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T-Mobile admits massive customer data loss

Info on 17 million lost in early 2006

by Katie Scott published on 6 October 2008

It's taken a very long time to come out, but T-Mobile has owned up to losing details for 17 million of its customers.

The German mobile phone company, which is a subsidiary of Deutsche Telekom, is now red-faced after details of the data loss were published by the German mag Der Spiegel.

The magazine reported that some of the lost data was now being sold on the black market, prompting T-Mobile to come forward and hold up its hands after 2 years of silence.

It has now admitted that the data was on a disc that went missing in early 2006.

It contained customers' name, date of birth, address and mobile phone number, and some email addresses for millions of customers.

T-Mobile insists, however, that no banking details were on the disc.

It also said in a statement that it had reported the data loss to the state prosecutor as soon as it found out that the disc had gone missing.

It then monitored Internet forums and sites where such stolen information is offered for sale but found no evidence that the missing data was available for purchase.

But Der Spiegel article has now blown this out of water, and, more worryingly, says that the data being sold includes details for "business leaders, religious representatives, government ministers and politicians", according to online reports.

T-Mobile is still insisting that there is no evidence that the stolen data has been used to con its



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customers, but is offering worried customers the opportunity to change their mobile phone number for free.