SERVICE STATION DEALERS OF AMERICA AND ALLIED TRADES

SSDA News

Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades

VOLUME 39, ISSUE 11 DECEMBER, 2025

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SSDA-AT Builds Strong Momentum Behind the REPAIR Act

By Roy Littlefield

SSDA-AT is intensifying its national efforts to advance the bipartisan REPAIR Act, a key piece of legislation that protects consumers' right to choose where their vehicles are serviced and ensures independent repair shops can access the tools and information required to work on modern vehicles.

The association is working closely with industry partners, meeting with lawmakers, and elevating the issue across Capitol Hill to reinforce why the REPAIR Act is essential for a fair, competitive, and affordable repair marketplace. SSDA-AT is also engaging its nationwide membership to help share real-world examples of how restricted access affects small businesses and the communities they serve.

SSDA-AT is also strengthening its collaboration with national coalitions focused on repair access. By coordinating strategies and sharing insights across automotive, aftermarket, and consumer groups, the association is helping build a united voice urging Congress to move forward. This coordinated approach underscores just how central the REPAIR Act is to protecting small businesses and ensuring long-term consumer choice.

Looking ahead, SSDA-AT will continue to monitor progress in Congress while keeping its members informed and engaged. With unified industry support and sustained advocacy, the association believes that passage of the REPAIR Act is both achievable and essential to the future of independent automotive service.

RIGHT TO REPAIR

The Online Edge – What Your Business Needs to Thrive

By: Stephanie Santore, Net Driven

Does your business have an online presence? If so, are you doing all you can to ensure its virtual success? If not, what are you waiting for? Let's take a sneak peek at some statistical findings from the Pew Research Center. According to their most recent studies on the use of internet and technology it was found that:

Roughly three-quarters of Americans, or 77%, now own a smartphone, which nearly doubles the former findings since the Center began its research in 2011.

As of November 2016, nearly three-quarters, or 73% of Americans indicate that they have broadband service at home.

Nearly seven-in-ten Americans now use social media. When the Center started tracking social media adoption in 2005, just 5% of Americans said they used these platforms. Today, 69% of U.S. adults are social media users.

Half the public now owns a tablet computer. When the Center first began tracking tablet ownership in 2010, just 3% of Americans owned a tablet of some kind.

As you can see, now more than ever before, an online presence for your business is significant. And not just any online presence, but a quality one that provides a sense of credibility and legitimacy, turning its visitors into leads and sales, and contributing to the success of your business.

First impressions matter. If your business has a website, rest assured that internet users are navigating to it to formulate their opinion, to see what other people have to say about you, and to "screen" shop your services and products, which is much like window shopping, but with the ease of never having to actually visit your business's location.

Your business can now be accessible to the masses thanks to technology. Therefore, it's vital to have a way for potential clients to find you with the swipe of their fingertip and also to ensure you have a website that makes a good impression.

So, how do you go about trying to meet your customers' needs online?

Let's Talk Internet Marketing Best Practices

There are several factors that play into the creation of a well-made website that will help your business's online presence generate traffic and rank effectively:

Design & Layout

Visual presentation plays an important role in the functionality of a website. A high-performing website will provide a positive user experience. It helps to have a responsive web design. What makes a website responsive? Responsive design helps to generate leads and sales without any limitations based on user devices. So, customers can find your automotive service site on their tablet, smartphone, smart watch, etc., viewing your website efficiently from any screen size.

Content

Content is the reason why visitors come to a site. They are seeking information about your business and its services. The key is to provide relevant content that is easy for visitors to digest. Too much or too little and your visitors

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NET DRIVEN

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might go elsewhere to find what they're looking for. Check out what Moz has to say about content regarding search engine ranking. By providing unique content that moves beyond self- promotion and is easily digestible to the user, your website offers valuable information.

Calls to Action

Calls to action within a site's content and design come in the form of clickable links or custom buttons. It entices a visitor to take action beyond the page they are on, an action like submitting a form, requesting a quote, purchasing a product, or even just clicking a link that leads to another page with relevant information. Through a CTA, a user moves to take a specific action that will benefit your business. And action is what it's all about.

