The Cyber Advisor
Monthly Newsletter

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total
Digital Security

April Letter

Hi there,

Email attacks are off the charts, and it's getting worse. More on that later - it's part of a bigger story.

Cyber Attacks on Affluent Families is Rising

Hillard Heintze is one of the leading security risk management firms in the world, and Steve Bova is Vice President for their Private Client + Family Office division. He's a colleague with deep experience in security and law enforcement, especially in technological and cyber activities.

On March, 8th, Mr. Bova wrote:

"For many of our private clients, we are seeing evidence that cyber-criminals are employing the same methods they use in corporate espionage to target them and the offices that support them.

Several of the schemes our team has encountered recently are very sophisticated and contain elements that corporate entities are tracking and trying to counter with protective strategies.

Wealthy families are an attractive target for cyber-attacks because their cyber defense systems are usually not as robust as those in a corporate environment supported by a full team of experienced information security experts with access to advanced technology and robust practices, procedures and training."

Steve Bova, Hillard Heintze, March 8th.

Read Bova's report in the tile below, but the point is about the trickle-down effect of technology in cybercrime. Digital trickle-down is increasing hacker sophistication while decreasing target-size profiles of potential victims.

The Personalization of Cyber Risk

The "personalization" of cyber risk was an emerging trend in 2012, and it's why I started TDS the next year.

Working with private banks, family offices, and wealthy clients, I had an early view of what was coming. Sophisticated cyber attacks mass-targeting individuals and personal technology for criminal motives would soon become one of society's greatest challenges.

"Cyber attacks are the #1 threat to mankind today."

Warren Buffett on May 6th 2017 – Berkshire Hathaway Annual Shareholder Meeting.

Criminals go where the money is. Cyber crimes have high profits with potentially big upsides and are easy-pickings compared to their physical form. Chances of getting caught in the act are low, and digital loot is easy to clean.

Cyber is a perfect crime, and it's growing over internet highways that provide fast, unfettered access directly to our digital doors; front and back. These entrances are online and still mostly open, unguarded. and unlocked. Now, criminals, cartels, lawless governments, militaries and the marginalized everywhere are looking to get in.
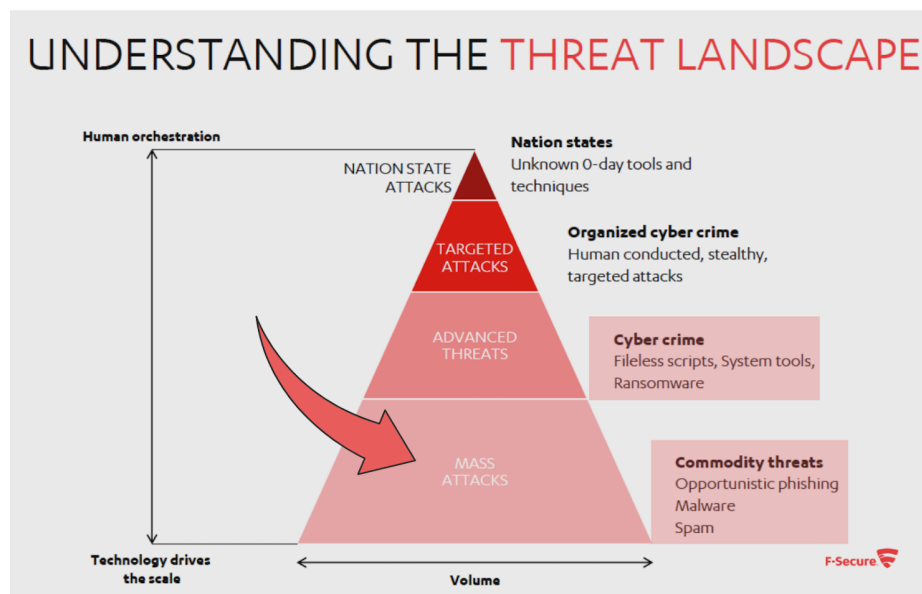
What's It Mean?

The digital equivalent of financial theft, fraud, blackmail, and extortion are on the rise, and crimes committed against anyone with anything to lose is fast becoming a mainstream activity.

