



In times of escalating privacy and data breaches, customers expect every business — large or small — to take the necessary precautions to protect their sensitive personal information. The Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota (BBB) advises business owners to proactively address customer anxiety and take steps to both prevent and prepare for a security breach. The BBB has endorsed the Online Trust Alliance's (OTA) Data Protection and Breach Readiness Guide, recently updated for 2012

Last year, more than 125 million people were affected by data loss incidents. Increased awareness of these high visibility incidents, as well as aggressive data collection and sharing practices, have eroded consumers' trust and online confidence, according to OTA.

"The Internet has become the land of opportunity for scams and, unfortunately, we see thousands of them every year," says Dana Badgerow, President and CEO of the BBB. "Consumers need assurances that they can trust the companies they do business with to secure their data, and the Data Protection and Breach Readiness Guide is a great tool to help businesses protect themselves and their customers."

In the wake of a security breach, it's important to take action quickly. Small and large businesses alike need to be able to readily determine the nature and scope of the data incident, and take all appropriate steps to contain and stop the attack.

The 2012 Data Protection and Breach Readiness Guide reflects input from a wide range of stakeholders, including interviews with companies that have experienced breach and data loss incidents, and industry and breach analysis experts. The BBB encourages all businesses to use its suggestions to help build a safer Internet for all.

For more data security advice you can trust, visit www.bbb.org/data-security , and for a

Protecting data – Does your business know what to do?

Written by

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complete OTA guide, visit

<https://otalliance.org/breach.html>

. For more consumer tips you can trust, visit

www.bbb.org/us/bbb-news

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The mission of the Better Business Bureau is to be the leader in building marketplace trust by promoting, through self-regulation, the highest standards of business ethics and conduct, and to instill confidence in responsible businesses through programs of education and action that inform, assist and protect the general public. Our hours of operation are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Contact the BBB at www.bbb.org or 651-699-1111, toll-free at

1-800-646-6222. Visit our Centennial website at

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