Credibility

A business with an online footprint is a business that can be found, recognized, and confided in.

From building a solid and consistent brand across all channels, to maintaining an active social media presence, gaining positive reviews, managing your online reputation with products like Net Driven's Reputation Management.

Mobile Viewability

More and more people are looking at your site from a mobile phone or web enabled device. It seems like anything with a screen and a microchip in it is capable of getting on the internet these days.

Make sure your site is viewable on a mobile internet enabled device.

Search Engine Optimization

At Net Driven, we drive the traffic that drives your business! It begins with a website that keeps local search in mind.

A strong SEO foundation puts proven strategies to work and improves your ability to get found.

From understanding searcher behavior to using tested best practices, the SEO team at Net Driven works hard to ensure that your site has all of the key ingredients for SEO success. Look to us for:

Keyword research performed for your business and target geographic

Optimized meta tags for click through success

Relevant industry content

Local directory management

SEO-friendly site architecture

and more!

Don't have a website yet? What are you waiting for?!

Talk to a representative from Net Driven today and ask about how we can help you create a website that not only generates traffic, but turns your traffic into leads and sales!

Net Driven should be your choice for all your automotive internet marketing needs.

Contact us today!

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Energy Dept. Reorganizes to Support Trump Priorities

The Trump administration has unveiled an Energy Department reorganization, eliminating two clean energy offices and establishing ones for critical minerals, fusion and hydrocarbons.

It also renamed the Loan Programs Office, which will be called the Office of Energy Dominance Financing.

Trump Administration Announces Plan for New Oil Drilling Off the Coasts of California and Florida

The Trump administration announced on new oil drilling off the California and Florida coasts for the first time in decades, advancing a project that critics say could harm coastal communities and ecosystems, as President Donald Trump seeks to expand U.S. oil production.

Energy Transfer Weighs Upsizing Desert Southwest Pipeline as Demand Surges, MSN

Energy Transfer's recent open season for its Desert Southwest pipeline was so successful that company officials are considering options for a potential increase in capacity.

Company officials said during an investor presentation that the 1.5 billion cubic feet of capacity on the pipeline was fully contracted under long-term commitments from investment-grade customers with 25-year terms. They added that since the open season launched, the company had received significantly more interest than current planned capacity and is evaluating options for a potential increase in capacity. They said on the investor call they are considering whether to upsize the project from a 42-inch to a 48-inch pipeline. The change could add 500 million to 1 billion cubic feet per day to delivery capacity.

Desert Southwest is an expansion of the company's Transwestern Pipeline, a 516-mile, 42-inch pipeline with nine compressor stations that would move natural gas from the Permian Basin to the Phoenix area. The $5.3 billion project is expected to enter service by the fourth quarter of 2029. Company officials also told investors they have entered into commitments with U.S. pipe mills to lock in 100% of production and delivery space for pipe in the fourth quarter of 2027.

The results of the open season "confirm strong gas demand potential in the Southwest from utilities and data centers," according to Ian Heming of East Daley Analytics.

"The success of the proposed expansion comes as no surprise to East Daley Analytics.

In the West Coast Supply & Demand Report, we had identified a growing imbalance in the Southwest from new utility and data center demand, well before Energy Transfer announced the Transwestern expansion," he wrote.

"Gas consumption is increasing to support population growth and an emerging technology hub," he said. Including the expected startup of ECA LNG on Mexico's Pacific coast, East Daley analysts forecast a regional imbalance of more than 1.6 billion cubic feet per day by 2030. The Desert Southwest project will go a long way to fill this gap.

Desert Southwest is designed to deliver gas to seven counties across Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, following existing pipeline easements for between 75% and 99% of the route, according to a project update on the company's website, East Daley reported.

Trump Takes Aim at Oil and Gas Leasing, AP

The Trump administration said it is rescinding federal rules that were aimed at protecting from future oil and gas leasing vast swaths of a petroleum reserve in Alaska that provide key habitat for migrating birds, caribou and other wildlife.

The U.S. Interior Department said the final rule would be published soon but announced it is repealing rules put in place last year. Those rules restricted future leasing and industrial development in areas within the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska designated as special for wildlife, subsistence or other values.

