



What Happened

87 million Facebook profiles were harvested without consent to influence voters for the election.

This was used to build a powerful software program to predict and influence choices at the ballot box. The users were targeted with personalised political advertisements.

Who was Involved

Cambridge Analytics, a data analytics firm that worked with Donald Trump's election team and the winning Brexit campaign as well as the former Trump adviser Steve Bannon .

Also, Christopher Wylie, who worked with a Cambridge University.

This was also alongside Facebook the social media platform.

What Ethical Principles were Violated

All ethical principles. Not one was adhered to.

They also failed to alert users and took only limited steps to recover and secure the private information of the users of their platform.

The information was taken without “sufficiently clear and informed consent”.

Impact

It affected individuals by having the privacy breached and their information shared with a lot of companies.

It affected society as there will be a lot of mistrust and anger towards companies. It may even hinder the use of social media by them.

It could also make for a more rebellious and protesting nation as they will be pushing for change and betterment and protections.

Company Consequences

Large fines, law suits, mistrust by regulators, other companies and the public.

Facebook was fined \$725 million for its US users.

Facebook paid \$5bn to the Federal Trade Commission probe into its privacy practices

Facebook paid \$100 million to the Securities and Exchange Commission for misleading investors about the misuse of users data

Facebook was fined £500,000 by UK watchdog for its failure to protect users information

With Facebook owning many platforms the repercussion can be far reaching as people will refuse to use their services any longer and could drive down revenue and traffic.

Preventative Measures

Facebook could have prevented this by using more oversight and supervision of what these companies were doing exactly and not allow as unfettered access to their platform as they did.

They should have properly vetted the company for the reason they were wanting access and properly vet the project.

They could also have made sure that the companies were strictly adhering to the proper privacy laws and regulations.

They should also have used the principle of least privilege when allowing access in the first place.

Lessons

In future companies should learn from this by making sure that they are adhering fully to GDPR and perform regular audits and round tables to make sure that they are doing more than the minimum necessary to ensure users privacy is intact at all times.

The prevention of future may be ensured by updating legislation and law to reflect the current use of technical devices and make sure it is relevant to the times and the way that people use technology.

It should be under current review frequently.