

PROTECT BUSINESS AGAINST A

DATA BREACH

INNOVATE

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The recent Target and Home Depot data breaches are a scary reminder of the need to maintain security on your company networks. While it's true that larger companies are often more attractive to cybercriminals and those are the ones you hear the most about, smaller companies are not immune.

A data breach occurs when a person's private identifying information (name, address, social security number, credit card info, etc.) is put at risk either electronically or on paper. Data breaches can be inadvertent or deliberate, external or internal. There are breaches caused by cybercriminals hacking into systems for information such as patient records as well as situations when an employee loads malware onto a PC or a disgruntled employee leaves the company and takes valuable intellectual property with them. So, what can you do to reduce the risk to your company?

1. Encrypt your customer data where you store it as well as when you transmit it.
2. Use multi-level passwords or two-factor authentication (require two forms of identification such as a pin and a thumb print) for accessing important information.
3. Run background checks on employees and limit access to data that is not necessary for them to do their work.
4. Have your IT provider run security health checks periodically to keep an eye out

for holes in your security.

5. Install a professional-grade firewall to monitor external connections to your network.
6. Make sure your IT provider is keeping your malware up to date on both your desktops and your services.
7. Put security policies and measures in place throughout your organization, and make sure your staff are trained and consistently follow those policies.
8. Have your attorney review your terms and conditions to make sure you are protected should a breach occur.

Just because we don't hear about the data breaches affecting smaller companies doesn't mean they aren't happening. Taking steps to ensure you are doing everything you can to control your company's data and that of your clients is every business owner's responsibility.



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