The announcement is in line with an Alaska-specific executive order President Donald Trump signed upon his return to office. The order sought to unravel policies put in place by his predecessor, Democrat Joe Biden, that state political leaders complained had limited Alaska's ability to develop its vast energy resources, including oil and gas.

The Biden-era rules also had called for the Interior Department to evaluate regularly whether to designate new special areas or to boost protections in those areas. They cited rapidly changing conditions in the Arctic — such as melting permafrost and changes in plant life and wildlife corridors — due to climate change. The agency under Biden said the rules would not affect existing leases or operations, including the large Willow oil project, but would "raise the bar" for future development.

Interior Secretary Doug Burgum in June said the Biden-era rules were at odds with a leasing program mandate for the petroleum reserve and prioritized "obstruction over production."

There has been longstanding debate over where oil and gas should be developed within the reserve. Supporters cite the petroleum reserve's name to underscore their point that it's a place for drilling. But opponents say federal law requires a balancing act for managing the reserve that includes environmental considerations and protec-

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Trump Takes Aim at Oil and Gas Leasing, AP

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tions.

The reserve, roughly the size of Indiana, was set aside more than a century ago as an emergency oil supply for the U.S. Navy. It's been overseen by the Interior Department since the 1970s.

Biden had angered many environmentalists when his administration approved Willow in the northeast portion of the reserve in 2023. Development of that project has being ongoing.

The most recent lease sale for the reserve was in 2019. A law passed earlier this year by Congress calls for at least five sales within the reserve over a 10-year period.

Voice of the Arctic Iñupiat, an advocacy group that includes leaders from Alaska's petroleum-rich North Slope, has seen responsible development as important for the economic wellbeing of communities in the region. Members expressed concerns during the Biden administration that their views weren't being heard, and lauded the announcement.

Josiah Patkotak, North Slope Borough mayor, in a statement called repealing the rules "a meaningful step toward restoring a federal process that respects local knowledge and leadership."

But environmentalists criticized the administration's decision as short-sighted. Erik Grafe, an attorney with Earthjustice, in a statement called it "another example of how the Trump administration is trying to take us back in time with its reckless fossil fuels agenda."

"This would sweep aside common-sense regulations aimed at more responsibly managing the Western Arctic's irreplaceable lands and wildlife for future generations," he said.

Global Oil Refining Profits Surge and May Stay Strong, MSN

Global refining margins have hit multi-year highs in November due to sanctions on Russia, refinery outages and maintenance, according to LSEG data and analysts, and some see little respite without more plants being built in the Western world.

The strength in margins contrasts with crude oil markets coming under pressure from an expected oversupply, and has defied expectations earlier this year that the rally could prove to be a short-term blip due to the impact of tariffs.

In the U.S., the 3-2-1 crack spread, a key measure of overall profitability, hovered at $32.13 a barrel on November 18, close to an earlier high which was the highest since March 2024.

Asian margins have eased from a 20-month high, while gasoline cracks were close to their highest since early 2024 on November 14.

Ukrainian drone attacks on Russian oil refineries and pipelines have disrupted operations.

Plants have closed in the United States and Europe. Nigeria's Dangote refinery has had maintenance while others in Asia and the Middle East, such as Kuwait's largest refinery Al-Zour - have had outages.

REFINING SQUEEZE SET TO PERSIST

The strong refined fuels market has helped keep Brent crude prices supported in the low-to-mid-$60s per barrel despite expectations of an oversupply due to OPEC+ rising production and increased supply from other countries.

"The growing differentials between the crude prices and product prices are unlikely to see any relief for the time being," said John Evans, analyst at PVM Oil Associates.

"It is a refining problem, and one that will be with us in the foreseeable future unless new plants are built in western economies - a very unlikely event."

EUROPE PARTICULARLY STRONG

European diesel margins reached $33.90, the highest since September 2023.

Physical Eurobob gasoline barges had inched slightly lower to a $23.36 premium to Brent crude according to LSEG data but were close to a 26-month high reached.

