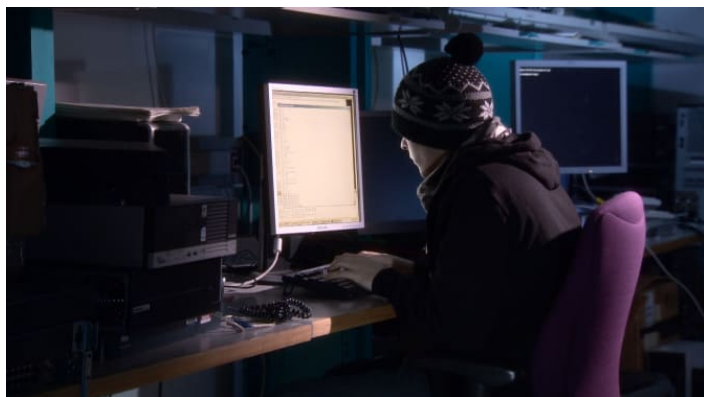


Cyber-crime: the invisible enemy posing a growing threat for businesses and households

March 2018



Mark Hughes, Chief Executive of BT Security says Cyber-crime is posing a growing threat across the region

As an ever increasing number of people and organisations make ever greater use of the internet, the potential impact of cyber-theft, cyber-vandalism and even cyber-extortion is exploding. The more we rely on the fantastic resource of 'the net' the more potentially vulnerable we become. It is a daunting thought that there are now about 27 billion devices connected to the internet – well over three times the human population of the world – and that this figure is expected to reach 125 billion within 13 years. If you think this issue doesn't affect you and that it is a mainly a matter for governments and large organisations, then think again.

There are growing indications that small and medium businesses, the bedrock of a regional economy such as the one in the North East, are increasingly in the firing line of the criminals. And research indicates that many are unprepared to meet this threat. Research by Accenture showed that 55 per cent of British workers can't recall receiving cyber security training, whilst one in five weren't sure they could identify a phishing email – a common method used by cyber criminals to raid personal bank accounts.

To give a sense of the scale of the cyber-crime problem, BT's security team detects 100,000 unique malware samples every day – more than one per second – and protects the BT network against more than 4,000 cyber-attacks daily. Half of all reported fraud in the UK is now committed through cyber-crime, according to the National Fraud Bureau, and half of all Britons have been targeted. In the past 12 months alone BT has identified and closed more than 5,000 phishing websites.

The cyber threat is also changing. In the case of phishing, for example, criminals are becoming increasingly skilled at creating what appear to be genuine e-mails for people to click on. Even chief

executives are at risk with the rise of 'Whaling' where phishing techniques are deliberately targeted at board level to impersonate and abuse the board's authority. Ransomware also burst into the public consciousness recently as the WannaCry and Petya attacks spread across the world. With ransomware available for as little as 50 US dollars, criminals can enter this rapidly growing market with ease.

Perhaps the most worrying aspect of Wannacry was its relatively unsophisticated nature. It was a known vulnerability and a 'patch' to deal with it was readily available.

Such outbreaks are a stark reminder to us all to get the basics rights:

- Update your anti-virus software regularly;
- Install patches;
- Invest in regular cyber security training for staff;
- Remind staff to be wary of opening suspicious e-mails or links

It's not just about investing in up to date technology. A truly comprehensive approach is needed. For businesses, cyber security must feature at the top of the boardroom agenda. Companies need to have robust cyber security strategy and policies, which are kept under review and continuously put to the test. For larger organisations, this can include 'war games' to test the response to a cyber crisis. At BT we regularly run sessions pitching so-called 'red teams' of ethical hackers trying to penetrate our defences against the 'blue teams' protecting the network.

Whether you are a businessperson in Newcastle or Middlesbrough or a household in a remote part of Northumberland or County Durham, it is vital that we are all prepared to meet this threat. Financial loss is not the only risk. The recent attack on Britain's healthcare system resulted in cancelled operations, missed appointments and delayed diagnoses.

Realistically, online crime is unlikely to be eradicated entirely, but we- Internet Service Providers, Government and other organisations - are stepping up our collective efforts to curb the cyber criminals' success rates through initiatives such as the Government's Cyber Security Information Sharing Partnership, which BT is supporting.

