

## **Inappropriate Use of Surveys**

Cambridge Analytica had purchased Facebook data on tens of millions of Americans without permission to create a "psychological warfare instrument" that it used to help Donald Trump win the presidency. Just before the story emerged, Facebook barred Wylie, Cambridge Analytica, its parent firm SCL, and the researcher who obtained the data, Aleksandr Kogan, from the network. However, these actions came years too late and could not quell the fury of users, lawmakers, privacy advocates, and media critics. Facebook's stock price dropped immediately, and boycotts began. When Zuckerberg was called to testify before Congress, a year of acrimonious international arguments about online consumer privacy rights began.

A year after the Cambridge Analytica story emerged, questions about privacy problems have yet to be answered by companies, regulators, or consumers who want the internet to remain handy and accessible while having control over their data. However, the incident has thrust these discussions, previously limited to academics and privacy experts, into the mainstream (Lapowsky, 2019).

The Data Protection Authority of Hamburg, Germany, fined apparel company H&M €35,258,707.95 on October 5, 2020, the second largest GDPR fine ever imposed.

GDPR infractions at H&M included "monitoring of several hundred employees." Employees were forced to attend a return-to-work meeting after taking a vacation or sick leave. Some of these discussions were videotaped and made available to more than 50 H&M executives.

Senior H&M executives obtained "a broad understanding of their employees' private life spanning from pretty innocuous details to family concerns and religious convictions." This "detailed profile" was used to evaluate employees' performance and make employment decisions (Tessian, 2020).

H&M appears to have breached the GDPR's data minimisation principle, which states that personal information, sensitive data like people's health and beliefs, should not be processed unless necessary for a specified purpose.

H&M should have also put strong access controls on the data, and the corporation should not have utilised this data to make hiring decisions.

The issue arises when data is collected without people's permission and used to target them without their awareness. Millions of people participated in the myPersonality study, which was open about who would use their information and why. They had no notion Cambridge Analytica would use it. This report may dissuade Facebook users from opting to let their info away. People may even discontinue using Facebook entirely. Will they quit Googling, watching TV, or sending emails? These corporations have a monopoly on people's leisure and personal time. The rest of us can make little difference unless we are effectively challenged on how they utilise people's information for financial advantage and are held accountable when they behave in unlawful or unethical ways (The Guardian, 2018).

## References:

Lapowsky, I. (2019). How Cambridge Analytica Sparked the Great Privacy Awakening. [online] WIRED. Available at: <https://www.wired.com/story/cambridge-analytica-facebook-privacy-awakening/>.

Tessian (2020). 11 Biggest GDPR Fines of 2020 (So Far). [online] Tessian. Available at: <https://www.tessian.com/blog/biggest-gdpr-fines-2020/>.

the Guardian. (2018). There are plenty more like Cambridge Analytica. I know – I've used the data | Poppy Noor. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/mar/23/plenty-more-like-cambridge-analytica-data-facebook>.