

Submission for previously published paper

## **"Now I'm a bit angry:" Individuals' Awareness, Perception, and Responses to Data Breaches that Affected Them**

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Link to the published version of the paper:

<https://www.usenix.org/conference/usenixsecurity21/presentation/mayer>

Abstract:

Despite the prevalence of data breaches, there is a limited understanding of individuals' awareness, perception, and responses to breaches that affect them. We provide novel insights into this topic through an online study (n=413) in which we presented participants with up to three data breaches that had exposed their email addresses and other personal information. Overall, 73% of participants were affected by at least one breach, 5.36 breaches on average. Many participants attributed the cause of being affected by a breach to their poor email and security practices; only 14% correctly attributed the cause to external factors such as breached organizations and hackers. Participants were unaware of 74% of displayed breaches and expressed various emotions when learning about them. While some reported intending to take action, most participants believed the breach would not impact them. Our findings underline the need for user-friendly tools to improve consumers' resilience against breaches and accountability for breached organizations to provide more proactive post-breach communications and mitigations.