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Mr. Jeff Weiner
Chief Executive Officer
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The upcoming changes to LyndaLibrary, soon to be reborn as LinkedIn Learning, have raised a number of concerns in the library community about patron privacy and information storage, retention, and ownership. Throughout the country, libraries fear the company is reducing patrons who are using a valuable library resource into data points to collect, retain indefinitely, and profit from within the context of a social network. The Massachusetts Library Association has made the recommendation to libraries in the state to discontinue their use of LyndaLibrary/LinkedIn Learning until LinkedIn addresses the privacy and data retention/ownership issues raised in this letter.

Once the new platform is launched, LinkedIn Learning will require patrons to create LinkedIn accounts in order to access this resource collection. This subjects all patrons and their activities to the user, privacy, and cookie policies of LinkedIn, forcing them to agree to a number of stipulations that either outright violate or create significant ambiguity around privacy norms between a library and its users. As things stand in August 2019, this grants the company the following:

1) Indefinite retention of data both added to an account and tracked by the LinkedIn platform

2) The permission to give data to "others" as LinkedIn deems reasonably necessary; they do not explain the parameters of this in any terms of use document and have not provided a clear explanation in follow-up conversations with account representatives

3) Ownership of data as per the LinkedIn user policy: by using LinkedIn, users are granting them "a worldwide, transferable and sublicensable right to use, copy, modify, distribute, publish, and process, information and content that you provide through our Services and the services of others, without any further consent, notice and/or compensation to you or others"

Members of MLA, and librarians from Massachusetts to Australia have attempted conversations with LinkedIn account representatives in an effort to address the data security and privacy issues presented by the changes to LyndaLibrary. Additionally, Erin Berman, the Chair of the American Library Association's Privacy Subcommittee, met with the LinkedIn Learning product and engineering team at LinkedIn's headquarters in early July 2019. She confirmed that the creation of a LinkedIn account is

mandatory for use of LinkedIn Learning resources, and that the option to make a profile "obscure" is not turned on by default. LinkedIn's position is that this account creation requirement enhances security on the platform and prevents people from fraudulently using their resources.

When a library chooses to do business with a vendor, this agreement is a tacit endorsement from a library that a given vendor is safe for the public to use and share their data with. In deciding to do business with a given vendor, we need to uphold a standard of privacy as written into Massachusetts law; this is also a matter of following the core ethics of our profession. Massachusetts General Law 78 Section 7 states, "That part of the records of a public library which reveals the identity and intellectual pursuits of a person using such library shall not be a public record." LinkedIn's current policies do not guarantee this protection to users of the LinkedIn Learning product.

We request that the following changes to be made to LinkedIn Learning's user agreement, privacy, and cookie policies to bring it more in line with the service expectations of libraries, as well as our own privacy policies and government regulations, before resuming business with your company:

1. LinkedIn Learning should provide library users an option to use the service as a guest without the need to create a LinkedIn profile.
2. LinkedIn Learning users should not fall under the same privacy policy as other LinkedIn users.
3. LinkedIn Learning should adopt a policy to scrub personally identifiable information (PII) on a regular basis. Additionally, library users' data should be scrubbed within a reasonable amount of time after closing their account.
4. PII should be used only to keep operations running and only in circumstances necessary to providing the service.
5. Personal data of library patrons should not be used for advertising. Cookies that track user data when they are logged out of the service should not be allowed. Cookies should not track patron behavior outside of the LinkedIn Learning site or app.
6. Privacy should come standard with new accounts, and other services can be offered on an opt-in basis.
7. Library users have the right to know who they are giving their personal data to. An agreement cannot be made with "some others."
8. Library users' PII should not be made public by default. Public profiles should be an opt-in service for those who choose it.

Sincerely,

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