Comcast Business Study Underscores the Importance of Cybersecurity in Long-term Remote Work Strategies

Study unveils identifies how IT teams are investing in technology and re-architecting their cybersecurity stance to support work-from-home initiatives

PHILADELPHIA – October 6, 2020 – Comcast Business today unveiled new research that sheds light on how companies are adjusting their cybersecurity strategies to support the expanding remote workforce. The survey of IT decision makers – conducted by Comcast Business and IDG – indicates that growth in the number of remote workers is causing most organizations to invest more in remote IT operations to support them and in cybersecurity to address the challenges of protecting against a growing threat profile.

The remote workforce has expanded dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic – with the number of employees working from home increasing by almost one-third in 2020. As a result, organizations are re-evaluating their cybersecurity policies and practices – with more than half of respondents indicating they are accelerating deployment of new security technologies and approaches, such as implementing "zero trust" policies.

The study also revealed that organizations are:

- **Rethinking cloud security**: As increased reliance on cloud comes with new security challenges, 98% said that securing applications, data, and infrastructure in the cloud is "very" or "somewhat" challenging. When asked about specific concerns regarding cloud-based security, 36% noted data theft, another 36% stated lack of staff skilled to manage security for cloud applications, and 35% said fear that cloud applications providers could face advanced threats. This points to the need for companies to rethink security policies governing remote access to sensitive business applications and ensure flexible routing of network traffic over virtual private lines.

- **Still grappling with their employees' connectivity**: Among companies that have shifted a third or more of their workforce remote, increasing network speed (75%) and providing access to data (69%) are the most pressing needs to support a distributed workforce. Whether focusing on VPN or cloud access, IT must also face the reality that some workers lack sufficient bandwidth – particularly with whole families at home during the pandemic. To combat this, businesses can opt to provide workers with dedicated, in-home, enterprise-grade connectivity that is separate from their residential network.

- **More in need of managed security services than ever**: As they expand remote work capacity, nearly all (99%) of those surveyed indicate they will need managed cybersecurity services, which can provide a security overlay for organizations to extend their data protection. Organizations shared a wide range of services they need from service providers, with disaster recovery and business continuity rated highest at 43%. Other areas that top their priority list are getting guidance from experts (40%) and managed detection and response (36%)

"More than half a year into the pandemic, remote work has blurred the lines between work and home – but the need for a sound security strategy has never been clearer," said Shena Seneca Tharnish, Vice President of Cybersecurity Products, Comcast Business. "As the remote work environment – and threat landscape – evolves, Comcast Business is proud to serve as a partner to help IT professionals ensure their businesses remain connected, secure and agile."

To view the entire report and learn more on how organizations can enhance their cybersecurity posture, visit: https://business.comcast.com/community/browse-all/details/cybersecurity-crucial-to-remote-work-expansion

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