

Latest Yahoo Data Breach is the Largest Ever

December 15, 2016 - For the internet behemoth Yahoo!, the hits just keep on coming. In late September, we told our readers about a massive data breach that released information on 500 million registered users of the company. Then in November, it came to light that the company actually knew about that breach in 2014 but didn't tell anyone. Now comes word of another, even more massive breach at the company. This one took place in 2013 and released information on 1 billion Yahoo! users. It's the largest single data breach in internet history and it couldn't have come at a worse time from the company.

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(function() {  
var s = document.createElement('SCRIPT'), s1 = document.getElementsByTagName('SCRIPT')[0];  
s.type = 'text/javascript';  
s.src = 'http://widgets.digg.com/buttons.js';  
s1.parentNode.insertBefore(s, s1);  
})();
```

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(function() {  
var po = document.createElement('script'); po.type = 'text/javascript'; po.async = true;  
po.src = 'https://apis.google.com/js/plusone.js';  
var s = document.getElementsByTagName('script')[0]; s.parentNode.insertBefore(po, s);  
})();
```

The data stolen by hackers in the newly announced hack includes names, email addresses, dates of birth and passwords. It may also include security questions and answers. While the data isn't enough to commit identity theft on its own, it certainly provides a starting point for any ID thieves who are interested. Anyone who uses the same user name and password information for Yahoo! and other online accounts is especially vulnerable.

Anyone using Yahoo!'s email may have some additional risks. That's because the hackers behind this breach now have your email logon information. That means they can impersonate you very easily. And if you store your contact information in a Yahoo! address book or have an email signature which includes your street address, they may actually be able to get everything they need to commit identity theft with a couple of mouse clicks.

The breach announcement comes as the company is in the middle of a \$4.8 Billion buyout with Verizon. There is the very real possibility that the breach will derail that process. Verizon may try to reduce their purchase price or they could potentially pull out completely.

If you have a Yahoo! account, you should change your password immediately. If you use the same logon information for other accounts at other companies, you need to change your user passwords there too. In addition, anyone with a Yahoo! account would be well advised to check their credit report to make sure that they aren't already a victim of identity theft.

Below, is an interesting video on the troubled history of Yahoo! including previous buyout attempts and information on the 2014 data breach.

by Jim Malmberg

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