Trend Micro Blocked 8.8 Million COVID-19 Threats in the First Half of 2020

Overall, 27.8 billion threats were stopped, 93% of which were email-based

DALLAS, Aug. 26, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Trend Micro Incorporated (TYO: 4704; TSE: 4704), the leader in cloud security, today released its annual mid-year roundup report, which reveals COVID-19 related threats as the single largest type of threat in the first half of the year. In just six months, Trend Micro blocked 8.8 million COVID-19 related threats, nearly 92% of which were email-based.

Cybercriminals shifted their focus from January through June to take advantage of global interest in the pandemic. The risk to businesses was compounded by security gaps created by a completely remote workforce.

"The pandemic has dominated all of our lives during the first half of 2020, but it's not slowing down the cybercriminals," said Myla Pilao, director of technical marketing for Trend Micro. "IT leaders must continue to adapt their cybersecurity strategies to account for increased threats to their new normal. That means protecting remote endpoints, cloud systems, user credentials and VPN systems, as well as refreshing training courses to turn that newly dispersed workforce into a more effective first line of defense."

In total, Trend Micro blocked 27.8 billion cyber threats in the first half of 2020, 93% of which were email-borne.

Business Email Compromise (BEC) detections increased by 19% from the second half of 2019, in part due to scammers trying to capitalize on home workers being more exposed to social engineering.

Among all the threats in the first half of the year, ransomware was a constant factor. Although the number of detected ransomware threats decreased, Trend Micro saw a 45% increase in new ransomware families compared to the same time last year.

Global organizations have also been burdened by a significant spike in newly disclosed vulnerabilities. Trend Micro's Zero Day Initiative (ZDI) published a total of 786 advisories, representing a 74% increase from the second half of 2019. Some of these came as part of Microsoft Patch Tuesday updates, which have fixed an average of 103 CVEs per month so far in 2020 — including the largest number of patches ever issued in a single month (129) in June.

Trend Micro also observed a 16% increase in vulnerabilities disclosed in industrial control systems (ICS), compared to the first half of 2019, which could create major challenges for smart factory owners and other organizations running IIoT environments.

To effectively protect dispersed corporate networks, Gartner recommends businesses "refine security monitoring capabilities to reflect an operating environment where network traffic patterns, data and system access vectors have changed due to increased remote and mobile operations.[1]" Trend Micro XDR helps customers do exactly that by correlating security events across the entire IT environment, which is critical for holistic protection in the second half of 2020.

To learn more about the threat landscape in the first half of 2020 and how businesses can stay secure moving forward, read the full report here: https://www.trendmicro.com/vinfo/us/security/research-and-analysis/threat-reports/roundup/securing-the-pandemic-disrupted-workplace-trend-micro-2020-midyear-cybersecurity-report.

About Trend Micro
Trend Micro, a global leader in cybersecurity, helps make the world safe for exchanging digital information. Leveraging over 30 years of security expertise, global threat research, and continuous innovation, Trend Micro enables resilience for businesses, governments, and consumers with connected solutions across cloud workloads, endpoints, email, IIoT, and networks. Our XGen™ security strategy powers our solutions with a cross-generational blend of threat-defense techniques that are optimized for key environments and leverage shared threat intelligence for better, faster protection. With over 6,700 employees in 65 countries, and the world's most advanced global threat research and intelligence, Trend Micro enables organizations to secure their connected world. www.trendmicro.com.

[1] Gartner, Be Resilient: Prepare to Treat Cyber Risk Following the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak by Focusing on These 7 Areas, April 17, 2020

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