



## Anti-virus and the Battle against Malware

The number and variety of cyber-attacks faced by organisations continues to grow daily. Businesses of all sizes and across all industries are being targeted. To compound the problem, the attack surface is becoming greater and more varied with the proliferation of mobile devices, Cloud services and BYOD (Bring Your Own Device). This is creating a major headache for security professionals trying to counter this growing threat.

### Ransomware

The enormous global press coverage of recent ransomware attacks put cyber security front of mind for many organisations. The term “ransomware” was probably new to many people until they switched on the news a week ago or tried to keep an appointment at a local NHS hospital. However, ransomware is not a new issue, but is a multi-billion dollar problem.

### Damaging Fallout

Besides the immediate monetary loss, the longer-term fallout from a malware attack can be devastating. There’s the public relations nightmare and reputational damage done to the brand.



Other consequences include regulatory compliance issues, legal action, operational disruption, lost customers, cancelled contracts, raised insurance premiums and difficulty obtaining credit. In a 2017 global study, over 30% of firms reported a loss of revenue and nearly 25% lost customers as a result of a data breach.

### Think Data Breach

Unfortunately, there is no such thing as 100% security. However, you can take precautions and safeguards to protect your data, reduce the likelihood of being a victim of an attack, and ensure you can recover quickly should the worst happen. Many CIOs now think in terms of when will our organisation suffer a breach, and how will we respond to minimise the impact. Although there is no silver bullet of data protection, you can take a number of precautions. In the remainder of this blog, we will look at anti-virus as a crucial piece of your security puzzle.

### Security at the Endpoint

So why is anti-virus important? Anti-virus is a key component of endpoint protection and is used to prevent, detect and remove malicious software. It helps protect against a variety of threats including viruses, ransomware, Trojans, worms and many other types of attacks. If you don't have anti-virus software deployed across all of your devices we recommend you address this immediately.



### Question the Status Quo

If you already have anti-virus, it is still worth asking the question: does it give your organisation the right level of protection you need? Do you regularly audit your systems to ensure that all your endpoints (PCs, tablets and mobiles) have anti-virus software installed, and are they running the latest definitions? This is a critical point, as many organisations deploy anti-virus software as a 'set and forget' solution but fail to monitor the endpoints and ensure they are continually protected.

### Central Administration

It is crucial that you choose an endpoint solution that can be centrally managed by an administrator. Anti-virus providers regularly release new updates for new threats as they are detected. If your software isn't centrally managed or requires the user to update the software 'at their convenience' it may not happen at all, and leave your network vulnerable.

### Does Your Anti-virus Measure Up?

Secondly, how does your anti-virus score in independent tests? Organisations such as PassMark carry out independent testing of anti-virus solutions covering a range of areas such as reliability, usability, detection and performance. If your solution doesn't score well in these tests you should reconsider its suitability for your organisation.





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### Inexpensive but Vital

Anti-virus doesn't need to be an expensive solution but is a key component of your security strategy. The costs can be as little as a couple of pounds per user per month with flexible plans and options to suit most businesses. The key is to have the right level and type of protection that's appropriate for your business and the data you hold.

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