

Corporate under-reporting of cybercrime: An investigation into its extent and consequences

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Technical Report

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## Executive Summary

Reporting crimes to law enforcement agencies is the starting point for any crime response or criminal investigation process. Without reporting crimes cannot be investigated and prosecutions cannot be pursued, furthermore effective response strategies cannot be developed. Despite the importance of cybercrime reporting, many evidential sources suggest a prevalence of corporate under-reporting of cybercrime. Exploration of corporate under-reporting of cybercrime is an area of academic scholarship within which there is a current lack of coverage. This study investigates the extent and consequences of corporate under-reporting, pursues greater understanding of potential barriers to reporting and considers potential strategies to improve reporting cultures.

Under-reporting of cybercrime is a difficult topic to investigate, with corporates unlikely to publicly discuss issues relating to cybercrime victimisation or reporting positions. This qualitative research study was undertaken by , anonymously interviewing 12 seasoned information security professionals, including Chief Information Security Officers, threat intelligence experts, and senior executives of security service providers and consultancies, to explore a cross section of information security industry views on corporate under-reporting of cybercrime, analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2008) thematic analysis method.

This study finds growing trends of general accessibility to cybercrime tools and services, with a rising tide of cyber-attack sophistication, identifying links between organised crime and the cyber-attacks routinely affecting corporates. Interview participants identify that most corporates do not report cybercrimes to law enforcement agencies. I argue that these trends in combination make corporate under-reporting an important and timely issue to examine.