



BSG/PR/05

Spam back as top email security threat

Junk email bigger problem than viruses

3rd July 2006 - More than half (53%) of UK businesses rate junk email as the most pressing email security threat, almost twice the urgency given to virus protection, according to research carried out by Vanson Bourne on behalf of Business Systems Group (BSG).

Indeed, whilst spam represents the most pressing threat to email security, followed closely by physically insecure devices and inadequate patching, only 30% saw inadequate virus protection as the top threat. Physically insecure devices were rated as the biggest threat by 2 in 5 directors, whilst over a third (36%) said patching was the top problem.

The research also identified the fact that spam is a particular problem for larger companies.

It echoes the findings of international spam monitoring organisation Spamhaus, which reports that almost 75% of all email traffic arriving at ISPs' servers is now spam. It predicts that: "By mid-2006 spam could reach 95% of all email traffic and we may see visible signs of the beginning of a slow meltdown of email delivery systems caused by overloaded email queues and stressed spam filters."

Simon Ratcliffe, head of managed services, BSG comments: "No one can doubt that there have been huge leaps forward against junk email: from both a legislative and technological perspective there has been a concerted effort to shut down spammers. We have ourselves seen it decrease as an issue amongst our client base. However, it seems this has not been enough and if more than a third of UK businesses are still

battling junk email. This is especially true in the manufacturing sector where over half of respondents – 59% - said it was the top threat.

“The two questions this research throws up are these: if spam is still such an issue, how can we get it back under control? And secondly, does the low rating given to viruses mean companies are confident that they are now on top of that issue?”

“As email technology is converged into other messaging systems to create powerful toolsets for businesses the two issues of spam and viruses will once again take centre stage. Organisations will need to investigate options to ensure their communications systems, email included, can continue to function.”

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For a full breakdown of questions asked and answers please contact the above. 100 UK IT directors in companies of more than 1000 employees were interviewed by Vanson Bourne in May 2006.

Simon Ratcliffe is available for interview