



## 'Be prepared' is now the security motto

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The issue of security continues to move up the agenda, fuelled by high-profile data leaks and fears about the rising number of threats.

The findings from IDC that most companies anticipating IT budget increases are earmarking the majority of the extra funds for security should encourage resellers to target this sector.

But the success of any pitch is likely to depend on the reseller's understanding of the threat landscape as the industry shifts its focus to take a pre-emptive position by trying to stop problems before they impact the network.

A cross-section of the industry interviewed on the question of pre-emptive security agreed that the people behind the threats had changed from being show-off students to serious criminals that

were trying to go unnoticed as they accessed systems in an attempt to steal sensitive data.

Ed McNair, CEO of Marshal, said the market had definitely changed and vendors were being forced to react, moving away from signature-based systems in favour of software that works by concentrating on anomalous behaviour and the reputation of the provider.

According to Marshal's own research, a significant number of customers admitted to having suffered a data leak, with 43 per cent admitting they had no idea if there had been any data loss.

But the looming threat of legislation that could force companies to reveal data leaks (*MicroScope*, 16 July, p16) means there might also be some mileage to be had in targeting customers as security creeps higher up their agenda.

"Legislation that requires the disclosure of data breaches will undoubtedly result in data security being placed firmly at the top of the IT procurement agenda, which could prove fruitful for security resellers," said Jon Shaw, EMEA sales manager at Ingrian Networks.

Dave Ellis, director of e-security, professional services and training at ComputerLinks, said we could see the return of the historical approach used by resellers and vendors which centred around fear, uncertainty and doubt (FUD).

"Experience of the market shows that any form of fear, uncertainty and doubt can help drive sales of IT security products. Indeed, this formed the basis of many of the vendors in the market as long as eight to ten years ago," he added. "Over time, many vendors have evolved their message to address other things such as productivity or



McNair: The market has changed

business enablement, however the introduction of much tighter regulatory compliance has again highlighted that the FUD approach is a strong sales tactic." ■

▶ Turn to this week's feature on p21 for further coverage of the rise of pre-emptive security