Information By Design
*Technology for Business Performance*

## Cyber Crime is Rampant – Traditional Anti-virus/firewall strategy is dead

Let's say you live in a high crime neighborhood. The number of home invasions has been rising dramatically. Thieves have been brazenly entering homes at all hours of the day and night, even with residents at home, thru open windows and unlocked doors. In fact, the crime rate is so high that one in three of your neighbors have experienced a break-in in the last 6 months. Would you continue to leave your doors and windows unlocked at your house? Probably not!

Your business network is not unlike the neighborhood described above. Cyber crime is more diverse, insidious, clever, and effective than ever before. The techniques hackers use to gain access to your data now evade the standard firewall, anti-virus protection commonly found on most networks today. The result – lost productivity at the minimum and serious business impact at the extreme. And they do it right under your nose while you're at the office!

The emergence of Web 2.0 has created a fertile threat environment for malware writers to distribute these threats through social networks, blogs, wikis, and other collaborative sites on the web. There are 17,000 new malware threats identified per day, and 5.5 Million malware threats identified in 2007. The Washington Post reported in January, 2008 that 51% of Web sites serving malware are actually legitimate sites that have been compromised. Malware distributors have also created banner ads directing users to Web sites supposedly offering animated emoticons, screensavers and desktop widgets pointing to a safe page. Once distribution of the ad begins, the original site is replaced with malicious content, e.g. Trojan-laced banner ads on MySpace. Malware distributors have even created 'drive by' viruses that are initiated with hardly a mouse click.

Even if you're a company not under the gun of federal compliance requirements, you need to rethink your security strategy. The digital bad guys are looking for any vulnerability in your business to gain access and to assess what they can steal to sell on the black market. And in doing so, they don't care what damage they end up doing to your business network.

If you're depending on your anti-virus and firewall strategy to protect you today, think again. You need to close all your windows and doors by implementing URL filtering, Unified Threat Management, Intrusion Detection, advanced spam filtering, real time data backup, firewall management, penetration testing, security management processes, end user training and policies.

So, take an assessment of your "business" house. Talk to us to learn how you can evaluate how to cost effectively close and lock all your windows and doors to keep your business as safe as possible in an unsafe world.

The author, ***AJ Walters***, is a principal consultant for Information By Design.