

Mobile-security services take off

September 26 2011, By Byron Acohido

The prospect of consumers and employees physically losing information-packed mobile devices, or getting them hacked, has become the driver for a red-hot sector of the tech industry: supplying mobile security.

Research company IDC says global spending on [mobile security](#) is on track to balloon to \$1.9 billion by 2015, up from \$407 million in 2010.

PC anti-virus companies [Symantec](#), McAfee, Trend Micro and Webroot, among others, are stepping up their efforts to market their mobile-security services to consumers.

A subscription, which typically costs about \$30 a year, includes anti-virus protection, backup [data storage](#) and technology to locate a lost or stolen mobile device. Some offerings also include safe browsing, parental monitoring and the ability to remotely lock a missing device and even wipe clean all the [sensitive data](#) it contains.

"Security is not just about anti-virus anymore," says Kevin Mahaffey, [chief technical officer](#) of Lookout Mobile Security, which specializes in security services for [Android](#) and BlackBerry [handsets](#). "Security involves everything that could go wrong with your mobile device."

The threat was highlighted recently after someone hacked into starlet Scarlett Johansson's text messages and circulated nude photos of the actress.

Other players are moving to cash in. AT&T recently announced a

partnership with Juniper Networks to develop a mobile-security platform for businesses and consumers. New security software, delivered over AT&T-supplied Wi-Fi connections, is expected to be available later this year, with a subscription.

"Everyone recognizes that [mobile devices](#) have gone from being a convenience to being a necessity," says Ed Amoroso, chief security officer at AT&T.

Mobile devices are "uniquely more sensitive than PCs," because "the device is with you all the time," says Trend Micro's Tarek Alawdeen.

Results of a recent Symantec survey of 12,704 respondents in 24 nations found that only 16 percent installed the most up-to-date security on their devices, while 10 percent reported being the victim of a mobile-related cybercrime.

The security companies are banking on a rising percentage of consumers and businesses finding value in spending about \$30 a year on a subscription service to protect each of their mobile devices, says Stacy Crook, senior research analyst at IDC.

"We'll have to see how the market shakes out. It could be a very good business to be in, especially if users have to pay for it every year," Crook says.

(c)2011

Distributed by MCT Information Services

Citation: Mobile-security services take off (2011, September 26) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2011-09-mobile-security.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private

study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.