Global Oil Refining Profits Surge and May Stay Strong, MSN

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The International Energy Agency raised its forecast for European refining throughput by 290,000 barrels per day for November and December due to strong margins, as Russian disruptions tighten middle distillate markets.

"The high margins are already pricing in a lot of disruption and giving refineries everywhere a strong incentive to ramp up runs," said Eugene Lindell of consultant FGE, especially as they come out of maintenance season.

Global refining profitability rose to the highest in two years on average in early November, the IEA said.

MAJORS REAP REFINING WINDFALL

Oil companies, some of which warned earlier in the year that 2025 would be a bad one for refining, have benefited from the stronger margins in their third-quarter earnings.

French major TotalEnergies' downstream profit jumped by 76%, and the latest U.S. sanctions on Russian producers Lukoil and Rosneft would push refining margins and oil prices higher in the fourth quarter, Total CEO Patrick Pouyanne said.

STRUCTURAL DIESEL SHORTAGE PERSISTS

Strength in diesel cracks in Europe was the main driver of the rally, said Susan Bell of Rystad Energy.

Europe remains structurally short diesel, and recent regional refinery closures will exacerbate import requirements, the IEA highlighted.

Morgan Stanley said in a report they expect European diesel cracks to hold above $27 a barrel over the next six months - higher than they have been for most of the time since early 2024, according to LSEG data.

In the U.S., margins have also hit highs. U.S. diesel margins widened to $49.12 a barrel, the highest since October 2023.

EIA Forecasts Alaska Crude Oil Production to Grow 13% in 2026

In our latest Short-Term Energy Outlook, we forecast crude oil produced from Alaska will reach 477,000 barrels per day (b/d) in 2026, the most since 2018.

After decades of decline, we expect a 13% (55,000 b/d) increase in Alaska oil production, the largest annual increase since the 1980s.

The recent growth is attributable to two projects on Alaska's North Slope:

The Nuna project, owned by ConocoPhillips, started production in December 2024 and is expected to produce 20,000 b/d at its peak. In August 2025, the project produced 7,000 b/d, offsetting existing production declines.

The Pikka Phase 1 project, jointly owned by Santos and Repsol, is expected to start production during the first quarter of 2026 and reach peak production of 80,000 b/d by mid-2026, nearly 20% of total Alaska oil production in 2025.

The wells from these new projects outperform most Alaskan wells. Based on recent production records from the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, these wells produce about 480 barrels of oil equivalent per day (BOE/d) on average, whereas 78% of Alaskan wells produced less than 400 BOE/d in 2023.

Our latest forecast for 2026 production—an increase from our initial forecast—reflects Santos's expectations for an accelerated ramp-up to peak production for the Pikka Phase 1 project and recent well tests demonstrating high productivity.

ExxonMobil Teams Up for Hydrogen Pilot in US, upstream

US supermajor ExxonMobil and German chemicals giant BASF have announced that they will partner on a methane pyrolysis pilot in the US that would produce so-called “turquoise” hydrogen.

While “blue” hydrogen is produced via natural gas in processes that generate carbon dioxide, which has to be captured and stored for the hydrogen to be considered low-carbon, methane pyrolysis splits natural gas under high heat in the absence of oxygen.

This means that no CO2 is produced during the process, but rather solid carbon, which proponents argue can be sold to existing markets for the material.

The pilot project would be sited at ExxonMobil’s Baytown refining complex in Texas and produce 2000 tonnes per annum of hydrogen with 6000 tpa of solid carbon by-product, Upstream's sister title Hydrogen Insight reported.

ExxonMobil noted in a press release that methane pyrolysis requires five times less electricity than electrolytic hydrogen production, as well as not requiring the use of water.

Meanwhile, although both blue hydrogen production and methane pyrolysis can leverage existing natural gas infrastructure, the latter does not depend on suitable geology for carbon storage and additional infrastructure to transport CO2 to these sites — making it easier to deploy in regions where carbon capture and storage is more difficult.

ExxonMobil is developing a massive blue hydrogen complex at Baytown, which would produce 1 billion cubic feet (or more than 2000 tonnes) per day of hydrogen, much of which will be converted to ammonia.

