

Wisconsin companies targeted by cyber attacks

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Compromised business email accounts are among the top online threats to Wisconsin companies in 2018, according to Byron Franz, a cybersecurity special agent for the FBI.

He spoke yesterday at the Wisconsin Tech Summit, held at the GE Healthcare Institute in Waukesha by the Wisconsin Technology Council.

Email accounts can be hacked through technological means, but also by targeting the most vulnerable part of any company's security system: its people.

Spear-phishing is a method for precisely targeting decision-making individuals in the company. It's often done by sending misleading emails, using data mined from the internet to customize the message in hopes of getting the target to click a nefarious link.

Doing so can open up that business account to outside control, often without the knowledge of the targeted user or the employer. Cases like these underline the importance of getting system-wide scans, Franz says, to ensure the integrity of the company's security.

"The fact is, we are being attacked at home," he said. "In the year 2018, your digital life is your life, and the failure to protect yourself can result in obviously huge tragedies."

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