

CYBER GUIDANCE ISSUE 00157

RANSOMWARE TRIPLE THREAT EVOLUTION

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IMPACT	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
EASE OF EXPLOIT	HARD	MEDIUM	EASY

OVERVIEW

With ransomware remaining one of the top threats for the year, it's not surprising that attackers are going further than ever to gather revenue. Attackers are branching out to demand payment from customers, suppliers and other third parties of their victims in what is being dubbed "Triple Extortion."

BREAKDOWN

Earlier in the year we saw ransomware attacks evolve to include data breach as a preliminary step to dropping the encryption malware payload. Now attackers are upping their game with the stolen data, threatening those whose information they have seized and exfiltrated from their initial victim. The volume of attacks has increased by over 100% and the monetary value of ransoms is also seen to be increasing, averaging at \$310,000. The additional extortion of potentially very vulnerable third-party victims of such a data breach adds pressure to the victim to pay, as well as the third party to protect their own interests. It has also been noted that a majority of high-profile ransomware attacks have occurred after hours, during holidays or in the weekend when there is less of a chance of the environment or systems being monitored.

REMEDATION STEPS

- Make sure systems are up to date with the latest security patches applied.
- Educate users on how to spot suspicious or phishing emails and social engineering tactics and what to do within your organisation if they suspect something is amiss.
- Ensure your security is "on" 24/7 and doesn't become lax during less active periods such as weekends and holidays.
- Use network monitoring and endpoint protection solutions to detect, protect and respond to unusual behaviours.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Threatpost <https://threatpost.com/ransomwares-swindle-triple-extortion/166149/>
Security Brief <https://securitybrief.co.nz/story/ransomware-attacks-surge-in-2021-triple-extortion-threat-comes-to-light>