Through collaboration and consensus, I am confident we can win the battle against the rapidly-expanding cyber-crime industry.

EE launches 4G home broadband antenna to connect more than 18,500 homes across the North East

March 2018



The new 4G home broadband solution could connect more than 18,500 homes across the North East

EE, part of BT Group, has unveiled a new 4G home broadband solution which could connect more than 18,500 homes across the North East, especially those in rural areas that are currently only able to access broadband slower than 10Mbps. The service will provide customers with superfast broadband speeds at home using the power of EE's 4G network. Customer trials in the Northern Fells area of Cumbria have delivered speeds of over 100Mbps.

EE's new 4G home broadband, which combines the 4GEE Home Router with a powerful external antenna and professional installation service, has been designed specifically as an alternative for those in rural communities that have yet to be connected with traditional fixed line broadband access – or where customers can only receive slower fixed broadband speeds.

EE has recently been trialling the solution in the Cumbrian Northern Fells, an area with dramatic topography. Currently many homes in rural Cumbria can only get limited broadband access, and EE, working with the Northern Fells Broadband initiative has worked to trial the service with users in the area. The new solution allows customers to access EE's superfast 4G network which currently extends to 90% of the UK's landmass (equal to more than 99.6% of UK homes). EE predicts that there are 580,000 UK homes with slow or no fixed line access which could benefit from the solution – with EE continuing to roll out 4G in to new areas of the UK on the way to its ambition to extend 4G to 95% geographic coverage

Max Taylor, EE said: "As our network continues to expand into some of the most remote parts of the UK, we've seen the amazing impact that 4G connectivity can have on rural communities. Our newest 4G home broadband router and antenna takes this one step further, ensuring thousands of families in rural areas across the UK could enjoy the benefits of superfast broadband inside their home for the very first time – whether video-calling the grandparents or streaming their favourite TV series."

4GEE Home Router & antenna

With no requirement for a landline, the 4GEE Home Router is ready to go straight from the box allowing up to 32 devices to connect to it at once. The new 4GEE Home Router is EE's fastest own brand device with enhanced wi-fi strength, making it the perfect alternative to traditional fixed broadband.

EE's new antenna is fitted to the side of a customer's property and is connected to the 4GEE Home Router situated inside the home by a cable. This eliminates any loss of signal due to thick exterior walls, improving both the speed and consistency of the 4GEE Home Router. The antenna has been designed for use on properties with good outdoor coverage but variable indoor coverage. The 4GEE Home Router and antenna solution offers speeds as fast as most fixed line fibre broadband services – with trial speeds showing over 100Mbps in Cumbria. Separately, independent recognition has revealed EE offers the UK's fastest 4G, with average download speeds above 30Mbps*.

New combined line checker

EE has also launched the UK's first fixed and mobile broadband combined coverage checker – allowing customers to see which broadband solution is most suitable for them based on their postcode – whether that's via a fixed line or over 4G.

For more information, please visit www.ee.co.uk/broadband

Meet your board member Angela Howey

March 2018



One of EE's senior managers is to play a leading role in BT's operations in the North East.

Angela Howey, EE's head of Consumer with a career in the company spanning nearly 30 years, has been appointed deputy chair of BT's regional board in the North East, where the company employs more than 8,500 people.

She pledged the company would help the North East to "achieve maximum productivity and economic growth" and highlighted making the most of digital technologies as key to driving future success.

BT is one of the region's largest private sector employers with major centres in locations such as Darlington, Sunderland, Gosforth, South Shields, Newcastle and North Tyneside.

Angela, who has lived in the Tees Valley for most of her life, will help lead the board of ten senior BT executives and direct BT's activities to ensure the company remains one of the region's leading investors and employers. Among the company's achievements in the North East is the creation of a high-speed, fibre broadband network that is already available to more than one million homes and businesses, and is continuing to grow rapidly.

She said: "I've lived in Darlington for most of my life so it's an honour for me to represent BT across the North East. The prosperity of the local economy is really important to me and I'm passionate about supporting my home region in its ambitions. Not only is BT one of the North East's largest private sector employers we are also one of the largest private sector investors through our roll-out of exciting technologies, such as superfast and ultrafast broadband and 4G mobile communications – and we most certainly are not stopping there. The North East has vast potential and we want to support the region to achieve maximum productivity and economic growth."

