

Chief Executive Magazine

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It's Time for a Security Checkup

Whether your e-company is Internet-based or out sources the critical parts of IT infrastructure, you may find the top 10 list of security and technology trends from the Institute for the Global Futures (IGF) both frightening and enlightening. The San Francisco-based think tank/consulting firm's list includes a rather dire outlook on the serious security issues that could stem from economic information warfare perpetrated by rogue individuals and groups. "Overall, our forecasts would indicate that September 11 was just the beginning of a more sophisticated wave of terrorism that will grow, surfacing deeper vulnerabilities in companies and economies small, medium and large," says James Canton, the IGF's CEO and founder.

To counter such attacks, Canton recommends employing a "planned, shaped and designed" three-step program. The first step is to perform a security audit. "Identify areas of vulnerability, but do so with a vendor, not an internal group," says Canton. This will not only identify areas of concern and vulnerability, but areas that should be deploying prevention. Next, devise a series of test for your company's physical and IT infrastructure. Then hire a company to test these areas and have them target not only your firewall and warehouses, but also those of your suppliers.

After evaluating the results, come up with a strategic security plan that can protect your economic sustainability in the event of attack. “Have security teams at the ready to monitor customer databases, your supply chain, and your physical and virtual gateways,” says Canton. “and figure out how to implement this plan over the long term.” He urges companies to continue to conduct thorough tests at least every 90 days. “If you don’t,” he says, “you’ll never know where your vulnerability spots are.”