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Cyber Security Top Tip 5

Incident Response Plan



For our penultimate top tip I would like to discuss incident response plans.

Most of us are familiar with Business Continuity and most of you will have no doubt been involved, or should have been involved, in a simulation exercise by which perhaps your office was inaccessible and you had to make alternative arrangements about carrying on business as usual. These processes should include sufficient plans and detail by which someone external to your organisation could pick them up and understand what to do.

An element of Business Continuity, which is sometimes overlooked, are Cyber incidents which impact upon the availability or integrity of your systems or information.

As an example, the DD4BC team which has targeted Channel Island organisations in recent months. Their modus operandi is to perform a Distributed Denial Of Service (DDOS) attack and then contact you for payment to stop it from happening. How would you cope with this situation? What would your clients do either if they were unable to access the internet service you provide or email you for assistance?

In a similar vein there are thousands of malicious software attacks every day with a significant number of them considered Ransomware, these attacks if successful will encrypt the network server data and hold it to ransom. The software once activated will display a countdown clock and timer, if you haven't paid when the time runs out, the encryption key used to obfuscate your files is deleted ensuring you have to do full recovery, but even paying the ransom doesn't ensure you get the files back. Do your processes provide for an eventuality such as this? Does your Business Continuity rely on the live replication of data? In other words would your continuity process replicate the encrypted data wiping out your backup as well?

As part of the current proposed EU data protection legislation changes it will become a mandatory requirement

for any company processing the data of EU nationals to notify when there has been a data breach. Handling that breach and understanding the impact of it needs careful management and appropriate processes, which again would not be covered by normal business continuity processes.

So what can you do about it? Well make sure you have a specific Incident Response plan in place which provides for key processes that may be required in the event of an incident.

Key processes and roles should be assigned. Given the nature of an incident you might need to have legal representation and specialist support from data forensic experts. The plan should deal effectively with security incidents by investigating the cause, resolutions and lessons learned to reduce the likelihood of the incident reoccurring in the future. Of course the plan should be tested, maintained and updated on a periodic basis in line with your other continuity documentation.

Fail to prepare and you prepare to fail, effective Cyber Security is a journey not a destination.

Minimise the threat of cyber attacks to your organisation.

Call Matthew Parker for a consultation.



Matthew Parker

Senior Manager

T +44 (0)1481 753467

E matthew.parker@gt-ci.com



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Grant Thornton Limited
PO Box 313 Lefebvre House
Lefebvre Street St Peter Port
Guernsey C.I. GY1 3TF

Grant Thornton Limited
Kensington Chambers
46/50 Kensington Place
St Helier, Jersey C.I. JE1 1ET

www.gt-ci.com



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