In May, the company signed an offtake agreement with Marubeni to ship 250,000 tonnes of ammonia to Japan, which would be co-fired with coal at the Kobe Power Plant.

However, ExxonMobil has yet to take a final investment decision on the Baytown facility, with rumours that it will delay this step beyond the end of this year.

Meanwhile, BASF had installed its own methane pyrolysis testing site at Ludwigshafen in Germany in 2020, and brought the largest operational green hydrogen plant in Europe — a 54 megawatt proton exchange membrane electrolyser — on line earlier this year.

2,500+ EPA Employees take Trump's Resignation Offer, E&E News

Nearly a fifth of EPA's workforce has opted into President Donald Trump's mass resignation plan as he pushes to reduce the federal government's payroll.

About 2,620 employees have taken the "deferred resignation" offer at EPA, according to figures the agency shared with POLITICO's E&E News. EPA has reviewed all its applications for the program, including all four rounds offered this year.

At the end of September, 15,166 EPA employees were on board at the agency, its latest government shutdown plan indicated. Using that number as a baseline, more than 17 percent of EPA staff, a sizable chunk of its headcount, has left or will leave by the end of this year as part of the resignation program.

In January, soon after Trump's inauguration, more than 2 million federal employees, including at EPA, received an email to join the resignation program, also known as the "Fork in the Road." They were offered a chance to leave public service, go on administrative leave with full pay and benefits, and then voluntarily resign later in the year.

EPA officials validated the program in emails to staff and offered four rounds of "deferred resignation" to encourage employees to leave. The agency opened its final round for the program in September, targeted at staffers for the Office of Research and Development, which closed on Oct. 3.

The Trump administration plans to eliminate the EPA research office. The agency already stood up last month a smaller replacement program, the Office of Applied Science and Environmental Solutions, located in the administrator's office.

Government workers left their agencies on Sept. 30 or will later on Dec. 31 as part of the deferred resignation program.

Roughly 154,000 workers opted into the program, according to the Office of Personnel Management. About 100,000 employees left in September, while the other 50,000 will exit by year's end.

US Crude Oil Inventories Continue to Rise as Production Hits New High, oilprice.com

The American Petroleum Institute (API) estimated that crude oil inventories in the United States saw a large build of 4.4 million barrels in the week ending November 14. Crude oil inventories gained 1.3 million barrels in the week prior.

Crude oil inventories in the United States are so far showing a net gain of 9.3 million barrels for the year, according to Oilprice calculations of API data.

Earlier this week, the Department of Energy (DoE) reported that crude oil inventories in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) have risen by 500,000 barrels to 410.9 million barrels in the week ending November 14 as the government attempts to replenish the nation's oil stockpile that shrank during the Biden Administration.

US production rose during the week of November 7, hitting yet another record. US daily production rose to 13.862 million bpd in the reporting period, according to the EIA. This is 299,000 bpd more than the beginning of the year levels.

At 3:53 pm ET, Brent crude was trading up by $0.71 (+1.11%) on the day, rising to $64.91 per barrel. WTI was also trading up on the day, by $0.86 (+1.44%) at $60.77—a $2.30 per barrel gain week over week.

Gasoline inventories saw an increase of 1.5 million barrels in the week ending November 14, after losing 1.4 million barrels in the week prior. Gasoline inventories were 4% below the five-year average for this time of year, according to the latest EIA data.

Distillate inventories rose in the reporting period, gaining 600,000 barrels, compared to the week prior's 944,000-barrel build. Distillate inventories were already 8% below the five-year average as of the week ending November 7, the latest EIA data shows.

Cushing inventory—the inventory kept at the delivery hub for the WTI Crude futures contract—dipped by 800,000 barrels, after falling by 43,000 barrels in the prior week.

ExxonMobil Takes 40% Share in Enterprise Products' Bahia NGL pipeline, Plans expansion, Oil and Gas Journal

ExxonMobil Corp. will acquire from Enterprise Products Partners LP, Houston, a 40% undivided joint interest (UJI) in Enterprise's Bahia natural gas liquids (NGL) pipeline with investment aimed at increasing throughput by 400,000 b/d.

