



Client Alert

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Protecting Confidential Information in the Age of WikiLeaks

The unfolding case against a U.S. Army intelligence specialist suspected of leaking secret government documents to WikiLeaks along with the online organization's plans to release sensitive documents from a major U.S. bank are ongoing reminders of how easily confidential information can become public. Just like the government, all companies with competitively sensitive data are at risk. A recent national survey indicated that 59 percent of employees who quit, were laid off or terminated admitted to stealing company data. The rapid development of new technologies and media that make it easier to transfer large amounts of data quickly and quietly exacerbates the problem.

Disgruntled employees are not the only risk when it comes to disclosure of private information. Sometimes information is unwittingly disclosed by users, either through inadvertence or ignorance. For example, it was recently discovered that Facebook applications had been transmitting users' personal identifying information to dozens of advertising and Internet tracking companies.

The attorneys in Armstrong Teasdale's Trade Secret and Non-Compete and Social Media practice groups along with the firm's Security Clearance Task Force routinely assist their clients in protecting their confidential information from disclosure and misuse. Our lawyers are closely following the developments in the rapidly-changing areas of information protection and privacy law.

Our services include an audit of your policies, practices and agreements with employees. A comprehensive audit goes far beyond reviewing your non-compete agreements and will likely reveal numerous additional steps that you can take to guard your confidential information. Because we have vast experience in both litigation and implementation of security procedures, we can help you institute practices aimed at protecting your competitively sensitive information against theft.

Your confidential information can be one of your company's most important assets. Getting the right legal advice before problems develop is key to keeping those assets safe.

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