**THE CUSTOMER LIST**

**David Green, Middle Tennessee State University**

**Joe Thomas, Middle Tennessee State University**

**ABSTRACT**

James Bean began as a part time sales associate at Tax Solutions Software Center (TSSC). After roughly a year, James was offered his current position as Head of Sales and Marketing. In his current role, Bean supervised an onsite sales staff of 4-6 people and two remote sales teams of 10 sales representatives. James was surprised, but not alarmed when Rand Smith, his top salesperson, did not report for work. However, he was surprised when he checked the company’s Facebook page. He found a post from Smith to his former and next employer containing a list of TSSC’s major customers with proprietary account information. Bean was furious and asked himself what he should do next, and what he should have done differently to avoid this situation?

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this critical incident are to:

1. Identify potential conflicts between workplace privacy and proprietary information.
2. Evaluate ethical and unethical uses of company information and technology.
3. Recommend steps firms can use to protect company information and technology.
4. Discuss the concept of workplace privacy.

**APPLICATION**

This critical incident allows for a discussion of proprietary information and its confidentiality. It is most appropriate for classes in sales management, ethics, and communications.

**KEY WORDS**

Workplace privacy, proprietary information, social media

**CONTACT**

Joe Thomas, Box 75, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN 37132 Phone: (615) 898-5652 email: joe.thomas@mtsu.edu