



PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION ACT
Breach Notification Decision

Organization providing notice under section 34.1 of PIPA	Municipal Media Inc. (Organization)
Decision number (file number)	P2018-ND-054 (File #008430)
Date notice received by OIPC	April 20, 2018
Date Organization last provided information	April 20, 2018
Date of decision	May 7, 2018
Summary of decision	There is a real risk of significant harm to the individuals affected by this incident. The Organization is required to notify those individuals pursuant to section 37.1 of the <i>Personal Information Protection Act</i> (PIPA).
JURISDICTION	
Section 1(1)(i) of PIPA “organization”	The Organization is a Toronto-based educational technology company that owns the Recycle Coach and My Waste brands. It is an “organization” as defined in section 1(1)(i)(i) of PIPA.
Section 1(1)(k) of PIPA “personal information”	The incident involved subscriber email addresses. This information is about identifiable individuals and is “personal information” as defined in section 1(1)(k) of PIPA. Some of the information was collected from residents of Alberta.
DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT	
<input type="checkbox"/> loss <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unauthorized access <input type="checkbox"/> unauthorized disclosure	
Description of incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In December 2017, the Organization uploaded a list created from its subscriber data to an industry platform called MailChimp, intending to inform subscribers about information available through digital assistants.• On April 16, 2018, the email account of an employee of the Organization was hacked and the perpetrator accessed the MailChimp account, stealing approximately 55,000 email addresses.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Organization discovered the incident on April 17, 2018 after receiving a notification from MailChimp advising that the export of email addresses was complete. The action was not initiated by the Organization.
Affected individuals	The incident affected a total of approximately 55,000 email addresses, including 1,000 “associated with users in Alberta”.
Steps taken to reduce risk of harm to individuals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responded to requests from affected individuals to be removed from the Organization’s system. Notified affected individuals and provided tips to be aware of any additional spam messages that appear to be from the Organization or its affiliated brands, Recycle Coach and My Waste. Changed passwords and added an additional layer of security. Provided contact information so affected individuals could contact the Organization’s Customer Services team.
Steps taken to notify individuals of the incident	The Organization notified affected individuals via email on April 17, 2018.
REAL RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM ANALYSIS	
Harm Some damage or detriment or injury that could be caused to the affected individuals as a result of the incident. The harm must also be “significant.” It must be important, meaningful, and with non-trivial consequences or effects.	<p>The Organization reported that “We believe that the harm caused to subscribers is at a low level since only email addresses were stolen. No names, location (not even country), or passwords were stolen by the perpetrators in this incident.”</p> <p>In my view, the email addresses at issue could be used to cause the harm of phishing, particularly in combination with profile information (affiliation with the Organization’s brands). Previous breach notification decisions issued by my office have identified phishing as a significant harm.</p>
Real Risk The likelihood that the significant harm will result must be more than mere speculation or conjecture. There must be a cause and effect relationship between the incident and the possible harm.	<p>The Organization reported that it “...notified the affected subscribers of the breach on Tuesday, April 17. We heard back from a few residents, most helpfully forwarded the spam messages they received”.</p> <p>In my view, the likelihood of harm resulting from this incident is increased as the breach was the result of malicious intent (deliberate intrusion and theft of email addresses). The Organization also reported subscribers had received spam messages.</p>
DECISION UNDER SECTION 37.1(1) OF PIPA	
Based on the information provided by the Organization and given the circumstances of the incident, I have decided that there is a real risk of significant harm to the affected individuals as a result of this incident.	

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I require the Organization to notify affected individuals in Alberta in accordance with section 19.1 of the *Personal Information Protection Act Regulation* (Regulation). I understand the Organization notified affected individuals via email on April 17, 2018. The Organization is not required to notify affected individuals again.

Jill Clayton
Information and Privacy Commissioner