Cybercrime will soon be a big problem for more than just the wealthy. The nature of cybercrime and the lure of easy money in a troubled society points to a vast pool of potential victims with trillions of dollars at stake.

"Opportunistic" Mass Attacks are the Future

The mega-trend in cybercrime is mass-targeted "opportunistic attacks" against the vulnerable and unprepared. That's us using personal technology without an IT security department, compliance officer, or government regulator to keep us on our toes.

Here's a chart by F-Secure Labs illustrating how "opportunistic" attacks have already become the most active cyber-related threat today:

UNDERSTANDING THE THREAT LANDSCAPE

Human orchestration

NATION STATE ATTACKS

Nation states
Unknown 0-day tools and techniques

TARGETED ATTACKS

Organized cyber crime
Human conducted, stealthy, targeted attacks

ADVANCED THREATS

Cyber crime
Fileless scripts, System tools, Ransomware

MASS ATTACKS

Commodity threats
Opportunistic phishing
Malware
Spam

Technology drives the scale

Volume

F-Secure

It's the bottom piece of the chart that we need to watch - the **Mass Attacks**. These are opportunistic exploits in volume. At this stage in the cybercrime mega-trend anyone anywhere can use sophisticated hacking tools to quickly profit from easy prey.

Fueled with an infinite source of detailed personal information, the low-hanging fruit is all that stands between a perpetrator and their piece of the trillions of dollars at hand. Over the next 5-years, it's the mass-opportunistic attacks where most of the damage will be done.

Email is Attack Vector #1

And that brings us full circle to email.

If our digital home has a front door it's our personal email account. Most users do nothing to protect and secure their email so it's not surprising most cybercrime activity starts at the inbox.

"Today, a new generation of cybercriminal organizations is the driving force behind rapidly-evolving, socially-engineered email threats that grow more dangerous by the day."

Agari, an email security company in their Q1-2019 report.

The best thing you can do to avoid loss and damage from cybercrime starts with thinking differently about email.

Privatizing email moves your activity off the grid and away from most of the risk and abuse online, and it's core to what we do. If you're still using Yahoo Mail, AOL, Hotmail, MSN, or their equivalents, contact us here or reply to me to see your options and how to find Cybersecurity for Life with a private email of your own.

Thanks for reading,

Brad

Brad Deflin

Cyber Attacks on Affluent Families

Steve Bova from Hillard Heintze on "Cyber-Criminals' Latest Targets: Ultra-High Net Worth Families, Offices and Businesses."

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The Best Browser for Privacy and Security?

They say we search the internet. In reality, the internet searches us. Without controls, what we do on a browser is watched and recorded

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How to Encrypt and Share Files for Free.

The most useful tool for cybersecurity is encryption. Sharing encrypted documents and files online is now simple and free.

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IN SECURITY EVERYDAY RESULTS MATTER

5 times winner of Best Protection award

6 out of 6 on AV Test for Overall Protection since the beginning of 2014

No other vendor can show this track record

F-Secure Rated #1 Again

F-Secure provides the technology behind our managed cybersecurity for computers and Androids. They won the "Best Protection" award by AV-Test for 2018 marking the sixth time achieving the first place award since 2011.

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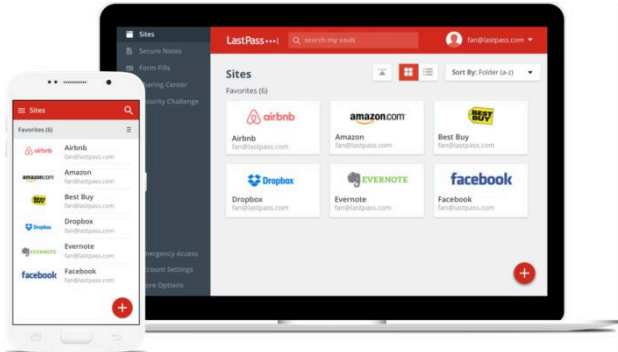
Our Top Pick for Password Manager

Enter our newest top-recommended product is **LastPass** for password management.

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The Art and Science of a Great Password

A great password is one that won't be hacked and yet is easy to remember. Here is a method that accomplishes both.

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