

Why You Need To Care - Intellectual Property

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Protecting intellectual property has a high strategic value to almost every company. If competitors gain access to your IP, the cost is enormous; companies may commit millions of dollars to investigating new drugs, writing program source code, or developing new products. Smaller companies may store IP in a central database, while international companies may have employees around the world involved in research, development, and code writing-making it imperative to monitor traffic leaving and entering every location for IP. Companies also need to monitor communications with partners and with regulatory agencies they interact with, such as the Food and Drug Administration.

Companies with valuable intellectual property thus require comprehensive, direct content protection of the entire network. Just monitoring information that leaves via e-mail or IM or via specific ports is not sufficient; a comprehensive solution must monitor all information leaving or entering the company via any protocol and any port. Companies should also be able to discover information throughout the network by crawling repositories and individual PCs.

The ability to go back and look at historical information is also key to protecting IP, and requires a solution that can capture and store all content passing through network. Retaining content serves two purposes; first, it can be used for "after-the-fact" investigations that help identify risks that could not be anticipated beforehand. These investigations will then result in augmenting of detection rules for information at rest and in motion. Second, companies can use stored information to proactively find, investigate, and prosecute cases of information leaks and theft, an ability that helps protect them from IP loss.

Most companies do not know if insiders are following guidelines for appropriate network and Internet use or if sensitive data such as IP is leaving their networks. But those that recognize the serious threat that insiders can pose to IP are now making content protection a strategic priority.

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