Angela, who has held several senior EE roles, is currently based at the EE campus in Darlington. She has been a member of the BT North East board for two years and is a well-known face in the Tees Valley as an active board member for the Tees Valley Authority Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Darlington Cares.

EE became part of BT Group in 2016. It is the largest and most advanced mobile communications company in the UK, delivering mobile and fixed communications services to customers.

North East plays leading role in achieving UK superfast broadband coverage target

March 2018



The three areas have all been praised for playing a leading role in Great Britain achieving the target of 95 per cent superfast broadband coverage

All of them have surpassed the national average with Middlesbrough reaching 97.4 per cent coverage, North Tyneside 98.4 percent and County Durham 95.3 per cent.

Derek Richardson, Programme Director in the North East for Openreach, which employs more than 1,100 engineers and other workers in the region, said: “This is a great news for both the country and for the North East. For a number of years the region has led the way with the roll-out of this exciting technology, which is providing a major boost for the economy. We have some of the highest superfast coverage figures, which is a tribute to the hard work of local engineers and the success of the Digital Durham BDUK partnership. The multi million pound scheme has been one of the largest and most complex engineering projects in the whole region over recent years and it’s a great example of the public and private sectors working effectively together. We have managed to bring new services to areas which fall outside the private sector’s commercial programme and we’re determined to go further. Openreach is continuing to work with its public sector partners, including Tees Valley Combined Authority and Middlesbrough Borough Council, to get faster broadband to even more locations.”

Tees Valley Mayor, Ben Houchen said: “Today, superfast broadband is a necessity rather than a luxury. From ensuring Tees Valley businesses have the ability to compete on a global scale to connecting families to their loved ones, it’s vital we have the means to reach out to the world. Thanks to our funding, Middlesbrough is leading the UK in superfast broadband provision. This 97.4 per cent coverage will pave the way for more success and competitiveness in our key advanced manufacturing, process, chemicals and energy and digital and creative sectors. I couldn’t be more proud of what we are doing, but we Teessiders always strive for more. So there is still work to be done to achieve our even higher goal of over 98 per cent coverage and really make the region a world-beater in connectivity.”

Cllr Joy Allen, Durham County Council’s cabinet member for transformation, said: “This is wonderful recognition of the work done in County Durham. We know how important it is for people to have superfast

download speeds and we're proud to say that the work undertaken by the Digital Durham programme has contributed to achieving the UK Government 95 per cent target. Whilst excellent progress has been made, work under the programme continues to extend coverage further so that more residents and businesses can benefit from faster broadband speeds and the opportunities they can create."

Nationally, Openreach chief executive Clive Selley recognised the "huge contribution" of more than 9,300 Openreach people across the UK following a Government announcement that 95 per cent of the country can now order superfast broadband speeds of at least 24 Megabits per second (Mbps). Openreach has rolled out more than 35 million kilometres of fibre optic cables in an initiative taking more than 145 million man hours.

Fastest broadband in the UK speeds towards new housing developments

March 2018



New homes and flats across major new housing developments in Tyne and Wear, Sunderland and South Tyneside will be able to get some of the fastest broadband speeds in the UK

Openreach, the business responsible for Britain's largest phone and broadband network, is answering a call to build fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) technology capable of ultrafast speeds up to one Gigabit per second (1Gbps) for properties on sites in locations including Birtley, Hebburn, Hazelrigg, Scotswood, Killingworth, Throckley, Jarrow, Hylton, Hetton-le-Hole and Ryhope are in line to be some of the first in the UK to benefit from a new way of installing 'full fibre' broadband, by using the infrastructure already in place for the existing copper broadband network.

The agreements are part of an Openreach initiative agreed with the UK Government and the Home Builders Federation to connect all new UK housing developments of 30 properties or more with ultrafast fibre broadband. Openreach has also made FTTP technology available to more than 2,000 new developments nationwide, covering more than a quarter of a million premises, since the partnership launched last year.

Kim Mears, Managing Director of infrastructure delivery at Openreach, said: "An ultrafast broadband network will be a major boost for these sites by ensuring that people living and working there have quick access to some of the fastest speeds available. It reflects our commitment to ensuring that the North East and the UK has a first-class network, capable of delivering the latest communication services for households, businesses and other organisations. We know that people are passionate about the speed and reliability of the broadband service their communication provider can offer them and that, for some, the availability of ultrafast speeds will strongly influence their decision on which new property to buy."

