

Information Risk - Information Disposal

Incident Details:

Texas Attorney General took legal action against a pharmacy after hundreds of documents containing customers' personal information were unlawfully dumped behind the store. The investigation revealed that numerous credit card receipts containing customers' complete credit card numbers and expiration dates, as well as a handful of prescription sleeves that included dates of birth, type of medicine prescribed, insurance company, and prescribing physician were exposed.

The pharmacy had violated state laws that govern the disposal of customer records containing sensitive personal information.

Why Did This Happen?

Lack of Awareness, lack of oversight and general training did not engage employees or give them the necessary tools to understand proper information disposal rules and regulations. Employees were not aware of or accountable for procedures for disposing of confidential information.

How Would Better Knowledge Sharing Help?

Improving knowledge management and implementing new procedures to safeguard customers' personal information is critical. The company should ensure that all employees receive customized training regarding the company's enhanced security procedures and a review of the state laws governing the disposal of consumer records on an annual basis. Employees should also be made aware of identity theft, its costs to individual consumers and businesses, and the importance of abiding by the company's disposal program.

Who Needs Customized Knowledge?

- Employees
 - Full-time Employees
 - Temporary Employees
 - Media Spokesperson
 - Risk Department Person
 - Legal Department Person
 - Compliance Department Person
 - Records Management Department
- Third-Parties
 - Vendors
 - Contractors

OK, Then What? (Prevention, Responses, Recoveries and Re-Training)

- What information was breached?
- Who (if anyone) had access to the information?
- Information Disposal Procedures (shredding, etc.)
- Storage of information
- Oversight and monitoring of customer records
- Customer Privacy Breach – Unauthorized Access Notifications
- Update Incident Reporting Procedures (lessons learned for next incident)
- Update Incident Calling List



Real-World Example:

<http://www.oag.state.tx.us/oagNews/release.php?id=2397>

In early 2008 reports surfaced that detailed building plans for the new Freedom Tower were found in the trash in New York City. The detailed plans had been used as bidding documents and discarded by a contractor. The documents were found on top of a public trash can in downtown Manhattan, with written warnings on it to "properly destroy if discarded," as they could obviously be useful to potential terrorists.

Next-Generation Knowledge Management Quadrant

