The Yahoo Data Breach

Brandon J. Tenn

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On September 22, 2016, Yahoo told the public about the data breach which started from 2013 to 2016, which went down in history as one of the biggest data breaches ever and places outside of the US like Europe and Asia were affected as well.

The way that the two hackers Alexey Belan and Karim Baratov (they were hired by Russia’s Federal Security Service) got access to the Yahoo company’s network through the weakest part of cybersecurity which is people. The duo managed this by sending spear-phishing emails that contained malicious software through a download link. They were able to gain access to the network since it only took one person to click on the link. This allowed them to create a back door and then they were able to download copies of the user database.

The biggest thing that was lost in the breach was the various information concerning at least 500 million people who used Yahoo, although it has never been said exactly how many of the Yahoo accounts were affected. After the announcement of data breach, Yahoo had to pay for it thanks to a class action lawsuit that the victims filed. They then had to pay over 100 million dollars to compensate the users of Yahoo. Also, Baratov was arrested and sentenced to 5 years with 2.2 million dollars fine. Whereas, Belan has never been caught and is still at large to this day.

The way that this data breach could have been avoided is, if there was more cybersecurity training for employees regarding unknown and suspicious emails. If there was some kind of re-training before the initial breach then the 3-years of Yahoo users having private information such as names, phone numbers, and passwords, etc., leaked would have never happened. Now, after this incident they hopefully have implemented more robust initial and refresher training sessions to all employees.

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