

Press release

Two thirds of large UK businesses hit by cyber breach or attack in past year

From: Department for Culture, Media & Sport (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-culture-media-sport>) and Ed Vaizey MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/ed-vaizey>)
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Britain's businesses are being urged to better protect themselves from cyber criminals following government research



- Nearly seven out of ten attacks on all firms involved viruses, spyware or malware.
- Record £1.9bn government investment to protect UK but industry must act to help protect themselves
- New National Cyber Security Centre will launch in the autumn 2016

Britain's businesses are being urged to better protect themselves from cyber criminals after government research into cyber security (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-security-breaches-survey-2016>) found two thirds of large businesses experienced a cyber breach or attack in the past year.

The research also shows that in some cases the cost of cyber breaches and attacks to business reached millions, but the most common attacks detected involved viruses, spyware or malware that could have been prevented using the Government's Cyber Essentials (<https://www.cyberstreetwise.com/cyberessentials/>) scheme.

The Cyber Security Breaches Survey (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-security-breaches-survey-2016>) found that while one in four large firms experiencing a breach did so at least once a month, only half of all firms have taken any recommended actions to identify and address vulnerabilities. Even fewer, about a third of all firms, had formal written cyber security policies and only 10% had an incident management plan in place.

Minister for the Digital Economy Ed Vaizey said:

“ The UK is a world-leading digital economy and this Government has made cyber security a top priority. Too many firms are losing money, data and consumer confidence with the vast number of cyber attacks. It's absolutely crucial businesses are secure and can protect data. As a minimum companies should take action by adopting the Cyber Essentials scheme which will help them protect themselves.”

Results from the survey are being released alongside the Government's Cyber Governance Health Check (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-governance-health-check-201516>), which was launched following the TalkTalk cyber attack. It found almost half of the top FTSE 350 businesses regarded cyber attacks as the biggest threat to their business when compared with other key risks - up from 29 per cent in 2014.

The Government's Cyber Governance Health Check (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-governance-health-check-201516>) also found that:

only a third of the UK's top 350 businesses understand the threat of a cyber attack; only a fifth of businesses have a clear view of the dangers of sharing information with third parties; and many firms are, however, getting better at managing cyber risks, with almost two thirds now setting out their approach to cyber security in their annual report.

Both surveys form part of the Government's rigorous approach to tackling cyber crime, which will see £1.9 billion invested over the next five years.

The Government is encouraging all firms to take action: the 10 Steps to Cyber Security (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cyber-risk-management-a-board-level-responsibility>) provides advice to large businesses, and the Cyber Essentials (<https://www.cyberstreetwise.com/cyberessentials/>) scheme is available to all UK firms. The Government is also creating a new National Cyber Security Centre offering industry a 'one-stop-shop' for cyber security support.

A new national cyber security strategy will also be published later in 2016 setting out the Government's plans to improve cyber security for Government, businesses and consumers.

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