A Bad Couple of Weeks for Data Breaches

October 8, 2015 â€“ The past two weeks are littered with corporate data breaches; exposing the personally identifiable information of close to 20 million people. Companies involved include T-Mobile, Experian and Scott Trade. As bad as this is, youâ€™ll never believe how one of these companies found out their computer systems were under attack.

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In fairness to T-Mobile, the company doesnâ€™t appear to be responsible for the breach of customer data. Experian appears to be able to take all of the credit here.

T-Mobile was using Experian to check the credit of new clients. All reports indicate that the executive leadership team at T-Mobile is absolutely furious about this breach. Experian was housing a database of T-Mobile customers, which is what hackers gained access to. There was apparently no breach of Experianâ€™s own database.

The information that the hackers gained access to include everything needed to commit identity theft. The breach involved two years of data; from September of 2013 to last month.

Anyone who believes that their information could have been compromised in the breach can find more information about it by reading Experianâ€™s FAQ on this incident.

The good news about the Scottrade data breach is that the hackers appear to have only gained access to the names of the companyâ€™s customers. The company is saying that they donâ€™t believe that enough information to commit identity thef

or fraud. In fact, the company isnâ€™t even advising its customers to change their passwords since that data is encrypted and they donâ€™t believe it was compromised.

The bad news is the Scottrade only found out about the breach when the FBI showed up knocking on their door. They didnâ€™t discover it themselves, which raises some serious questions about the companyâ€™s data security monitoring. This breach exposed the names of 4.5 million Scottrade customers.

The companies involved in these data breaches are offering customers a free year of credit monitoring. T-Mobile customers whose data was released in the breach should seriously consider freezing their credit files to prevent any future identity theft.
byJim Malmberg
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