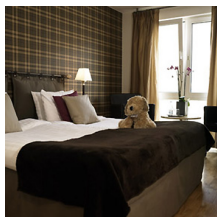


25 August 2008

By: Denisa Ilascu, Internet / SEO News Editor



Comfortable rooms may not be sufficient to convince people to book at Best Western anymore
book.bestwestern

[Personal Information of 8 Million People May Be in Terrorists' Hands](#)

As the Sunday Herald claims

A British newspaper reported about what it claims to be the biggest identity theft ever. According to the publication, personal information of over 8 million people is now at stake, as it has been intercepted by an Indian terrorist. Reporters say that the man gained access to a Best Western hotel and installed a trojan which allowed him to remotely control the affected machine and the others in the network. This means, as the [Sunday Herald](#) claims, that bank accounts, names or addresses of over 8 million people who have checked in one of the 4,000 hotels in the chain around the world as of August 2007 are now at cyber criminals' stake. Although the company has not denied all accusations, it still claims that the security breach that has been reported "is grossly unsubstantiated". Mainly because "whereas the reporter asserted the recent compromise of data for past guests from as far back as 2007, Best Western purges all online reservations promptly upon guest departure". Indeed, the two statements aren't matching at all, although this is a matter of life and death, considering the fact that so many people are concerned with it. "Was this a case of over-exuberant reporting, or is Best Western trying to downplay the scale of the incident? What's obvious is that at the moment the facts of this case are unclear. Even if only one hotel branch was affected, there is still an important reminder here for every organization to take the utmost care over securing its customers' data. Rival hotel firms would be wise not to bounce on their beds in glee at Best Western's possible misfortune - but look again at their own systems to make sure that they are properly defended," comments Senior Technology Consultant Graham Cluley, from security company Sophos on the [blog](#) of the firm.