Trend Micro: 90% of IT Decision Makers Believe Organizations Compromise on Cybersecurity in Favor of Other Goals

Trend Micro study reveals urgent need for new way to discuss business risk

DALLAS, Nov. 15, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Trend Micro Incorporated (TYO: 4704; TSE: 4704), a global cybersecurity leader, today announced new research* revealing that 90% of IT decision makers claim their business would be willing to compromise on cybersecurity in favor of digital transformation, productivity, or other goals. Additionally, 82% have felt pressured to downplay the severity of cyber risks to their board.

To read a full copy of the report, please visit:https://www.trendmicro.com/explore/en_gb_trendmicro-global-risk-study

"IT leaders are self-censoring in front of their boards for fear of appearing repetitive or too negative, with almost a third claiming this is a constant pressure. But this will only perpetuate a vicious cycle where the C-suite remains ignorant of its true risk exposure," said Bharat Mistry, UK technical director for Trend Micro. "We need to talk about risk in a way that frames cybersecurity as a fundamental driver of business growth – helping to bring together IT and business leaders who, in reality, are both fighting for the same cause."

"IT decision makers should never have to downplay the severity of cyber risks to the Board. But they may need to modify their language so both sides understand each other," said Phil Gough, Head of Information Security and Assurance at Nuffield Health. "That's the first step to aligning business-cybersecurity strategy, and it's a crucial one. Articulating cyber risks in business terms will get them the attention they deserve, and help the C-suite to recognise security as a growth enabler, not a block on innovation."

The research reveals that just 50% of IT leaders and 38% of business decision makers believe the C-suite completely understand cyber risks. Although some think this is because the topic is complex and constantly changing, many believe the C-suite either doesn't try hard enough (26%) or doesn't want (20%) to understand.

There's also disagreement between IT and business leaders over who's ultimately responsible for managing and mitigating risk. IT leaders are nearly twice as likely as business leaders to point to IT teams and the CISO. 49% of respondents claim that cyber risks are still being treated as an IT problem rather than a business risk.

This friction is causing potentially serious issues: 52% of respondents agree that their organization's attitude to cyber risk is inconsistent and varies from month to month.

However, 31% of respondents believe cybersecurity is the biggest business risk today, and 66% claiming it has the highest cost impact of any business risk – a seemingly conflicting opinion given the overall willingness to compromise on security.

There are three main ways respondents believe the C-suite will sit up and take notice of cyber risk:

- 62% think it would take a breach of their organization
- 62% it would help if they could better report on and more easily explain the business risk of cyber threats
- 61% say it would make an impact if customers start demanding more sophisticated security credentials

"To make cybersecurity a board-level issue, the C-suite must come to view it as a true business enabler," said Marc Walsh, Enterprise Security Architect at Coillte. "This will prompt IT and security leaders to articulate their challenges to the board in the language of business risk. And it will require prioritized, proactive investments from the boardroom – not just band-aid solutions following a breach."

**Trend Micro commissioned Sapio Research to interview 5321 IT and business decision makers from enterprises larger than 250 employees across 26 countries.*

About Trend Micro

Trend Micro, a global cybersecurity leader, helps make the world safe for exchanging digital information. Fueled by decades of security expertise, global threat research, and continuous innovation, Trend Micro's cybersecurity platform protects hundreds of thousands of organizations and millions of individuals across clouds, networks, devices, and endpoints. As a leader in cloud and enterprise cybersecurity, the platform delivers a powerful range of advanced threat defense techniques optimized for environments like AWS, Microsoft, and Google, and central visibility for better, faster detection and response. With 7,000 employees across 65 countries, Trend Micro enables organizations to simplify and secure their connected world. www.TrendMicro.com.

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