

BOLT Publishes Infographic Offering Tools to Mitigate Risk of Rapidly Increasing Data Breaches at U.S. Small Business

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Graphic Highlights Growing Threat and Details Steps Small Business Owners Must Take to Defend Businesses and Personal Assets

FARMINGTON, Conn., Sept. 27, 2011 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [BOLT](#) (Business Owners Liability Team), a leading insurance agency that exclusively protects small business owners, published today a [data breach infographic](#) that illustrates the growing threat of these intrusions and thefts at U.S. small businesses. The graphic also details vital steps owners must take to protect their businesses, and themselves, from this mounting and perilous risk. Up until recently, large corporations were the primary victim of data breaches, but recent reports and high profile cyber attacks tell a much a different story.

According to the U.S. Secret Service and Verizon's forensic analysis unit, in 2009 27% of corporate data breaches were targeted at companies with 100 employees or fewer. In 2010, a remarkable 63% of all attacks targeted these small businesses. Similarly, Visa recently shared that 95% of its credit card breaches are against their small business customers. In part, this growing number of breaches at small businesses is a result of cyber criminals discovering that these organizations typically have very weak security due to limited budgets and small or no technical staff.

"More than half of small business owners have literally no IT security policy, and nearly that many have never even assessed their security," said Tom Hammond, EVP of Operations at BOLT. "The primary reason that small business owners are leaving themselves vulnerable is that they simply don't believe that they're a target for data theft. Owners need to understand that this is a very real risk and that they must take immediate action to protect their business, livelihood, and in many cases, their personal assets."

Added Hammond, "Not a day goes by where you don't hear in the news that a medical office or other unsuspecting small business has had a data breach. An intrusion or theft of this kind can be the result of a number of security deficiencies that can even include improper handling of data by employees."

While criminal breaches pose a major threat, the potential loss from non-criminal breaches can be much more expensive. Additionally, although larger corporations can usually weather the ramifications of a data breach, small businesses and their owners are less likely to have the reserves to withstand a significant loss as a result of stolen company funds, the significant costs associated with investigating a breach, legal issues and penalties, client litigations, termination of service from one or more credit card companies, and the immeasurable cost of losing customer trust.

BOLT published this latest [infographic](#) in an effort to warn its small business customers of both the existence of this very real threat and the potential results of an unwanted third-party intrusion or theft. BOLT is taking this opportunity to detail the three key ways in which owners can help mitigate this risk and the debilitating financial ramifications of a data breach.

"The first basic step to protection is for small business owners to simply identify their vulnerabilities, including weak passwords, poor technical security and improperly stored records," said Hammond. "Next, it's important to train employees to help maintain security policies, including being careful when opening emails and surfing the web, securing laptops and other devices, being diligent with confidential documents and information. And most importantly, understand that you can't be a specialist in every area of your business, and partner with an IT expert."

Hammond adds: "While taking steps like these can help protect your business from a data breach, none of them can be effective once a breach has occurred. At that point, the only protection from potential losses you would incur as a victim of cyber crime is a pre-existing insurance plan."

Please visit <http://info.boltinsurance.com/small-business-data-breaches/> to view BOLT's [data breach infographic](#) as well as other important tips and information for protecting a small business.

BOLT exclusively focuses on protecting the small business owner by providing access to top markets and carriers online, with immediate quotes and expert guidance. Using its proven Web-based technology, BOLT

collects all underwriting information required by top-line carriers, and allows business owners to view proposals online within minutes. Through the strength of its technology platform, processes and team of experts, BOLT delivers a unique "high tech/high touch" approach to serving the very specific needs of small business owners.

About BOLT

BOLT, the Business Owners Liability Team, is a national insurance agency that exclusively protects the owners of small businesses. Business insurance policies offered by BOLT include, but are not limited to, General Liability, Business Property Insurance, Workers' Compensation, Commercial Auto, Umbrella Insurance, Errors and Omissions, Directors and Officers, Business Interruption, Employment Liability, Sexual Harassment and Flood. These policies are provided by top-rated insurance carriers such as The Hartford, CNA, Liberty Mutual, Zurich, Ace and Chubb. BOLT Insurance Agency is headquartered in Farmington, CT, and is licensed to do business in all fifty states. For additional information, visit the BOLT website at www.boltinsurance.com.

More advice for small business owners can be found at <http://info.boltinsurance.com>. Visit BOLT on Facebook at www.facebook.com/boltinsurance or follow us on Twitter @boltinsurance.

The BOLT Insurance Agency logo is available at <http://www.globenewswire.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=8807>

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