HOME CYBER DEFENSE
ARE YOU SAFE FROM CYBER CRIME?
ALERT

Issued 2/9/18

2017 Smashed World's Records for Most Data Breaches, Exposed Information

It was a record-breaking year for the numbers of publicly reported data breaches and exposed records in 2017 worldwide: a total of 5,207 breaches and 7.89 billion information records compromised. While hacking remained the No. 1 method used in data breaches last year (55.8%), for the first time it wasn't the top cause of exposed data records: 68.7% of exposed records came at the hands of unintentional Web-borne exposure due to accidental leaking online and misconfigured services and portals. Some 5.4 billion records were exposed this way, even though that was via just 5% of all reported breaches. Data breaches due to hacks accounted for 2.3 billion records. There was a painful wave of publicly disclosed leaks via misconfigured Amazon Web Services (AWS) Simple Storage Service (S3) bucket accounts in 2017. RedLock CSI (Cloud Security Intelligence) found that 53% of businesses using cloud storage services like AWS S3 had inadvertently exposed one or more of their cloud services to the Internet. Among the big-name companies found with exposed AWS S3 storage buckets were Accenture, Booz Allen Hamilton, and Verizon. Most of the exposed record incidents in 2017 were data-handling errors that could have been prevented. Risk Based Security, which compiles and aggregates publicly disclosed data breach events, published its findings today in its annual Data Breach QuickView report on breach trends for 2017. Both the number of total breaches and total records exposed each jumped by 24% over 2016. Eight of 2017's reported data breaches made the Top 20 list of all-time

largest breaches, according to the report. And the five biggest breaches of the year exposed 72.2% of the records, or 5.7 billion records total. Most reported breaches (39.4%) occurred in the business sector, followed by medical (8.1%), government (7.2%), and education (5.3%). And 40% of breaches came from organizations that were not identifiable based on the public disclosure data. Businesses suffered the most exposed records, with 82.9%, government (3.7%), medical (less than 1%), education (less than 1%), and some 12.4% in sectors not identifiable via public disclosure information. The US led the world with the most reported breaches, with 2,330, followed by the UK (184), Canada (116), India (78), and Australia (62). That wide gap between the US and Europe could change once the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) goes into effect in May, which includes rules for mandatory breach notification. "I'll be curious to see how GDPR impacts the data," she says, noting that the US has had some of the most stringent reporting requirements thus far. Even so, the US didn't rank at the top for median number of lost records: 1,458, far below China (11.8 million), South Africa (6.7 million), South Korea (1 million), and other nations. The top five all-time biggest data breaches are Yahoo (3 billion records) in 2016; China's DU Caller Group (2 billion records); US's River City Media (1.3 billion); China's NetEase (1.2 billion); followed by 711 million records exposed by a Netherlands organization not disclosed, according to the report.