

Indian CIOs Bullish On Information Security Spends

By: Abhishek Raval | Sep 15, 2009

Information security ranks on top of the priority list of the Indian CIO Community. According to a recent Gartner report and also the Ernst and Young (E&Y) report that was published in collaboration with the CIO Klub, CIOs are keen on IT security spends. This is despite the fact that they may be shredding their overall IT budgets.

"In the current highly uncertain economic environment, with overall IT budgets shrinking, even the modest spending increases indicated by the survey show that security spending accounts for a higher percentage of the IT budget," said Adam Hills, principal research analyst at Gartner.

According to the E&Y 'Enterprise IT Trends Survey 2009-10', 76 percent of Indian CIOs listed 'Information Security' as a concern. This response was consistent across both large enterprises and SMEs. "It is evident that companies of all sizes will be upgrading their security environment," the report goes on to say.

Biztech2.com spoke to a cross section of CIOs, who reflected the same sentiment. Anil Jaggia, CIO, HDFC Bank, said, "Our security spending is likely to increase". The BFSI space has several Internet-facing applications; as more and more customers go online to transact, security is top-of-the-mind for players here.

Joydeep Dutta, CTO, ICICI Securities, said, "Our information security spend for 2010 is likely to remain the same." The current IT spend at Dutta's firm is 5-6% percent of the overall revenue and the security budget is five percent of that 5-6% .

CFC International, which provides knowledge processing and IT services to Countrywide Financial Corporation in the USA, will be spending more on Information Security in 2010 compared to last year. The company's Risk Management Group based in the USA handles the security spending globally. The trend will be more towards Intelligent Filtering, Network Traffic Monitoring, Input/ Output Shifting and IDS. "CFC has been using these systems for more than three years," said Anwer Bagdadi, VP and CTO, CFC International (India Services).

Sameer Ratolikar, CISO, Bank Of India, said, "As we add more customers online, our information security spending is bound to increase". The bank will focus on areas like Two-Factor Authentication, Information Rights Management and Data Leakage prevention.

"Being a law firm, network security is a very crucial part of our IT infrastructure," said Milind Mundankar, head-IT, Nishith Desai and Associates (NDA). The company has to be very particular about the kind of Information Security systems it deploys as it is also a parameter for clients before selecting a law firm. As per the current projection, NDA is

likely to allocate approximately 50 percent of its IT Budget to network security. "We will be spending more on the Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) front and e-mail security also along with data protection management," said Mundankar.

To sum up, security solution providers will have less reason to worry this year as investments will continue as per CIO verdicts.