

## Cyber Crime – The Scale of The Problem

*This is the first in a series of cyber-crime and cyber security blogs by Gary Peace, CEO and founder of ESID Consulting.*

Cyber-crime and cyber security are intrinsically linked. The term “cyber” is now used daily by anybody with something to say about the risks and threats of doing anything online.

However, the term is just adding a gloss to an already existing problem faced by business and consumers. That problem is simply one of 'crime'. It's nothing but old-fashioned theft, criminal damage, and fraud. It's just that its being committed with the aid of or over computer networks.

### **So, what is the scale of the problem?**

The scale of the problem should not be taken lightly. It's big and getting bigger. [According to insurer Hiscox](#), its up in 2019 by 40% in the UK and the costs of it are increasing.

*“One of the most striking figures to emerge is the mean cost of the largest single incident. A year ago, this came out at \$34,000. This year, there has been a near six-fold increase – to a fraction under \$200,000. For companies in every size bracket the cost of the biggest incident is now likely to be anything from 3 to 18 times what it was only a year ago.”* Hiscox Cyber Readiness Report 2019

### **Why is it getting worse?**

Since we've all moved online, the checks and balances that existed in a manual, physical and hierarchical environment of 25 years ago now no longer exist.

Back then, if we wanted a file from HR or finance, we had to get up from our desks, go and find the 'gatekeeper' to that information and then persuade them (or not) that our request was a valid one and that we were authorised to have access to it. And only from that point onwards were we given access to it.

Today, the physical, personal and knowledge-based safeguards (the gatekeeper) are gone. All we do now is click into a folder from our desktop or mobile device and we get access to the information previously locked away. If things have been set up correctly and the governance systems are in place, then there won't be any issues. However, our own employees are telling us that this is not the case!

Organisations do not understand the value of information and employee surveys have repeatedly shown that neither do their employees:

- Over half of employees don't understand the consequence of company information loss.
- Half of employees have access to information that they themselves don't think they should have.
- Lack of understanding is also apparent in the boardroom too, where the value of data is poorly understood.
- Senior managers do not see the threat.

## **Security Culture**

As demonstrated within survey results there is lack of a security culture within organisations, with security all too often seen as an inconvenience as opposed to a benefit. There is also too much focus on technology and over-reliance on an already overstretched IT department.

What's more worrying is that [when surveyed](#) UK employees stated the following:

- 35% would sell your intellectual property for the right price.
- 18% would sell information for £1,000.
- 29% would sell your company information the £10,000.

## **The Solution**

The solution can be found in more joined up thinking between HR, Security and IT, to improve what can be very fragmented reporting processes.

Without clear lines of communication, risks, threats and security issues will not be recognised and incidents will not be dealt with holistically.

Above all else employee awareness and education is imperative in the battle against organised crime.

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