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Majority of European businesses have been subject to a malicious attack

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Delegates from BKR International have been told that there is increasing organized criminal activity in Europe to which they need to pay serious attention, not only for themselves, but their clients. At the conference in Barcelona, they have been told that many companies throughout Europe are not taking IT security seriously and do not have an Information security policy in place, which is leaving them wide open to possible attacks and a variety of threats.

The worldwide association of accountancy practices commissioned MWR InfoSecurity to carry out a global survey. The survey indicated that a quarter of firms expected an attack in the next 12 months, and that some 78% said that they felt that they would be able to deal with any incursion.

Ian Shaw, Managing director of MWR InfoSecurity, said that some 100 companies had been polled in Europe. He added: "More than 50% of companies surveyed admitted that in the last year they had been subject to a malicious or accidental virus, worm or malware attack. This goes to prove that the European business community is under constant attack."

Shaw said that the threat level was changing all the time and that most "attacks" were of a general nature and were from worms, accidental virus or Malware incursions. Some 10% of firms surveyed said that they had received targeted attacks, designed to hit them and bring their systems down.

He added: "The survey has revealed that while many companies are aware that threats exist they need to do more to safeguard their interests. One way to do this is to ensure that they have a robust security policy and plan in place that can swing into action when an attack is made".

Shaw said that targeted attacks were on the increase and that a good example of this was the recent attack on the Sony Playstation network, which had resulted in millions of clients having their personal information compromised.

He added: "Organisations who deal with client personal information need to review their security constantly because the likelihood of a targeted attack is growing. Firms can be targeted in a variety of ways, by disaffected employees, organized groups and criminal gangs."



Shaw said that there was also good news; most companies surveyed felt that information security was a significant priority

Shaw said: "Protection of client data is one of the biggest motivators for respondents to the survey. However, many organizations have identified that clients are requiring adequate reassurance that their data will be safe and therefore see good data protection as a key for business development."

Despite the difficult economic times, over 30% of the respondents to the survey stated that their budget for information security had increased, with only 4% stating there had been a decrease.

Chairman of BKR International's Europe, Middle East and Africa region, Peter Janssen, who is based at Arnhem in Holland said: "The survey which has involved a variety of companies across Europe shows the great risk that organizations face by not putting in place the right security procedures".

He added: "We commissioned the survey because we wanted to highlight the current risks so that our members, their clients and organizations across Europe are aware of the dangers that they face".

Daniel Faura whose firm, Faura-Casas, hosted the conference in Barcelona said: "Based on our experiences over the last few years, it is absolutely essential to adopt secure IT policies across Europe. Businesses must do all they can to avoid improper access and unauthorized use, especially as Europe is about to introduce new regulations about IT services and intelligent mobile utilities".



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