Threat actors diversify their toolkits throughout pandemic with DNS attacks costing nearly $1 million each

Almost 90% of organizations have experienced a DNS attack, a rise from last year according to 2021 Global DNS Threat Report

Vulnerabilities from remote working and cloud usage have led to rapid increase in phishing, DNS domain hijacking and cloud instance misconfiguration abuse

JUNE 7, 2021 -- PARIS: EfficientIP, a leading provider of network security and automation solutions specializing in DDI (DNS-DHCP-IPAM), has announced the results of its 2021 Global DNS Threat Report. The annual sponsored research, which was conducted by leading market intelligence firm International Data Corporation (IDC), sheds light on the frequency of the different types of DNS attack and the associated costs for the last year throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nearly 90% of organizations (87%) experienced DNS attacks, with the average cost of each attack around $950,000. The Report shows that organizations across all industries suffered an average 7.6 attacks this past year. These figures illustrate the pivotal role of DNS for network security, both as a threat vector and security objective.

In terms of regional damage from DNS attacks, North America continued to have the highest average cost of attack at $1,031,210. This is a modest decrease by about 4% from the year prior. Countries which saw significant increase in damages included Malaysia which increased by 78%, the sharpest increase, as well as India, Spain and France also seeing significant increases of 32%, 36% and 25%, respectively. Notably, damages in the U.K. declined by 27%.

The report has found that, throughout the past year during the pandemic, attackers have increasingly targeted the cloud, profiting from the reliance on off-premise working and cloud infrastructures. Around a quarter of companies have suffered a DNS attack abusing cloud misconfiguration, with almost half of companies (47%) suffering cloud service downtime as a result of DNS attacks.

The Threat Report, now in its seventh year, also found a sharp rise in data theft via DNS, with 26% of organizations reporting sensitive customer information stolen compared to 16% in 2020's Threat Report.

Evidence shows attackers are targeting more organizations and diversifying their toolkit—sometimes drastically. Threat actors relied on domain hijacking, where the user is connected not to the desired service but to a fake one, more than twice as often as last year. This year phishing also continued to grow in popularity (49% of companies experienced phishing attempts), as did malware-based attacks (38%), and traditional DDoS attacks (29%).

Although the cost and variety of attacks remains high, there is a growing awareness of DNS security and how to combat these attacks. 76% of respondents in the 2021 Threat Report deemed DNS security a critical component of their network architecture. Additionally, the report found Zero Trust is evolving as a tool to protect networks in the remote era. 75% of companies are planning, implementing or running Zero Trust initiatives and 43% of companies believe DNS domain deny and allow lists are highly valuable for Zero Trust for improving control over access to apps. The full 2021 Global DNS Threat Report is available online. Read the full report here: https://www.efficientip.com/resources/idc-dns-threat-report-2021/

NOTE TO EDITORS

ABOUT THE 2021 DNS THREAT REPORT

The research was conducted by IDC from January to March 2021. The data collected represents respondents' experience for the previous year. The results are based on 1,114 respondents from companies with 500 or more employees. Respondents came from three regions - North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. Respondents included CISOs, CIOs, CTOs, IT Managers, Security Managers and Network Managers.

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