Trend Micro Finds 72% of Remote Workers Have Gained Cybersecurity Awareness During Lockdown

Survey reveals users take security training seriously, but may still engage in risky behaviour

LONDON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Trend Micro Incorporated (TYO: 4704; TSE: 4704), a global leader in cybersecurity solutions, today released survey results that show how remote workers address cybersecurity. Nearly three quarters (72%) of remote workers say they are more conscious of their organisation's cybersecurity policies since lockdown began, but many are breaking the rules anyway due to limited understanding or resource constraints.

Trend Micro's *Head in the Clouds* study is distilled from interviews with 13,200 remote workers across 27 countries on their attitudes towards corporate cybersecurity and IT policies. It reveals that there has never been a better time for companies to take advantage of heightened employee cybersecurity awareness. The survey reveals that the approach businesses take to training is critical to ensure secure practices are being followed.

The results indicate a high level of security awareness, with 85% of respondents claiming they take instructions from their IT team seriously, and 81% agree that cybersecurity within their organisation is partly their responsibility. Additionally, 64% acknowledge that using non-work applications on a corporate device is a security risk.

However, just because most people understand the risks does not mean they stick to the rules.

For example:

- 56% of employees admit to using a non-work application on a corporate device, and 66% of them have actually uploaded corporate data to that application.
- 80% of respondents confess to using their work laptop for personal browsing, and only 36% of them fully restrict the sites they visit.
- 39% of respondents say they often or always access corporate data from a personal device – almost certainly breaking corporate security policy.
- 8% of respondents admit to watching / accessing porn on their work laptop, and 7% access the dark web.

Productivity still wins out over protection for many users. A third of respondents (34%) agree that they do not give much thought to whether the apps they use are sanctioned by IT or not, as they just want the job done. Additionally, 29% think they can get away with using a non-work application, as the solutions provided by their company are 'nonsense.'

Dr Linda K. Kaye, Cyberpsychology Academic at Edge Hill University explains: "There are a great number of individual differences across the workforce. This can include individual employee's values, accountability within their organisation, as well as aspects of their personality, all of which are important factors which drive people's behaviours. To develop more effective cybersecurity training and practices, more attention should be paid to these factors. This, in turn, can help organisations adopt more tailored or bespoke cybersecurity training with their employees, which may be more effective."

"In today's interconnected world, unashamedly ignoring cybersecurity guidance is no longer a viable option for employees," said Bharat Mistry, Principal Security Strategist, Trend Micro. "It's encouraging to see that so many take the advice from their corporate IT team seriously. Having said that, there are individuals who are either blissfully ignorant or worse still who think cybersecurity is not applicable them and will regularly flouter the rules. Hence having a one size fits all security awareness programme is a non-starter as diligent employees often end up being penalised. A tailored training programme designed to cater for employees may be more effective."

The *Head in the Clouds* study looks into the psychology of people's behaviour in terms of cybersecurity, including their attitudes towards risk. It presents several common information security "personas" with the aim of helping organisations tailor their cybersecurity strategy in the right way for the right employee.

About Trend Micro
Trend Micro Incorporated, a global leader in cybersecurity solutions, helps to make the world safe for exchanging digital information. Our innovative solutions for consumers, businesses, and governments provide layered security for data centers, cloud environments, networks, and endpoints. All our products work together to seamlessly share threat intelligence and provide a connected threat defense with centralized visibility and control, enabling better, faster protection. With more than 6,000 employees in over 50 countries and the world's most advanced global threat intelligence, Trend Micro secures your connected world. For more information, visit www.trendmicro.com.

Contacts

Media Contact:
Funda Cizgenakad
media_relations@trendmicro.com

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