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Security for and Use of DigitalMeasures Data

Submitted by Marc Cyr

5/2/2007

Question:

Who owns DigitalMeasures and where are they located? How will they respond to breaches of their system? How will the administration use the information gathered?

Rationale:

I am acting as a conduit for this RFI from a faculty member who does not want to be perceived as a pest (and who figures, I guess, that I'm used to it). At any rate, as this faculty member found out recently, availability of work/education history might seem innocuous, but can lead to identity theft: He is dealing right now with some financial fraud occasioned by someone getting hold of his educational records.

As for how the administration will use the data gathered, it's a question based on the assumption that this process must be projected to serve one or more purposes, and he wonders what those might be.

Senate Response:

From 6-20-2007 Senate Minutes: Patricia Humphrey (COST), 2005-2007 Senate Moderator:

There were two RFIs submitted in the interim. One was regarding DigitalMeasures, which is going to be used for faculty reporting their activities, generating annual reports, and other things that the administration needs. A faculty member wanted to know who owns DigitalMeasures. No one seems to know. They are based out of Milwaukee and likely are a privately-held company.

They were, in essence, the only viable responder to the task force that was formed by Dr. Bleicken to look into a system of this nature, a search prompted by a faculty member who complained that some of his activities got left off his department's annual report. DM have been adopted by numerous universities for faculty activity reporting.

Using GOOGLE, Moderator Humphrey discovered the following re: their security measures:

- All data collected over a 128-bit SSL-encrypted connection
- Servers located in a Tier-One datacenter
- Locked, caged server room
- Armed security guards on staff 24-hours per day
- Redundant fire suppression and climate control systems
- Redundant power and Internet connections
- Secure nightly backups to five geographically-dispersed locations
- They are compliant with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) legislation.
- They are registered with and certified by the United States Department of Commerce as compliant with the Safe Harbor Principles in effect between the European Commission and US.

David Ewing is going to look into things a little bit more. They are working in IT Services to establish a firm policy on getting outside vendors like DigitalMeasures in terms of how they are going to have to take care of securing our data.

The administration will use the data gathered primarily for annual reports, and in relation to promotion and tenure. The system is set up so that a department chair only has access to his/her department's information. You can only access your information, and so on up the chain. A Dean can only access information from his/her own college, so on, so forth. So, anybody and everybody can't get an individual's information.