

## Threats on UK e-trade

The opportunities offered by the Internet are lost on some businesses. Getting online gives the world a path to your door, however small it may be. But as enthusiasm for online trading grows, so too do opportunities for cybercriminals, ready to exploit every faultline in your system. Last year more than 44 percent of businesses suffered at least one online attack, according to figures from **Tarlo Lyons**, the commercial law firm. That figure was double the number of incidents two years ago and levels of Internet fraud now match more traditional crime.

However, fewer than one third of British businesses dedicate time and resources to making their computer systems safe.

“The growing reliance on the Internet is opening a door for computer viruses and hackers,” a spokesman for **Tarlo Lyons** says. “Internet security incidents cost UK business several billion pounds in 2000, and yet most organizations are failing to take even the most basic precautions.”

It is not just money that is at stake. If a company is tricked by cybercriminals its reputation is also at risk and potential customers, already unhappy about providing their bank account numbers over the Internet, may decide to stay well away.

The government, conscious that the perception of security risks is affecting the adoption of online transactions by both consumers and businesses is urging employers to defend themselves. Douglas Alexander, the minister for E-commerce says: “there needs not be a reason to neglect the incredible opportunities that the Web offers. They are simply challenges that have to be dealt with as efficiently and economically as possible.”

“The technology to prevent hackers and other criminals is not as complicated as it seems and it is vital today to protect your business,” says Roger Horam, an advisor for UK online for business, the government organization that promotes e-trading.

Encryption technique, which jumble up confidential information so that it is unreadable to prying eyes, and firewalls, pieces of hardware and software that prevent access to information can be installed cheaply by specialist companies for as little as £20.

### Task 1

Answer the following questions:

- 1- What are the drawbacks of Internet on businesses?  
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- 2- Do British businesses dedicate enough time and resources to fight back hackers on the Internet?  
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- 3- Is the British Government worried about cyber attacks?  
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- 4- What are the measures that would eventually prevent cyber attacks?  
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- 5- Is it affordable to get a protection against Internet hackers?  
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**Task 2**

Say whether the following statements are true or false:

- 1- In Britain, the majority of businesses have taken drastic measures to protect themselves against Internet hackers. ....
- 2- Cybercrimes are not as harmful as traditional crimes.....
- 3- It is so hard to fight against cybercriminals.....
- 4- Internet does not offer any opportunity for businesses.....

**Task 3**

Find in the text synonyms for these words:

Increasing:....., Attacked:.....  
 Aware:....., Essential:.....

**Task 4**

In your own words, try to explain how businesses could protect themselves against online threats in a more effective way.

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