



SPECIAL REPORT

Profiting from details of our personal lives

Big Brother is making a profit on-line from our thoughts, habits and personal details. Just check the Internet at www.Accenture.com and follow the links on 'data mining.' Super computer databases now merge and manipulate thousands of details about our personal lives and companies sell those individual profiles.

Brandishing the rationale of national security concerns, multi national corporations not subject to federal privacy legislation merge data bases to track what you and I read, what we buy, our bank records, where we travel, who we want contacted in an emergency, how much electricity we use, our history of welfare use or insurance claims, census information and they also profile our neighbours, friends and associates.

This is not the stuff of science fiction or wacky conspiracy theorists. You can see for yourself online that foreign corporations use the details of our personal lives as a commodity and advertise their data mining wares on the Internet.

Check www2.seisint.com or www.securityfocus.com/news/7036. See how much information a mere 25 cents buys about people's lives at www.accurint.com.

In an October 8, 2003 column in the *Cowichan News-Leader* newspaper, investigative reporter Don Maroc raised concerns about multinational corporation Accenture's mounting control over Canadian citizens' personal information.

After being contacted by *OPEIU 378 News*, Maroc said he would be 'honoured' for our union newspaper to run excerpts from his column about the Bermuda-based multinational.

According to Maroc's research that is readily verified on the multinational's corporate websites, Accenture has done contract work for at least three Canadian government's departments. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) has awarded Accenture a \$4.8 million contract to design a global case management system.

Each year the CIC processes about 1.3 million visitor, citizen, immigrant and sponsorship applica-

tions, 320,000 employment and student authorizations and 40,000 refugee claims. Facilitating information sharing with key stakeholders, Accenture now 'safeguards' all that personal information.

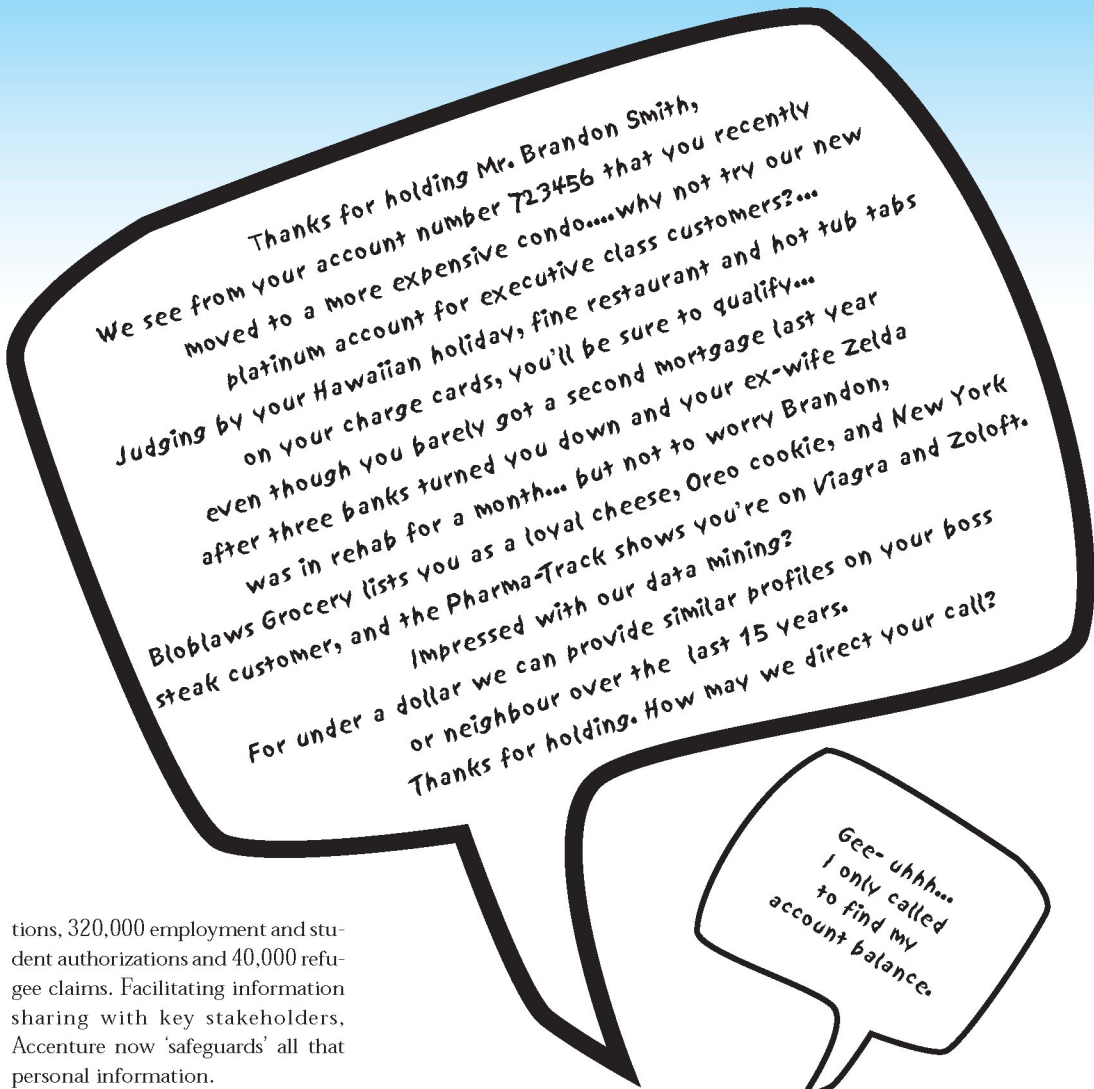
Hired also to redesign Ontario's welfare programs and information systems, Accenture now owns complete personal and financial histories for all families who have applied for welfare in Ontario. Here in BC, Accenture Business Services handles BC Hydro's customer services, financial services, human resources, information technology and procurement services. Complete files for every customer in BC are now in Accenture data banks.

Accenture has recently bought into Seisint, a massive US data bank corporation. Seisint of Boca Raton, Florida is a data-mining company connected with a project, dubbed Matrix, created to track would-be terrorists and criminal fugitives.

(As a side note, the Canadian

government has recently signed trade agreements that allow the national census to be contracted out to a US corporation. According to the Council of Canadians, Lockheed Martin, one of the world's largest weapons manufacturers, will soon have access to confidential census information about Canadians.)

Now back to Accenture and Seisint: The Matrix database cross-references driving records and restricted police files with billions of pieces of public and private data, including credit and property records. Accenture's eDemocracy Services runs the US government's voter registration and electronic voting machine management services for local, state and national governments.



Thanks for holding Mr. Brandon Smith,
We see from your account number 723456 that you recently
moved to a more expensive condo...why not try our new
platinum account for executive class customers?...
Judging by your Hawaiian holiday, fine restaurant and hot tub tabs
on your charge cards, you'll be sure to qualify...
even though you barely got a second mortgage last year
after three banks turned you down and your ex-wife Zelda
was in rehab for a month... but not to worry Brandon,
Boblaws Grocery lists you as a loyal cheese, Oreo cookie, and New York
steak customer, and the Pharma-Track shows you're on Viagra and Zoloft.
Impressed with our data mining?
For under a dollar we can provide similar profiles on your boss
or neighbour over the last 15 years.
Thanks for holding. How may we direct your call?

Gee- uhhh...
I only called
to find my
account balance.

Published by Local 378, Office and Professional Employees' International Union, Burnaby, B.C. Phone 604-299-0378. Writing and production by Paula Stromberg, OPEIU 378 Communications Director.