Webroot Study Finds 43% of Firms Hit with Malware

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The security vendor's State of Internet Security report surveys 600 companies on their experiences with malware threats.

A new report by Webroot Software has found that more than 40 percent of companies surveyed had been hit with malware that disrupted their business.

Webroot's State of Internet Security report details the cost and legal implications to businesses of malware threats. Using the company's Phileas automated spyware research system, Webroot researchers discovered that 4.2 million of 250 million URLs around the world harbor malware. Almost 3 million of those malicious sites were discovered in 2006 alone, company officials reported.

In addition, the study said 26 percent of the more than 600 enterprises surveyed reported that confidential information had been compromised as a result of spyware.

"Our research has shown that the methods of infection, which just a short time ago were considered incredibly advanced, are now commonplace, demonstrating how quickly today's threats are evolving into a global security concern," Peter Watkins, CEO for Webroot, based in Boulder, Colo., said in a statement. "Despite the growth and severity of malware, over 60 percent of businesses don't have a security plan. Businesses need to control this threat by adequately protecting themselves and their customers."

Recent studies by other security vendors have found a high percentage of malicious activity originating from networks in the United States. A report from Finjan released earlier in March found 90 percent of the URLs containing malicious code that were discovered in its UK-focused study resided on servers located in the United States or United Kingdom. Symantec found similarly in its recent Internet Security Threat report that the United States had spawned 31 percent of the worldwide total for malicious activity during the period studied.

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