A data breach occurs when access to secure or confidential information is obtained by an unauthorized individual. This loss of control over secure data can be caused by an intentional act such as theft, or by the unintentional revealing of information. It can occur in a number of ways, including lost or stolen passwords, malware attack, negligence, etc.

A data breach is a loss of information security and can have a severe negative impact to a company’s reputation. Protecting against the loss of confidential information is the responsibility of every employee. This means ensuring that passwords are kept safe, security procedures are followed, and any information security threats are reported.

**POTENTIAL CAUSES OF A DATA BREACH**

- Lost or stolen passwords are a major cause of data breach events.
- Malware or virus infections can lead to unauthorized access of computer systems and a data breach event.
- Physical loss of laptops or other electronic devices can provide access to a company’s network which can lead to a data breach.
- Employees may be coerced or manipulated into revealing secure information, or they may inadvertently provide access to data.
- A data breach may occur by means of hardcopy materials or files that are left unprotected.
- A disgruntled or malicious employee may also reveal information intentionally, resulting in a data breach.

**PREVENTING DATA BREACH EVENTS**

- Employee training and awareness of the threat are the best ways to prevent a data breach from occurring.
- Keep all computers current on security patches, anti-malware programs, and software updates.
- Maintain a secure and protected network environment that includes network firewalls and monitoring devices.
- Protect against unauthorized access to computers and electronic storage devices.
- Develop comprehensive guidelines for protecting sensitive and confidential information, and train employees on these procedures.

For further information on maintaining a culture of preparedness, consult your Preparis portal. Contact your Customer Success representative at csteam@preparis.com for more information on this or any other threat.