ExxonMobil will contribute its proportionate share of Bahia project costs to date, or about $650 million, according to an SEC filing.

The 550-mile Bahia pipeline, which has started commissioning activities and will begin commercial operations immediately thereafter, will have an initial capacity to transport 600,000 b/d of NGLs from the Midland and Delaware basins of West Texas to Enterprise's Mont Belvieu fractionation complex, Enterprise said in a release Nov. 20.

The companies' plan to increase Bahia's capacity to 1 million b/d includes adding incremental pumping capacity and constructing a 92-mile extension to ExxonMobil's Cowboy natural gas processing plant in Eddy County, NM. ExxonMobil will own a 70% UJI in this extension.

The extension will also connect to multiple Enterprise-owned processing plants in the Delaware basin.

The expansion and extension are expected to be completed in fourth-quarter 2027.

ExxonMobil's interest will be referred to as the Cowboy Connector. Enterprise will operate the combined system.

Growing Permian basin production

ExxonMobil, in a separate statement Nov. 20, said the investment will help connect its growing production in the Permian basin to US Gulf Coast refining and chemical plants and enable access to export logistics to serve markets around the world.

In its third-quarter report released late last month, ExxonMobil said it set a Permian production record of nearly 1.7 MMboe/d, while expanding its use of low-cost refinery coke as a proppant that penetrates deeper into fracs, improving well recoveries by up to 20%.

Noting the growth in Permian output, A.J. "Jim" Teague, co-chief executive officer of Enterprise's general partner, pointed to the increasing ratio of natural gas and NGL production to crude oil production.

The Bahia pipeline, he said, "will be an essential artery to deliver mixed NGLs to the fractionation complex in Mont Belvieu. From 2024 to 2030, NGL production in the Permian basin is expected to increase by over 30%."

The deal is expected to close by early 2026, subject to regulatory approvals.

Rising Threats to Critical Infrastructure in the U.S. , GTSC

Modern conflict is evolving faster than our preparations. Today's emerging battlefields are digital, silent, and without borders – where cyber warfare can be waged with a single keystroke from virtually anywhere. The next battle may not begin with explosions, but with a silent strike: a data breach, a blackout, or a system compromise. If we continue to train solely for yesterday's wars, we risk being blindsided by tomorrow's threats.

Leaders in AI and Defense understand the danger of uninvited access and surveillance by adversaries. The most potent weapons now travel through fiber-optic networks and cloud systems—advanced cyber tools engineered to disrupt and destabilize critical infrastructure, with devastating ripple effects on the public. Here's a closer look at the new realities shaping modern infrastructure security.

AI: The New Front in Infrastructure Security

America's July 2025 AI Action Plan casts AI as the next great strategic terrain—"a race to achieve global dominance in artificial intelligence," where the nation that builds the largest AI ecosystem will set the technical, economic, and military rules of the road. To win, the White House has introduced a roadmap for industry, government, and allies built on three pillars: Innovation, Infrastructure, and International AI Diplomacy & Security.

The plan's urgency is clear: U.S. systems are being incrementally probed and breached by foreign adversaries. By the time a major attack occurs, it may already have crippled our ability to react—a truly catastrophic outcome.

The Action Plan treats algorithmic power as national power. By integrating industrial policy, export controls, and frontier R&D, it aims to lock in an American advantage, protect critical systems, and align allies on a secure AI footing—before competitors impose their own, less-free rules of engagement.

Traditional Infrastructure Faces New Threats

Historically, U.S. installations—power grids, dams, reservoirs, transportation hubs, military bases, and communications centers—have been the backbone of national security and stability. From New Deal projects like Hoover Dam, to modern facilities such as Fort Bragg and AT&T's Network Operations Center, these "bricks-and-steel" assets remain vital.

Each site requires tailored physical and technical security to balance accessibility with protection. Post-9/11 upgrades exemplify the model: layered fencing, blast-rated gates, on-site security personnel, and 24/7 surveillance that ensure restricted access while maintaining operations.

