The Non-Data-Breach at Translate.com Consumers and Businesses Need to Know About

September 12, 2017 - Millions of people around the globe use online translation services. Many of these services have both paid and free versions; as it the case with Translate.com. It pretty well goes without saying that you should be able to expect more from a paid service than from one that is free. But most individuals and a lot of companies aren't willing to pay for anything that they think they can get for free. In this case, that could prove to be a costly mistake. Virtually anything that you enter on the free Translate.com service is made available to internet search engines, regardless of how sensitive that data may be. And in this instance, the company isn't a part of a data breach.

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The Translate.com data available through Google and other search engines includes some highly sensitive information. Merger and acquisition contracts, resignation letters, etcâ€¦ It includes pretty much anything that that consumers and businesses have entered into their free platform. If you were trying to write a letter that included your SSN and you entered it into their platform, the data is out there for anyone who knows how to do a site specific search. In fact, in a very specific search that I tried, it took me less than two minutes to find someone's SSN and a credit card number. That's pretty frightening.

To the credit of the company, they have never made any secret of the fact that using their free service may not be private. It's in their terms of service. Of course, very few people read the terms of service for the websites they use. But when you are dealing with sensitive information, that's a real mistake.

As we have always said, before you give out your personally identifiable information to anyone, you need to know how that information is going to be used and who will have access to it. This includes any written information that you submit to a website.

If you are translating a letter that contains your SSN, a credit card number, or any other information that ties back directly to you, you should cut that information out before you enter the rest of your letter for translation. This is true even if you are using a paid service. You're SSN, your address, your birth data, etc. isn't going to change as a part of any translation. That means you can simply add the data back in later.

Anyone who has used Translate.com and wants to make sure that their data isn't available over the internet can contact

the company using the following email address: support@translate.com. And from here on out just remember, nothing in life is free!

byJim Malmberg
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