see the Thawte seal, they buy more. It's as simple as that."

—Aaron Rubin, Owner, KarateDepot.com

Solution

STRONG SECURITY COMBINED WITH BRAND NAME RECOGNITION

When Rubin and his team launched KarateDepot.com, they implemented SSL certificates from another provider, but the technology ended up costing too much. Rubin then started searching for an SSL solution that provided better value while offering strong brand name recognition. “We looked at what other high quality, high volume e-commerce sites were using, and it wasn’t low-end certificates from unknown providers,” he says. “The successful sites were using Thawte, so we trusted their knowledge and expertise and decided to choose Thawte SSL certificates as well.”

Since he also wanted to give customers a clear signal that KarateDepot.com was secure, Rubin opted for Thawte® SSL Web Server Certificates with EV (Extended Validation). “We’re one of the biggest martial arts equipment retailers online, but we’re not a well-known national brand,” says Rubin. “When customers visit KarateDepot.com, not only do they recognize the Thawte name, but they also see a green bar in their browser.¹ That combination, visible security backed by a strong brand, helps our customers trust us even more.”

In addition to robust, customer-friendly security, Thawte SSL certificates offer a smooth implementation process, a feature that appealed to the KarateDepot.com programming team. “We do all of the programming for our sites in house, so having SSL certificates that are easy to work with is a definite plus,” Rubin says. “In the ten years that we’ve been using Thawte, we’ve only run into one minor issue, and the Thawte customer support team was able to resolve it right away. For us, Thawte SSL certificates have been virtually hassle free.”

1. Extended validation SSL certificates trigger a green address bar in high-security browsers.

Results

INCREASED TRANSACTION RATES AND STRONG SALES GROWTH

Since KarateDepot.com switched to Thawte SSL certificates, the site has experienced dramatic growth, enabling S and A Industries to expand and launch five additional e-commerce sites, including BoxingDepot.com, EliteMMA.com, ScrubsGallery.com, and MagsDirect.com. “Aside from last year, when we made some adjustments to our business model, we’ve grown 25 percent every year since KarateDepot.com went online in 2000,” says Rubin.

As Rubin points out, Thawte SSL security has been key to that strong growth and success. “After we implemented Thawte SSL certificates, we placed the Thawte seal on our sites and we definitely saw our conversion rates go up,” he says. “When people see the Thawte seal, they buy more. It’s as simple as that.”

Future

STICKING WITH THAWTE FOR EVEN MORE SUCCESS

In the future, S and A Industries plans to continue its expansion by acquiring even more e-commerce sites. As Rubin points out, the company will rely on Thawte to provide SSL security on every new site it launches. “We have some big plans for the next year. We’re looking to start running at least one or two additional websites and we’re switching to a new hosting environment,” he says. “We’ve seen such great results so far that we see no reason to switch to a different provider. We’re definitely going to stick with Thawte.”

To learn more, contact our sales advisors:

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Protect your business and translate trust to your customers with high-assurance digital certificates from Thawte, the world’s first international specialist in online security. Backed by a 17-year track record of stability and reliability, a proven infrastructure, and world-class customer support, Thawte is the international partner of choice for businesses worldwide.