

Five Tips for Manufacturers to Protect Against Company Data Theft



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Cyber criminals have been around for quite some time and continue to make our lives challenging. As you continually see in the news headlines, there are many forms of criminal activity occurring through the use of Internet technology. We have typically been hearing about user names and passwords being stolen. However, manufacturers have very valuable information and data that is being targeted as well.

Here are five tips for manufacturers to protect against data theft:

1. **Executives must put priority on data and trade secret information**

This seems obvious, but many organizations do not have the right protection plans in place and in many cases rely on dated equipment, software and procedures to keep their data and trade information safe. If key executives put a priority on increased security measures for confidential data and make it a continued company initiative then the necessary resources and support will be given to better protect this crucial information and data security can continue to be evaluated and updated as necessary.

2. **Identify what your most valuable data assets are and where they are stored**

Identifying the most important data and where it is stored may feel daunting with the amount and type of data that manufacturers have these days, but a good starting point is engineering and R&D type design files. Obviously, this type of data is confidential and very important to manufacturers.

3. **Label critical data assets**

Make sure that digital and paper documents are clearly marked with "Confidential" or "Internal Use Only". This provides a visual alert to all employees who have access to these documents that anything marked with this designation should be treated with extra care and protection.

4. **Think Like a Cyber Criminal**

Make it a practice to step back and take an outsider's point of view and look at all your business processes and practices to identify where data theft could occur.

5. **Improve Employee Awareness**

Put detailed company theft and confidential protection instruction and documentation in all manuals and employee agreements. In addition, include this type of employee security awareness in your training programs at all levels of the organization.

It is easy to become complacent with the valuable information that we handle on a daily basis and it is very important to be on constant alert for criminal activity. It is crucial to have an evolving security plan for protection. In addition, an effective security plan would include a response plan to guide reaction in the event of a breach threat or incident.

For more information on protecting your company against data theft contact Lance Mann at 502-566-1005 or lmann@deandorton.com or Jason Miller at 859-425-7626 or jmiller@ddafttech.com.

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