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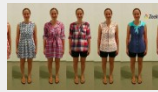
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#Technology

The cyber-security capital of the world

Beersheva's CyberSpark cyber-security development complex breaks ground as international companies seek Israeli expertise.

By [Viva Sarah Press](#) | FEBRUARY 16, 2014, 12:45 AM

Cyber attacks are changing today to tailor made attacks designed for specific organizations or groups. Image via Shutterstock

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Viva Sarah Press reports on the creativity, innovation and ingenuity taking place in Israel. Her work has been published by international media outlets including Israel Television, CNN, Reuters, Time Out and The Jerusalem Post.

It's no secret that the newest [cyber-security](#) and cyber-defense software is being coded in Israel.

In fact, in early 2014, multinational players IBM, Cisco, EMC, Lockheed Martin RSA and Deutsche Telekom all announced plans to set up [cyber-research facilities](#) in CyberSpark, Israel's new cyber-security technology park in Beersheva.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu revealed the establishment of the new national cyber complex in the Negev city at the [Cybertech conference](#) in Tel Aviv – where some 450 heads of industry and cyber-security agencies from across the globe came to see an expo of Israeli security companies and startups.

Two years after the founding of the Israel National Cyber Bureau (INCB), Netanyahu predicted that Beersheva would “not only be the cyber capital of Israel but one of the most important places in the cyber security field in the world.”

“Just looking at the innovation that Israel has generated over the past several years especially in cyber security, it's a growing area of focus and we want to be part of that,” Verizon infrastructure protection executive Sean Paul McGurk tells ISRAEL21c, explaining why he made the trip to Tel Aviv..

The number of Israeli cyber-defense companies has ballooned from a few dozen to some 220 in the last few years, according to the Tel Aviv-based IVC Research Center. That's about five to 10 percent of the global \$60 billion to \$80 billion annual cyber-security market, says INCB Director Eviatar Matania.

Two other noteworthy facts: 78 Israeli cyber-security companies have raised \$400 million since 2010; and about 20 multinational companies now operate online-security development centers in Israel (half of which were established since 2011).

“Cyber is the big engine for the Israeli market,” Theta-Ray VP R&D Ronen Lago tells ISRAEL21c. “We have the creativity to find out the new technologies.”

Futuristic solutions

“The most interesting thing happening right now is not sharing of historical information of attacks but actually coming up with technology that predicts the new type of attack according to proactive security,” Gadi Tirosh, a general manager at Jerusalem Venture Partners (JVP), tells ISRAEL21c. “It's not just defending attacks of the past but actually predicting the attacks of the future.”

A look around at the conference gave a sense of that activity in action. There were over 75 startups showing off the next must-have technologies.

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“What we’re seeing in the cyber-security market over the last two to three years is a shift of a completely new set of attacks. It’s not carpet-bombing attacks that we’ve seen in the past, but missile attacks, tailor-made attacks that are made to hit a particular organization, group or in some cases individuals. To deal with this kind of attack, you need a completely new set of technologies, and that’s what all these startups are striving [for],” Tirosh says.



From left, John D. Evans, vice president for business innovation at Lockheed Martin; Dr. Riuka Carmi, president of Ben-Gurion University; Orna Berry, general manager of EMC Israel Center of Excellence in Israel; and Beersheva Mayor Ruvik Danilovich. Photo by Coby Kantor

“One of the best parts of the conference was the innovation center of the new startup companies, because you’re seeing a lot of technology being brought to market in rapid fashion,” says McGurk, who discovered Israel’s “incredibly innovative” cyber-security approaches when he was at the US Department of Homeland Security before joining Verizon.

“Israel is a crucible for creating that capability, and it’s something we want to be part of.”

Global players in Israeli cyber security

With hack attacks aimed at Israeli institutions every day, the country has had no choice but to step up to the plate and revolutionize the field of cyber security.

As Netanyahu told conference attendees in Tel Aviv in January: “The combination of military or security requirements, research institutions, small space, culture and the survival imperative have produced this special mix that makes Israel an outstanding society that produces outstanding capabilities in the field of cyber.”

Netanyahu and INCB’s Matania encouraged outsiders to collaborate with, and invest in, the country’s growing cyber-defense industry.

“Cyber doesn’t carry a passport,” McGurk says. “So you can be anywhere in the world and have an impact in a cyber domain. It’s really important to work collaboratively – not only governments but also industries across the board to reach solutions necessary to protect the networks.”

IBM in the Negev and Tel Aviv

IBM is working with Ben-Gurion University of the Negev to establish a Center of Excellence for Security and Protection of Infrastructure and Assets.

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“Our ongoing investments and rich history of patent leadership is helping our clients secure and protect their infrastructure and data in today’s new era of big data and cloud computing,” said Steve Mills, senior vice present and group executive, IBM Software & Systems. “Our partnership with Ben-Gurion University will help extend innovation not only in Israel but around the world.”

In 2013, [IBM acquired Israeli cybersecurity](#) firm Trusteer and inaugurated the IBM Cybersecurity Software Lab in Tel Aviv. Here, more than 200 Trusteer and IBM researchers and developers focus on mobile and application security, advanced threat and malware, counter-fraud and financial crimes.

Similarly, Cisco Systems – one of the most active multinational tech companies in Israel – will invest \$60 million in Israeli venture capital fund JVP’s \$120 million cyber security fund.

“Cisco CEO John Chambers is personally committed to making Israel the first digital country. We are working closely with the government and we are very excited about the work we are doing across education and health and cyber,” Bryan Palma, Cisco senior vice president of security services, told *Haaretz*.

In his interview with the Israeli daily, Palma said IBM is hiring talented Israeli security consultants and is working with the government and startups to create a cyber-security technology lab through a strategic investment made with JVP.

JVP’s Tirosh tells ISRAEL21c that foreign companies “are putting money into Israel because they recognize the talent here and they recognize that this is where cyber innovation is happening. The Cyber Tech conference itself was amazing evidence of how much interest this country is drawing for cyber security and cyber defense.”

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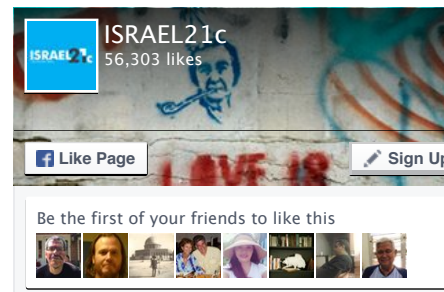


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