

# SECOND COURT ORDER REQUIRED TO RELEASE CUSTOMER DATA: EXPERT

Continued from page 3

it is possible for a judge to order that upon receiving the IP address the respective internet service provider will give further information, it is not likely.

And without a judge's order, internet service providers will likely be unable to provide further customer information to an investigator, Grant said.

"I think privacy legislation (PIPEDA) generally prevents the disclosure by businesses of personal information collected in the course of their business," he added.

Toronto lawyer Mark Donald says, based on his own limited knowledge, a Norwich order to identify the IP address of the sender of an email is more likely to be successful if the email was sent from a personal system, rather than a public one.

If an email was sent within a company or organization, there would likely be no need to apply for a Norwich order, as the organization would probably be able to access employee emails internally, he said.

"But if that person was using a public computer, such as the computer at a local library, it would be difficult to identify that sender," he added.

**Once an IP address is obtained, what are the next steps?**

An IP address is a set of numbers used to identify a machine on the internet, John DiMarco, direc-



Alexandra Heck/Metroland

## Halton Hills Town Hall

tor of information technology in the Faculty of Computer Science at University of Toronto said.

"When that machine connects to a mail server, the server will normally log the address, which is a special number belonging to the incoming machine," he said. "If somebody wants to identify

someone who has used an email system, they want to find out what the unique IP address of that machine is so that they can identify which entry in the logs of the server corresponds to that person's accessing the machine."

DiMarco says an IP address is composed of four

numbers, separated by dots, one of which identifies the internet service provider pertaining to that particular device.

Once the internet service provider is identified, the next step would be for an investigator to obtain a court order to get the provider to release specific customer data.

## STORY BEHIND THE STORY:

An anonymous email, sent Sept. 4, alleged the Town CAO was 'engaged in nepotism.' The CAO has categorically denied the allegations. Court documents reveal the Town is keen on identifying the sender of the email. The Town suspects the email was 'likely authored and sent by a town employee,' according to court documents.

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