

WEBER SHANDWICK CYBERSECURITY AND DATA LOSS

Many organisations are suffering disruption, financial loss and theft of intellectual property as a result of cybercrime. Few things damage an organisation's reputation more than the loss of private information entrusted to it by consumers, employees and partners. Serious as the threat is, it is also so common that it is no longer a question of 'if' but rather 'when' data will be compromised.

While people understand that hacking is commonplace, they remain careless of their own data and yet expect the organisations they trust to provide complete security. Any failure to do so can lead quickly to loss of trust and, in consequence, loss of reputation and business, among other penalties. Effective communications are crucial for mitigating these risks.

Weber Shandwick is highly experienced in helping organisations prepare for and manage all manner of cybersecurity and data loss issues. These range from cyber-hacking and compromised points of sale to loss of confidential information from misplaced or stolen laptops, smartphones and memory sticks.

Often, it is necessary to make considerable efforts to reach customers and/or other stakeholders to tell them the difficult news that their information has been taken and to advise them of the precautions they should take in light of that. Sometimes, organisations who are unused to handling these situations are so focused on being transparent that they inadvertently exaggerate the problem, for example by using the word 'breach' when in fact there is no evidence that data have actually been taken; this can have serious consequences. So, because we have been through these situations so many times, one of our most important roles can be as a calming influence and an aid to maintaining a proper perspective.

Our aim is to ensure that organisations are thoroughly prepared well in advance of any adverse event, but we are also ready to support at any time an issue occurs. The services we offer include:

- Review existing resources and systems for communicating about cybersecurity and data loss issues.
 - Create or augment a plan for ensuring a fast, effective response to these issues, including activation mechanisms, standby statements for various scenarios, lists of third-party experts, and so forth.
 - Test the organisation's readiness through simulation exercises. We offer a range of intensive sessions in which fictional issues are worked through by those who would be responsible in a real situation. A particular feature of note is our award-winning firebell software, which simulates a client's social media properties so that they can experience the real-time pressure of Twitter and Facebook in a secure environment.
 - React immediately we are informed that a real threat has been detected. Our first step is to assess rapidly whether or not any immediate communication is required and if so, what it should be.
 - Develop a communications strategy specific to the situation as it becomes understood.
 - Strengthen spokespeople through tough Q&A prep.
 - Provide counsel and support for the execution of the strategy, however much or little this is required. Typically, we are asked to work with the media and social media channels in order to stabilise important relationships and shape the opinions of key stakeholders.
- Throughout this process, Weber Shandwick works closely with the client's internal team, internal and external counsel, security and fraud solutions firms and IT forensic investigators. We are happy to be engaged either directly by the client or through their law firm.

“Cybersecurity is essential in today's European digital economy and society - and it remains a permanent challenge.”

Günther H. Oettinger, EU Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society

69% of businesses say cybersecurity is a high priority, yet only **10%** have a formal incident management plan.

Source: UK Government, Cyber Security Breaches Survey 2016: Main Report

CONTACT



Rod Clayton
EVP and Co-Lead,
Global Issues and Crisis

T: + 44 20 7067 0431

M: + 44 7515 503 420

rclayton@webershandwick.com



 webershandwickemea.com

 blog.webershandwickemea.com

 twitter.com/WS_EMEA

 [linkedin.com/company/weber-shandwick](https://www.linkedin.com/company/weber-shandwick/)