

Protect yourself with identity theft protection alerts from Integrity Upfront

By Integrity Upfront

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Approximately 10 million people in North America are victimized by identity theft each year. Already the number of firms that have had customer or personnel records exposed to potential fraud this year is 20% higher than last year.

NORTH BAY, Ontario — Identity theft continues to be a growing global concern, victimizing as many as 10 million people in North America each year , and has even surpassed drug trafficking as the number one crime in the United States . But Integrity Upfront, based in North Bay, Ontario, is taking a stand and educating consumers about the various forms of identity theft and effective methods of identity protection.

Less than five months into the year and already the number of U.S. firms that have had customer or employee records breached exceeds last year's figures by 120%, according to the Identity Theft Resource Center (ITRC). The organization reported 259 breeches as of May 13, 2008, compared to 446 breaches in all of 2007.

So far, this year's breeches exposed at least 11.9 million records containing personal information about customers and/or employees, the ITRC report said. In many cases, the number of exposed records was not reported, making the actual number of exposed records much higher.

"Every one of those people is a potential victim of identity theft," said Integrity Upfront President Randy Vezina.

Unfortunately, the bad news doesn't end there. ITRC is predicting that identity theft will grow more international in scope and become harder to detect due to increased sophistication in identity theft technology.

On average, identity thieves steal \$6,383 per victim before the fraud is detected, reported Javelin Strategy & Research in its 2006 Identity Fraud Survey Consumer Report. However, the Javelin report also revealed that when victims detect the identity theft themselves, the theft is detected 35% faster than when discovered by a creditor or financial institution and results in 36% lower costs to the consumer.

"This means that being vigilant against identity theft pays off big time," Vezina said.

To arm individuals against identity theft, Integrity Upfront has launched a new blog-based web site at <http://www.identitytheftprotectionlock.com> that keeps consumers updated about new methods of identity protection and credit card protection.

"An informed consumer is a protected consumer," said Vezina.

Information published on the <http://www.identitytheftprotectionlock.com> blog is free and open to all consumers. By using the site's RSS feed, consumers can get updated automatically when Integrity Upfront releases new alerts and identity theft protection tips.

High on Integrity's list of recommendations is the LifeLock identity protection program. For only \$10 a month, LifeLock takes proactive measures to protect your identity and reduce junk mail and credit card offers, which are principal avenues for personal information breeches. LifeLock offers a \$1 million

guarantee against identity theft for people on the program. Additionally, Integrity Upfront has secured a 10% discount for all readers of its <http://www.identitytheftprotectionlock.com> blog when they use promotion code RV42.

“We just haven’t seen anything better than this,” Vezina said. “Its cost is minimal and it offers incredibly effective protection from identity theft.”

To get your FREE identity theft protection alerts and tips from Integrity Upfront, or to find out more about LifeLock, visit <http://www.identitytheftprotectionlock.com>.

Represents cumulative figures from agencies in the U.S. (FTC) and Canada.

Based on statistics from the U.S. Department of Justice as reported by the Identity Theft Resource Center.

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