Craig Ferrans, Technical Director for the Home Builders Federation, added: "The amount consumers are doing online and at the same time, from streaming high definition movies and TV, gaming, online shopping to using mobile devices over wireless broadband, is growing every year and this pace shows no signs of slowing. That's why it's great to see developers across the region teaming up with Openreach to provide future-proofed ultrafast full fibre access to thousands of new homes in the county. With housing supply increasing at unprecedented rates, and more people purchasing newly built homes, improving

connectivity for new homes will help to accelerate the country's digital revolution.”

As part of ambitious plans to make ultrafast broadband speeds available to 12 million homes and businesses by the end of 2020 – Openreach will now build an FTTP network for free to all new housing developments with 30 or more homes. This is dependent on developers registering their site with Openreach and working together early in the building process. Openreach has promised to connect new homes within nine months of contracting with a developer.

Any developments with two or more homes will have access to the company's existing or planned fibre infrastructure, either funded entirely by Openreach or, where necessary, with the help of co-funding from the developer. Construction of Fibre to the Premises infrastructure (the ducting, poles and wires) will be carried out for free on developments of more than 30 premises. Standard connection and ongoing service provider charges will apply and excess construction charges will continue to apply where the site is more than 4.5 kilometres from Openreach's existing fibre network.

New ultrafast broadband network launched in Newcastle upon Tyne

March 2018



The latest ultrafast broadband, known as Gfast, is now available to thousands of people in Newcastle upon Tyne

The city is one of the first UK locations to pilot Gfast technology, offering download speeds up to 330Mbps – about seven times the UK average. People using Gfast can download a two hour HD film in just 90 seconds, a 45 minute HD TV show in 16 seconds and a nine hour audio book in three seconds.

Openreach, the business responsible for Britain's largest phone and broadband network, has so far made the technology available to more than 390,000 homes and businesses ahead of a nationwide rollout, which will see ultrafast broadband reaching 12 million UK premises by 2020.

Locations in Newcastle set to benefit include parts of the following wards: East Gosforth, Kenton, Parklands, West Gosforth, Dene, Parklands and Weetslade. Derek Richardson, Openreach's programme director for the North East, said: "It's great news that Newcastle is playing a leading role in the development of this exciting new technology. Gfast will help transform the broadband picture in the UK by ushering in a new era where ultrafast speeds are widely available. The amount people are doing online and at the same time, from streaming high definition movies, TV, gaming and online shopping to using mobile devices over wireless broadband, is growing every year and this pace shows no sign of slowing. We need to stay ahead in order to meet the evolving needs of our customers. Gfast will allow us to do that by building on the investment we have made in fibre to date. It will transform the UK broadband landscape from superfast to ultrafast, and it will reach the largest number of people in the quickest possible time."

Gfast technology allows ultrafast speeds, which previously required fibre optic cables to be run all the way to a property (Fibre to the Premises - FTTP), to be transmitted over existing copper lines and fibre broadband cabinets. It's enabling Openreach to make ultrafast speeds available more quickly to a much larger number of homes and businesses than if it focused on FTTP alone. Gfast technology is expected to exceed a million premises by the end of the fiscal year.

So far, Openreach has made ultrafast broadband available to hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses across the country – using Gfast and Fibre-to-the-Premises (FTTP) services, which are both capable of delivering ultrafast speeds. More than 770,000 customers already have access to these ultrafast technologies.

The rollout of Gfast in Newcastle upon Tyne, builds on the existing deployment of fibre technology where nearly 98 per cent of homes and businesses already have access to high-speed broadband. Derek Richardson added: "Pilot schemes, such as this one in Newcastle, are important for us to fully test the new network in a number of different situations before it reaches millions of homes and businesses across the UK. The areas we've chosen are carefully selected based on a variety of factors, including engineering considerations and the need to test the technology for a range of communities. We'd encourage anybody in one of the pilot areas to take part. You can check if you're eligible with the Openreach fibre checker by entering your postcode or telephone number."

Anybody wanting more information or wishing to check if they can get Gfast should visit www.openreach.co.uk/ultrafast