India Inc's IT security not up to mark: Expert

Mumbai, Apr 26 : Four months on, post the Chinese cyber attack on Google, India Inc is still very blase about their IT security set up, IT security expert Govind Rammurthy has said.

Though many companies have their IT security in place. But encryption of date, restriction of access areas, protocols, log records, back up UPS, the overall level of security is not very strong.

"It is virtually impossible for a company to be 100 per cent secure, but a lot of things can be avoided if proper security policies are implemented. Its a case for constant innovation and keeping oneself up-to-date," eScan, CEO and Managing Director, Mr Rammurthy has stated.

The company is the world's first packaged brand in Information Security from India that provide proactive protection against virus, spam, Trojans, and many other information security threats. It's clients include Eureka Forbes, Asian paints and a host of government department and agencies.

The problem in India is there are no audit trails, and a rather lax attitude. There is very little tracking done on the amount of data that is transfered from one computer to another.

It is difficult to trace a virus or a missing file, or detect an attack, when one is not aware of it in the first place. There is also no information to back up lost data. In contrast, even though Google could not prevent the cyber attacks, it got to know about the incident soon after, reflecting on its potent defense system.

"IT security is especially important for businesses like banks. But many systems administrators of state run banks will no have an iota of information on potential threats like phishing.

when the basic levels and requirements are not met, it's difficult to secure a company," Rammurthy pointed out.

Even when the level of awareness against potential threats- hacking, phishing, viruses etc is present, the rate of innovation to meet the fast changing IT landscape to meet new threats is often missing among Indian companies. As case in point, not many companies will be aware of the potential vulnerabilities of the new Apple "Ipad".

"Most companies come to us, when they have already been attacked. We try and find the loopholes in their systems and how inform them on how to secure their systems. IT security firms like us provide a range of software base security from stand alone computers like the PC to securing network systems.

Downloadable anti-virus systems provide a limited amount of security, and are mostly suitable for home PCs," he said.

Though the level of security and of attacks may not be as serious as in the developed economies, no one is really sure about the extent of the threat to Indian companies. No proper research has been carried out to find out the losses suffered due to such threats, but estimates run into millions of Rupees. Many companies are unaware of the fact that they are under attack or that their data is being stolen.

This translates into business opportunities for IT security providers like eScan. The market is still small though-worth around Rs 250 crore- mainly due to lack of initiative by companies to upgrade their security.

"Our sales has been has been growing at 60-70 per cent YoY, with our total annual revenues touching USD 30 million. We of course restrict our products to software for Windows and Linux platforms. We invest around 15 per cent of our revenues in research and development (R and D) to keep in touch with the latest developmentsin the IT industry," he added.
--UNI