

BDO TECHNOLOGY RISK SERVICES

BDO WARNS RESIDENTS ABOUT SHARING WHATSAPP ACCOUNT INFORMATION

ON THURSDAY, AUGUST 25TH, WHATSAPP UPDATED THEIR TERMS OF SERVICES AGREEMENT AND REQUESTED EACH USER TO "AGREE" TO THE NEW TERMS. UNLESS YOU CLICKED ON THE LINK FOR THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND REVIEWED THEM, YOU WOULD BE UNAWARE, THAT IN 30 DAYS, WHATSAPP WILL SHARE VARIOUS INFORMATION INCLUDING CONTACTS AND YOUR PHONE NUMBER LINKED TO YOUR ACCOUNT WITH FACEBOOK.

Though they indicate that nothing will be shared onto Facebook, you have what they want – data and contacts. Two years ago, Facebook purchased WhatsApp for over \$1 billion as it recognized the value of the web of increasing user base using WhatsApp. They are now coming to collect.

Ryan Geluk, Director of Technology Risk at BDO states that "research shows that 97% of persons do not review terms and conditions when they are asked to agree to them – so you are not alone; but it is important to know what you are agreeing to." In accordance with the WhatsApp's privacy policy, by agreeing to the Terms and Conditions "You agree to [WhatsApp's] data practices, including the collection, use, processing, and sharing your information as described in our Privacy Policy" – this includes sharing your information with its parent company, Facebook.

In the above case with Whatsapp, even if you had accepted the updated Terms and Conditions, you still have time to switch off the sharing feature. To turn off your sharing, just follow the following easy steps:

1. Open WhatsApp;
2. Click on 'Settings'
3. Click on 'Account'
4. Go to the section of 'Share my Account'.
Switch this off.

You have 30 days from August 26th to do this before WhatsApp shares your account information with Facebook.

BDO reminds everyone to take a few minutes, when receiving such notifications, and check to see what you are agreeing to. BDO does not condone nor do they condemn users to agree to sharing their information; however, they simply wish to remind everyone to be aware of agreeing to updated terms without reviewing them first. Information about you is very valuable, especially to large social media sites such as Facebook as it contains your contacts and also your phone number and provides for various new ways for Facebook to direct content to you, and those in your contact lists. Don't give Facebook the satisfaction of receiving private information about you, unless you want to. Each user is entitled to their privacy – be vigilant and keep yours.

This publication has been carefully prepared, but it has been written in general terms and should be seen as broad guidance only. The publication cannot be relied upon to cover specific situations and you should not act, or refrain from acting, upon the information contained therein without obtaining specific professional advice.

Please contact us to discuss these matters in the context of your particular circumstances. We do not accept or assume any liability or duty of care for any loss arising from any action taken or not taken by anyone in reliance on the information in this publication or for any decision based on it.

EXCEPTIONAL CLIENT SERVICE

BDO's Technology Risk Services team is comprised of knowledgeable and experienced specialists in every area of technology risk, from IT governance and strategy to IT change management, from information security to IT disaster recovery and data analysis. Team members hold relevant qualifications and have advised clients on many IT management disciplines.

CONTACT:

RYAN GELUK CPA, CA
Director, BDO Technology Risk Services
+1 284 852 6204 (Direct)
+1 284 541 0746 (Mobile)
ryan.geluk@bdo.vg

BDO Limited
Sea Meadow House
Tobacco Wharf
PO Box 34
Road Town
Tortola VG1110
British Virgin Islands