

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Email interception a real risk for UK law firms**

*Survey highlights mistaken belief that antivirus and spam prevention solutions provide adequate email protection*

**London, 9 October, 2007:** Interception of email poses a real threat to UK law firms, placing the integrity of their communications at risk, according to an industry survey. The survey, commissioned by specialist security provider Securecoms, highlighted a widespread and mistaken belief that existing antivirus and spam prevention solutions provide sufficient email protection and as a result, the possibility of interception is being overlooked. While email interception poses a threat to all businesses, the often sensitive nature of a law firms' communications increases the importance of security.

The risk posed by an email security breach was further highlighted by a related survey finding indicating that although most respondents believe email is the least secure method of communication, more than half of a law firm's daily email traffic contains confidential information. Interestingly, 82 per cent of respondents were aware that external emails pass through many places before reaching the intended recipient.

According to David Ford, Chief Executive of Securecoms, UK law firms need to be made aware of the true nature of the threat posed by email interception.

"This survey clearly identified a high level of confusion among law firms regarding email security. It's important to point out that this is not the fault of the legal sector, but is indicative of a general lack of awareness common to businesses of all types concerning the consequences of email interception as an email travels across the public internet. The growth in email usage and the amount of highly confidential information that's emailed on a daily basis has created an unacceptably high level of risk.

There appears to be a widespread misguided view that the most commonly used anti-virus and anti-spam systems also provide protection against interception. In fact, this is just not the case.

The research indicates that despite the recommendations contained in the email security guidelines issued by the Law Society, fewer than 10% of UK law firms encrypt their emails.

It's clear that there's a need to educate and inform lawyers across the UK on the issues surrounding email confidentiality" David Ford said.



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## **Key findings:**

On average, more than half the emails sent by law firms contain confidential information.

Email is considered the second least confidential way of communicating information - 82% of those asked were aware it passes through many places before the recipient actually receives it. Fax is thought of as the least confidential – probably because there is no guarantee that the person it is sent to will be the only person who sees it.

Almost half thought that their existing software covered confidentiality, although on further questioning it emerged that well over 90% of these were mistaken in their belief. 20% didn't know whether or not their software covered email confidentiality.

45% of lawyers thought that email security was a priority, but only 20% thought that there was a straightforward software solution available.

## **About the research**

A telephone survey was conducted by international research firm Strategy One on behalf of Securecoms to explore attitudes of behaviour concerning email confidentiality among law firms and determine awareness and usage of email security solutions.

The survey sample comprised of 201 partners and non-partners of law firms across the UK.

## **About Securecoms**

Keeping your business, your business is what Securecoms is all about. Our aim is to bring simple, affordable and secure email encryption to all sizes of business.

## **Contact details**

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