Facebook Data Leak Scandal

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The Facebook and Cambridge Analytica Data Scandal

One of the biggest data leak scandals that have emerged in the last few days is the Facebook Cambridge Analytica Data scandal. It involves the subsequent breach and the data leak of about 87 million Facebook users ("Facebook scandal 'hit 87 million users'"). Cambridge Analytica started collecting the information during the course of 2014 (Davies). The main reason for which the data was collected was to make sure that some sort of influence could be carried out over the opinion of the voter on behalf of the politicians who are going to be hiring them.

After the discovery of the scandal, Facebook immediately apologized, but the public outcry over how their information was being used, combined with the changes in their stock prices, meant that the story was going to linger on a bit more. Later on, it was also reported how the United States Senator Ted Cruz and some of the other politicians had been using this data to make sure that they gained an advantage over the other people. In the follow-up of the reports, it came to light how Cambridge Analytica's employee and whistleblower Christopher Wylie was the one who brought this scandal to the forefront. He was the one who gave insight into the overall size of the data as well as the sort of personnel that were involved during the course of stealing this data. The scandal raised questions about the practices and overall ethicality of Facebook.

Media coverage of the event was extensive due to the fact that it was an important story and the sort of implications that this story has for the presidential elections. The likelihood that the social media website that has access to the database of about a billion people could be using the data to their advantage and actually selling it was a very daunting prospect, to say the least. There were many platforms that covered the news in great detail. The Guardian, though, was the one that came forward with the extensive coverage of the story. They were the first ones to give a perspective regarding the extent of the scandal and how the overall thing is going to raise questions about the safety and security of using social media.

Media Coverage, Technical Complexity, and Public

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Understanding

The good thing was that in this information-oriented age, more or less, all the platforms were quite accessible. The key difference was that while, on the one hand, the electronic media and the prime time shows gave coverage to the whole issue, the problem was that in order to have a detailed and in-depth understanding of the whole issue, it is imperative that the clear narrative of the story be understood. Thus, it was one of the few stories where one can see how print media turned out to be a much more effective medium with regard to the understanding that needed to be developed.

The reason that the detailed outlook and the understanding of the whole issue need to be developed is due to the fact that the whole issue is rather technical in nature, and in order to have a clear idea of what is going on, one needs to actually go through the background and context to have a clear understanding of what is being asked here. The interesting thing during the course of the whole event was how different media outlets reported the story in a different light and manner. For instance, the reporting that was being done by the New York Times was more focused on the Congress trial and the subsequent way Mark Zuckerberg answered the question. On the other hand, if one compares the two, Channel 4 News and some of their other media outlets focus on how the data scandal worked out.

Especially if one talks about Channel 4 News, they are inclined to make sure that extensive coverage is provided to Christopher Wylie, the whistleblower who brought the whole issue to the forefront. The idea on their part was to make sure that the extent of the data scandal was being understood. The Guardian, on the other hand, was more interested in reporting how the different politicians were using the data to their advantage; especially extensive reporting was carried out with regards to the way Ted Cruz was using the data to make sure that the companies were aware of the selling of the data. Thus, each media outlet covered the special aspect of how this whole scandal unfolded in the given time period. Later on, the New York Times and the Guardian promoted their leftist ideologies with regard to the fact that different politicians, such as Donald Trump, might be using the data leaks to their advantage and how lack of safety is going to be the key theme when it comes to the governmental process.

Privacy, Consumer Rights, and the Irony of Digital Platforms

The interesting irony during the course of the whole event was that the whole event was about the potential pitfalls and lack of security and confidentiality one gets to see on social media pages. The reaction on social media at the initial level was that of disappointment among the users about how Facebook has compromised the trust that they have placed in it. As is the case with everything that is reported on social media, there was a certain degree of hyperbole as well. Another interesting thing was the fact that people started to side with Facebook after the completion of the trial with Congress

due to how Mark Zuckerberg handled all the queries that were coming his way. Again, it was quite an interesting perspective that people were criticizing Mark Zuckerberg on Facebook and were actually using the same medium for venting out their anger over him, the medium that was created by him on his own.

There was another dimension to the story with regard to the way consumer advocates saw it. Some of the business channels and organizations came up with the perspective that there is a need to increase the degree of consumer protection placed over social media. They were of the view that the way this whole incident has rolled out, there is the likelihood that the consumer's right to confidentiality is being breached during the course of the whole process. The whole thing, though, can be summed up by how the Congress trial of Mark panned out and the reaction one gets to see after it.

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