

Ethical and legal issues involved in the pro-active collection of personal information with the aim of reducing online disclosure

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Abstract

Pro-actively finding leaked information online can potentially reduce detection times to limit the exposure time of personal information on publicly accessible networks. Often the breaches are discovered by an external third party and not the data owner. The time that data is exposed on the Internet has severe negative implications since a significant amount of information disclosed in a data breach has been proven to be used for cybercrime activities. It could be argued that any reduction of data breach exposure time should directly reduce the opportunity for associated cyber-crime. While pro-active breach detection has been proven as potentially viable in previous work, several aspects of such a system still need to be investigated. This paper aims to highlight some of the major ethical and legal issues when pro-actively collecting personal information, through a South African case study, to assist in reducing the amounts of personal information being disclosed online.