

## **You've been compromised**

Through NO fault of yours, your personal information is probably for sale right now. How can that be? Since 2013 there have been at least 10 major data breaches, in the US, that have compromised individuals personal credit information. There have been countless minor breaches in the US. One of the largest data breaches was discovered on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017 when it was discovered that Equifax was compromised and approximately 143 million records were taken. That's 143 million people who are credit worthy. Chances are that you were one of them. If not, don't worry your information was probably compromised in one of the other 11 major breaches:



- Yahoo, 2013 & 2013, 1,500,000,000 records
- Target, 2013, 40 Million Records
- Global Payments, 2013, 7 Million Records
- EBay, 2014, 145 Million Records
- JP Morgan Chase, 2014, 7 Million Records
- Home Depot, 2014, 56 Million Records
- Anthem, 2015, 80 Million Records
- Ashley Madison, 2015, 33 Million Records
- Friend Finder Networks, 2016, 412,214,295 Records
- Office of Personnel Management, 2013, 2014, 2015, 60 Million Records
- Equifax, 2016, 143 Million Records

The chances that your personal credit information has been compromised is extremely good. What are the chances that you will have a problem as a result of this? About 1,000 times better than playing the lottery! Your personal credit information and possibly other information is for sale. If your last name starts with a letter at the beginning or end of the alphabet, the chances of being compromised is slightly greater.

### **What can you do?**

Not a whole lot. You can freeze access to your credit information at the "Big 3" Credit agencies, but this causes other problems. You can minimize damage by hiring a credit monitoring service to catch anyone opening accounts in your name or otherwise stealing your identity. This has become a HUGE business and there are a LOT of high quality firms in this market segment. Which one is best? It's hard to say, do a Google, check consumer reports, do your due diligence.

### **What's going to happen in the future?**

Social Security Numbers have to go away and another form of identification established that is multi-factored, that is, part is held by the vendor and part is held by you and neither works without the other. That technology is expected to be used for a variety of uses, including starting your future car.