



Attackers Have Successfully Hit the Nation's Largest Corporations – Their Onslaught On SMBs Will be Worse – Are You Prepared?

Leading Managed Technology Services Provider Shares How SMBs Can Protect Themselves from Cyberattacks and Ransomware Threats

SAVANNAH, GA – June 22 2021 – The nation's largest corporations, like Adobe, eBay, Equifax, LinkedIn, Marriott, Target, and Yahoo have all been affected by cybersecurity breaches. While many of these breaches have been widely publicized, they only represent a small fraction of the attempted cyberattacks, which the modern business owner now faces.

As a result of these breaches, we are beginning to see cybercriminals become more emboldened, targeting more critical infrastructure in an effort to demand heftier sums. In fact, recently the Colonial Pipeline, which is responsible for supplying 45% of the fuel for the East Coast, was hit with a ransomware attack. This halted gas distribution, sending customers into "panic buying" throughout the East Coast and eventually cost \$4.4 million to restore. Meanwhile, JBS, one of the nation's largest meat processors who is responsible for 20% U.S.'s meat supply, was also hit with a ransomware attack that they eventually paid \$11 million to resolve. While most small to mid-

sized businesses (SMBs) are aware of the growing threats posed by cybercriminals, they are failing to recognize if large corporations can't even protect themselves how can they.

Integrated Network Solutions has been educating business owners on the challenges that a breach, virus or phishing attack could have on any organization, and its best summarized by this statistic from the National Cyber Security Alliance, "60 percent of small and mid-sized businesses that are hacked go out of business within six months." While daunting, all this statistic actually reveals is that any preventative actions taken now, could have dramatic impacts on helping an SMB avoid these kinds of disruptions. "It's always a delicate balance," stated Richard Neal, President & CEO of Integrated Network Solutions Inc.. "We consider it our duty to inform businesses on how to defend themselves, so that they don't have to worry about these sorts of nuisances affecting them."

While an anti-virus and firewall may have been an effective security measure in the early 1990s, technology has evolved dramatically since then. There are many other technology systems available that can fortify

any SMB's defenses so that they are fully prepared and protected. Here are 6 steps that an SMB can take to protect its staff, customers, and future from cybersecurity attacks.

1. Use "Layers of Security" - Taking a layered approach to security enables damage to be quarantined, while simultaneously reducing the severity of any attack. This can easily be set up as long as the network administrator has taken good care to keep the infrastructure well-organized and properly maintained.

2. Activate Multi-Factor Authentication - Most companies now require multi-factor authentication upon logging into key systems, requiring the user to confirm their identity before proceeding further, via text message or phone call. While this is likely to become ubiquitous across all platforms, especially cloud apps, other internal technology systems need to be configured to provide this basic, yet extremely effective layer of security.

3. Have a Data Backup or Data Recovery Plan - In the event of a breach or an outage, it's extremely useful to have all key data duplicated and stored securely in a remote location. Not only does this thwart less

sophisticated cybercriminals who are counting on their target to be underprepared, but it eliminates the downtime that any breach or outage could cause, while employees “get things back up to speed.”

4. Use a SOC (Security Operations Center) - In the same way that residential homes are supported by a remote security center, with 24/7 monitoring, notification and authority alerting capabilities, your team’s devices should be similarly supported, as well. A good SOC will monitor network traffic, endpoints, logs, security events, etc., so that analysts can use this information to identify vulnerabilities and prevent breaches. When a suspicious activity is detected, your platform should create an alert, indicating further investigation is required.

5. Mandatory Cybersecurity Trainings for Employees - Unfortunately, “human error” is one of the main causes of most security breaches. If a company has not mandated cybersecurity trainings for employees, then undereducated employees can accidentally serve as a hacker’s greatest ally. These employee trainings do not take very much time to complete and they can be configured to track and confirm employee progress.

6. Remove All IT Tasks from the Owner’s List of Responsibilities - Not only is the CEO typically one of the people with the least amount of technical know-how in the company, but the time consumption required to build an adequate cyber defense strategy is sizable. While CEOs typically feel an obligation to keep their team protected, CEOs

should be spending the majority of their time thinking strategically and focusing on how to create more opportunities for revenue growth, not tinkering with IT tools that they don’t have full mastery over.

While hackers continue to search for targets, the steps outlined above are immediately actionable and will serve as a solid foundation for the majority of businesses that wish to prepare themselves for the coming trend.

ABOUT INTEGRATED NETWORK SOLUTIONS INC.

Integrated Network Solutions Inc. (INS) is a Savannah, Georgia based converged technology company. INS was incorporated in 1990 to provide high quality, cost-effective voice and data services with an emphasis on mutually beneficial business relationships. INS’ unique approach to the technical service business allows us to tailor the right mix of services to most effectively meet your needs.

For more information on INS, call (912) 966-5470 or visit us at www.phonesav.com.