

The (most likely) Suspects

The “Insider”



“Accidental”

Action: Employee (or vendor) does not dispose of data properly, loses data, sends data to incorrect person, etc.

Motive: None

Threat: Medium risk to consumers.

Sensitive personal information is in the possession of an unauthorized person, but that person may not understand the black market value of the data.

Difficulty: Easy

Likelihood: Likely

“Intentional”

Action: Employee (or vendor) steals consumer information for leads (either for self or to sell).

Motive: Increased leads

Threat: Minimal risk to consumers. Thief values the consumers’ trust and wants to do business with them in the future. The threat in this situation is to the company.

Difficulty: Easy

Likelihood: Likely

The “Muscle”



“Accidental”

Action: Physically steals items (electronic devices or paper documents) without knowledge of or concern about possible data stored on the items.

Motive: Selling stolen items

Threat: Medium risk to consumers. Sensitive personal information is in the possession of an unauthorized person, but that person may not understand the black market value of the data.

Difficulty: Intermediate

Likelihood: Likely

“Intentional”

Action: Physically steals items (electronics or paper data) because of the data stored on the items.

Motive: Selling data

Threat: High risk to consumers. Sensitive personal information is in the possession of an unauthorized person with an understanding of the black market value of the data.

Difficulty: Intermediate

Likelihood: Less likely

The “Hacker”



Action: Electronically steals sensitive consumer information

Motive: Selling data

Threat: High risk to consumers. Sensitive personal information is in the possession of an unauthorized person with an understanding of the black market value of the data.

Difficulty: Intermediate to Difficult

Likelihood: Less likely

Includes “espionage,” both nation-state and corporate (although unlikely)



The “Social Butterfly” is a common suspect who uses social engineering tactics in order to advance and enhance other avenues of information crime. The “Social Butterfly” is often seen with The “Hacker”, The (intentional) “Insider” and The (intentional) “Muscle.”