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war against hackers.

In a survey of 583 IT security practitioners in the US, more than half of them employed by organizations with more than 5,000 employees, finds that ninety percent of the organizations have had at least one breach of their networks, and 59 percent have had two or more in the past 12 months.

The financial consequences are severe. When asked to consider cash outlays, internal labor, overhead, revenue losses and other expenses related to a breach, 41 percent said the cost was \$500,000 or more.

As a result of these breaches, more than one-third say they have low confidence in the ability of their organization's IT infrastructure to prevent a network security breach. For many companies, an insufficient budget is an issue. Fifty-one percent of the professionals surveyed say that less than 10 percent of their IT budget is dedicated to security. Forty-eight percent of respondents say that they suffer a lack of resources.

Complexity of the IT solutions is also an issue, with nearly half saying that complexity is one of the major challenges to implementing better network security solutions.

That hacker attacks is not news. But the staggering level of successful network breaches is startling. The study, if nothing else, builds a strong case for IT consultants within accounting firms to put extra effort into programs to strengthen the security of the networks of their own firms and those of their clients.

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