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Recent Information Security Development in Hong Kong

Hon Keung YAU*

Systems Engineering and Engineering Management, City University of Hong Kong, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong
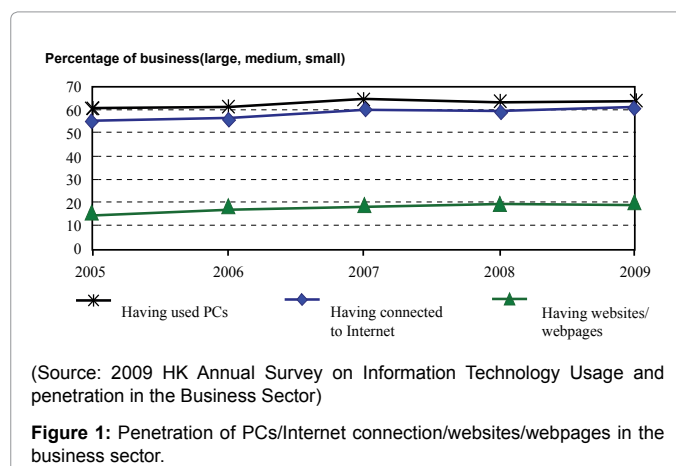
Introduction

In the 21th century, increasing number of business uses computers in the daily business operation. Figure 1 shows that businesses become rely more and more on computers over the years. According to 2009 HK Annual Survey on Information Technology Usage and Penetration in the Business Sector, the usage of PC increased which is positively proportion with the size of companies. Around 99.4% of the large business had used PCs, 89.9% for medium business and 59.8% for small business. The percentage of establishments having Internet connection was 85.6% of medium business and 57.0% of small business respectively. This reflected that Internet had become an important means of communication in most of the establishments.

The advent of the IT revolution has bought the ability to gather, store, process and transfer large quantities of information over the internet and intranet. Unfortunately, this resulted a new challenges faced by businesses which is the protection of information. Information Security becomes hot issue, as it is the key ingredient that driving business, most businesses cannot function if this ingredient is not available or is unreliable. Availability, integrity and confidentiality of information are paramount concerns today.

IT Security

The findings of Symantec Corp 2009 SMB Disaster Preparedness Survey said that Hong Kong Small Medium Enterprise (SMEs) have the most casual attitude towards information though slightly more than 60% of them plan to increase IT security and storage in 2009 [1]. Although organizations have increased their spending on instituting information security controls, the number security breaches have not been decreased. Only 38% of them had" extreme importance on information protection" and 56% placed extreme importance on protecting the network, ranking the lowest across all Asian Pacific and Japan countries. Because of the casual attitude, information security incidents happened frequently in Hong Kong SMEs.

From Table 1, majority of establishments had information

Percentage of business(large, medium, small)

(Source: 2009 HK Annual Survey on Information Technology Usage and penetration in the Business Sector)

Figure 1: Penetration of PCs/Internet connection/websites/webpages in the business sector.

	No of established having suffered from that type of information security incidents	Number of information security incidents (%)					
		1-10	11-20	21-30	31-50	>50	unknown
Type of information security incidents(1)							
Computer Virus	37141	99.1	0.5	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Denial of Service	2359	82.2	17.3	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0
Hacking	2219	98.9	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Leakage of information	96	98.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5
Theft of information	83	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Others	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Any combination of the Above	38350	97.5	1.8	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.1

Source: 2009 HK Annual Survey on Informaton Technology Usage and Penetration Business Sector

Table 1: Distribution of establishments having suffered from information security incidents by the type of information.

security incidents in the twelve months before enumeration. Most of them suffered from the following problem one to ten times: theft of information (100%), Computer Virus (99.1%), Hacking (98.9%), leakage of information (98.5%). And 97.5% of them had ay combinations of the above problems. It showed the problem about information security is serious.

Lack of information security tools and plans primary effect the privacy of businesses, sharp increase in the number of security violations resulted. At the same time, the confidence of their customers must be affected. From Symantec 2009 Survey, near 80% of SMEs in Hong Kong have changed vendors, as they felt their vendor's computers or technology systems were unreliable. So information security is really important to all businesses, especially SMEs.

Conclusion

To solve these problems, enterprises need to develop their methods and procedures to preserve the confidentiality and integrity of the information, so as to ensure the availability of the information systems and to enforce the accountability of the users.

Reference

1. Hong Kong SAR Census and Statistics Department (2009) HK Annual Survey on Information Technology Usage and Penetration in the Business Sector.

***Corresponding author:** Hon Keung YAU, Systems Engineering and Engineering Management, City University of Hong Kong, Kowloon Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong, E-mail: honkyau@cityu.edu.hk