Today, however, critical installations must think in 360 degrees. Drones and unmanned systems pose both threats and advantages—providing surveillance but also enabling incursions by state and non-state actors. Meanwhile, cybersecurity has become inseparable from physical security. Until the late 1990s, protections were limited to simple firewalls and access controls. Now, critical systems—from grid management to logistics—depend on data that increasingly resides in offsite, hyperscale data centers.

The rise of cloud computing redefined what "vital installations" mean. Data centers now store, process, and protect the nation's most sensitive information. As the Director of National Intelligence reported in early 2024, Iran-affiliated and pro-Russia actors accessed and manipulated critical U.S. industrial control systems (ICS) across multiple sectors, posing direct threats to public safety and service continuity. Similarly, Ret. Gen. Tim Haugh, former NSA director, has warned that China continues targeting U.S. military, industrial, and infrastructure systems, noting in a 60 Minutes interview: "They targeted water, electrical power, transportation… and in many cases they're vulnerable."

Rising Threats to Critical Infrastructure in the U.S. , GTSC

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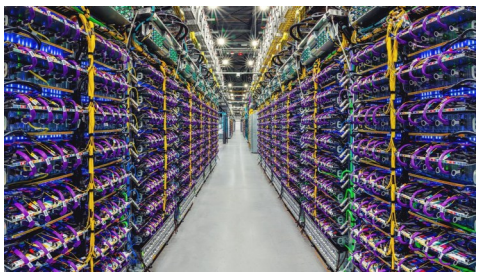
Data Centers: The New Critical Infrastructure
Data centers have become full-fledged critical infrastructure. Since Amazon's 2006 launch of S3 and EC2, storage and computing have migrated to vast hyperscale campuses—housing the telemetry, logistics, and AI models that power traditional installations, often from hundreds of miles away.
Mega centers by AWS, Google, Meta, and Oracle manage enormous datasets for AI, analytics, and operational continuity. Facilities in Virginia (4,000 MW), Texas (1,125 MW), and California store mission-critical data for remote installations. They require biometric access, perimeter sensors, encryption, and AI-based threat detection to safeguard against breaches that can cost hundreds of millions.
High-value data makes these "digital fortresses" prime targets. The Equifax breach cost $425 million, and a single compromised VPN password in 2021 shut down the Colonial Pipeline, disrupting fuel supplies across 17 states.
As operators embed AI into operations, risks grow. AI models and training data can be stolen, and personally identifiable information (PII) is a high-value prize. Data centers now use AI to forecast trends like weather and energy demand, but their expanded role also increases exposure.
Because cloud campuses are remote, they depend on secure fiber-optic transmission and compliance with privacy regulations like GDPR and CCPA. Protecting them requires a fusion of physical fortification and AI-driven cyber defense tools, such as FoxGPT for real-time threat hunting, along with safeguarding the physical cables themselves. Recent Baltic Sea cable cuts illustrate how one act in the physical world can cripple digital operations.
Defense Needs in the Age of Digital Threats
In the U.S., between 50% – 85% of critical infrastructure is privately owned. That mix of public and private control makes protection highly complex.
Modern data centers now demand fortified perimeters, redundant power, advanced cooling systems, and continuous monitoring—akin to military installations but with specialized server security. AI-driven cybersecurity tools and multi-layered defenses are essential to prevent breaches.
Protecting PII and operational data also requires proactive dark-web and exposure monitoring to detect and remove leaked information.
As the global race for AI dominance accelerates, Day & Zimmermann, SOC, and Mason & Hanger remain at the forefront—shielding the nation's critical infrastructure and keeping assets resilient.
As more of our lives move online, we comfort ourselves with the idea that our information sits safely "in the cloud." But those "clouds" are actually vast, ground-level complexes—run by Microsoft, AWS, Google, Oracle, xAI, and others—where walls of servers demand the same ironclad defenses that SOC and Mason & Hanger provide as Day & Zimmermann companies.
These vulnerabilities extend to the systems that sustain daily life—water, power, and communications—interconnected lifelines that uphold both community and national security. The rise in threats to critical infrastructure reminds us: these are not isolated risks, but connected vulnerabilities, where a single breach can send ripples across the nation's most vital systems.



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Published monthly by the Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades, ©