

Data Protection Ireland

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Major worldwide data breach for Sony

Sony has been the victim of a significant data breach involving millions of its customers' personal data worldwide.

Between 17th and 19th April, the Sony PlayStation Network and Qriocity services were compromised by a hacker, and it has now been discovered that there was a second hacking incident.

According to a statement on Sony's website and blog, published on 26th April, the hacker may have obtained the personal data of over 70 million users worldwide.

The name, address, email address, birth date,

PlayStation Network/Qriocity passwords and login information for each user was open to access, along with their purchase history, billing address and password security answers.

The statement went on to say: "While there is no evidence that credit card data was taken at this time, we cannot rule out the possibility.

"If you have provided your credit card data through PlayStation Network or Qriocity, to be on the safe side we are advising you that your credit card number (excluding security code) and expiration date may also have been obtained."

In response to this incident, Sony temporarily shut down its network services and enlisted the help of an independent security firm to investigate this episode.

Following a press conference, a statement was posted on the website setting out security measures Sony has now implemented, such as enhanced levels of data protection and encryption, a greater ability to detect software intrusions within the network, unauthorised access and unusual activity patterns as well as implementing additional firewalls.

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Organisations using dubious data back-up methods

A survey conducted by the Irish Computer Society found that a high number of Irish organisations are using potentially unreliable methods to back-up data.

Despite the legal obligations to keep data secure, 45% of the 500 organisations that responded to the poll use tape as their preferred method of data back-up. Tape can be unreliable — it consumes resources

because it needs to be manually changed (either each day or when full). Also, appropriate labelling and storing takes time. In addition tapes are vulnerable to theft, natural disasters and other types of loss.

There was a large increase in the number of organisations using online back-up services, from just 7% in 2010 to 23.2% in 2011. 38% admitted to a

significant data-loss incident, and of that number, 18% acknowledged that they had not been able to retrieve all the lost data.

The Society said: "In contrast to the widespread occurrence of data loss, the principle of backing up data is still heavily accepted amongst Irish organisations."

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