

Businesses still failing to deal with growing threat of cybercrime

Submitted by: Acceleris Marketing Communications

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New research reveals alarming rise in online attacks costing UK business £11bn a year

Businesses are continuing to place themselves at risk of 'cybercrime' according to experts at insurance broker Bluefin (<http://www.bluefingroup.co.uk>), as new research reveals a sharp rise in online criminal attacks.

The warning comes as several reports provide fresh evidence of the scale of the threat faced by UK industry.

A report compiled by Cambridge University calculated that cyber criminals cost the UK £11bn each year¹ and a separate Experian study released this month found that the trade in illegal data has already doubled in size compared to last year².

As well as the immediate costs associated with a data breach, there is also potential damage to a company's reputation to consider. According to another report compiled earlier this year, the average cost of a large organisation's worst security breach is £110,000-£250,000k and £15,000-£30,000 for a small business.

Cybercrime (<http://www.bluefingroup.co.uk>) refers to malicious criminal activity targeted at individuals and businesses online, and can include identity theft, fraud and extortion as well as the theft of intellectual property and data. As businesses across all sectors of the economy become increasingly reliant on the internet, the potential damage from malicious 'cyber' attacks has risen dramatically.

Last year, following consultation with a number of customers, Bluefin raised concerns that businesses of all sizes are being targeted by cyber attacks.

A Bluefin spokesman said:

"There is still a worrying lack of awareness over just how widespread cybercrime has become. Any business, large or small that relies on the internet, holds customer data or has commercially sensitive intellectual property is potentially at risk. This is no longer an issue that can be left to the IT department to deal with.

"Insurance companies are working hard to design policies that will protect businesses against the new and emerging threats arising out of e-commerce (<http://www.bluefingroup.co.uk>) and internet technologies. However it is imperative that businesses are aware of the risks and take appropriate steps to ensure they are prepared in the event that they are targeted."

To help businesses combat online crime, Bluefin (<http://www.bluefingroup.co.uk>) suggests five key points to consider:

1. Review company-wide IT systems and ensure that staff are aware of current best practice
2. Conduct a detailed risk assessment to identify any potential weak points in security and ensure that all firewall protection and anti-virus software is up to date
3. Examine current insurance policies and consider whether specialist online fraud cover is required
4. Provide training to new and existing employees highlighting ways to improve data security
5. Develop a series of contingency plans to help your business continue in the event of a data breach or other form of cybercrime

ENDS

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Notes to Editors

Bluefin Insurance Services Limited provides independent insurance broking services to businesses and private individuals. It is part of AXA UK plc and employs approximately 1500 people in 45 locations. For more information visit www.bluefingroup.co.uk

1. Measuring the cost of cybercrime – Cambridge University – June 2012

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/research/news/how-much-does-cybercrime-cost/>

2. Experian CreditExpert's identity web monitoring service - Experian – July 2012

<http://press.experian.com/United-Kingdom/Press-Release/illegal%20web%20trade%20in%20personal%20information%20soa>

3. UK Information Security Breaches Survey - Infosecurity Europe, PwC & The department for Business, Innovation and Skills – April 2012

<http://www.pwc.co.uk/audit-assurance/publications/uk-information-security-breaches-survey-results-2012.jhtml>