

The First ISOC India Mumbai Case Study Competition- 'The Dilemma of Insecure Data'.

Venue: Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies.

Date: 13th December 2017.

The case study competition is an innovative format for educational competitions in India. It presents real time challenges facing leading companies, not for profit organizations, governments and start-ups. Similar to the real world, the case study doesn't have all the information and it has various constraints-visible as well as invisible. As a decision maker, this competition provides a unique opportunity for participants to become adept at analyzing real time issues, exchange their divergent perspectives, exercise their judgment and make difficult decisions. Indeed, the competition provides a mock environment to groom participants to be skilful leaders of tomorrow.

With the advent of the twenty first century, the rise of data driven business models coupled with behavioral insights has enhanced the perception of data as a strategic asset for different stakeholders in any decision making process. As raw data is collected, cleaned, processed, analyzed and interpreted to guide informed strategic decisions, it has the potential to significantly influence the lives of its data subjects. Subsequently, data owners across the world are striving to safeguard their data assets.

Recently, the Government of India is coming up with a plan to frame a data protection law in India. Apart from a better understanding of nuances of data and its related issues in an indigenous context, the law will supplement existing Indian IT laws to prevent unauthorized access and misuse of data. As a precursor to this law, the government is keen to solicit opinions from different individuals and organizations to better understand their expectations from law.

In this context, ISOC India Mumbai sponsored a case study competition on the issue of data protection at Vaayu fest of the Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS). The objective of this case study competition was to improve the awareness of participants about real time nature of data protection issues in India and develop their decision making skills as data driven leaders of the future.

Additionally, participants were encouraged to write to the government and assist the government's efforts to come up with a suitable data protection law. Around 100 students from different colleges across India were selected through a competitive process to participate in this case study competition. Interested individuals can refer to the actual case study problem statement mentioned below.

THE DILEMMA OF INSECURE DATA.

Shefali Mayer is the CEO of India Health, a subscription based health service. India Health got their seed funding from the Government of India under the Standup India Programme. The in-house Information Technology (IT) team of India Health has developed an Artificial Intelligence (AI) based mobile application called *Harappa* which is a key revenue driver for the company.

Users report symptoms of their illness to *Harappa*. Based on their medical history and circumstances, *Harappa* offers an appropriate course of action. For example, if a young user describes flu like symptoms, the app will recommend the user to pick up some Over the Counter (OTC) medicine at a local pharmacy. Alternatively, if someone describes more serious symptoms to the app, it might recommend the patient to get admitted to a nearby hospital and/or automatically dial an emergency line.

On 9th December, Shefali got a high priority email on her Outlook account as she was logging off from her work. The email was sent by Rajesh who is her Secretary. The subject of the email was ‘Important Financial Documents: Please read for next meeting with investors on 17th December’. It asked the recipient of the email to enter his/her credentials to download an attachment. Shefali, a single mother, had to go home to nurse her sick infant. Still, she did the needful and entered her credentials. However, no attachment could be downloaded. After a few futile attempts, Shefali left for home.

On the morning of 10th December, Shefali asked Rajesh about his email. Rajesh claimed that he hadn’t sent any such email to her. He also informed her that it was his last day at work. Shefali felt suspicious but she decided to wait and watch.

On the evening of 11th December, Shefali and her executive team got an email from Al Hackers- a misogynistic, terrorist organisation specialising in

cybercriminal activities. In the email, Al-Hackers warned Shefali and her executive team that they have got access to personal, sensitive health records of all *Harappa* users. They issued a diktat - If Shefali doesn't step down in the next 48 hours, they would leak the data to the public.

Shefali and her executive team summoned their IT (Information Technology) team, their Legal team and their PR (Public Relations) team for an emergency meeting on the night of 11th December. The PR team was asked to issue a press release on the evening of 13th December.

Meanwhile, Al Hackers have released a portion of sensitive user data to the public on the official Facebook page of *Harappa* on 12th December. This has caused a massive uproar on different social media channels. Investors and government officials who were staunch supporters of India Health as an ideal company have expressed their disappointment over its data security practices.

Today is 13th December and you represent the PR team at India Health. With due consideration to interests of all stakeholders in the company, you are supposed to

1. Present your case to the jury about how you will salvage the reputation of your company and restore user's trust in your flagship *Harappa* app.
2. If the jury is convinced, prepare a press release on the same.

Please note:

1. This case study is fictitious.
2. In absence of any information, you can make assumptions. Please state these assumptions clearly.

After the competition was over, all the winning teams were asked to collaborate with each other and come up with a collective strategy which incorporated critical points of their press release. A five point summary of their Public Relation strategy is presented as follows:-

1. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company has offered her resignation. Her resignation has been accepted and an interim CEO has been appointed.
2. The pertinent legal authorities have been contacted and apprised of the situation.
3. Customers were informed about exact details of the information that was leaked. They were briefed about the future actions to be taken to prevent further damage. For example, they were asked to inform their banks to block their cards.
4. Customers affected by leak have been provided with special package of services for coming year for free.
5. The company has hired prominent cyber security experts and data protection lawyers to mitigate such risks in the future. It has agreed to contribute to the Internet Society's efforts to use the Internet model for developing collaborative standards and policies to achieve better cyber security.

Some photos from the event:-

Photo 1: Selected students participating in the case study competition.



Photo 2: A screenshot notifying ISOC India Mumbai as the official INNOVATIONS EVENT PARTNER of Vaayu had generated more than 100 likes on Vaayu's Instagram account within 48 hours.



Photo 3: Organisers of the event and ISOC India Mumbai Team



Photo 4: Two of the winners of the competition with their certificates and cheques.



Photo 5: ISOC India Volunteers, Rohit Gupta and Sneha Tambe, representing the jury at the final round of the case study competition.

