The Attack Surface of the Japanese Technology and Media Industries

Japan is the third largest economy in the world, a distinction that makes it a natural target for cyber attackers. As a global hub for many industries including automotive, financial services, and manufacturing, Japan's attack landscape far exceeds just companies and organizations within the geographic boundaries of Japan.

The Japanese technology and media industries are major players on the world stage and among the most complex and robust markets on the globe making them lucrative targets for cyberattackers. In our latest report we take a look at the entire Japanese attack landscape and analyze the technology, media, and telecommunications industries specifically. Below are a few of the key trends and findings our researchers uncovered.

Information Technology:

Typically, technology companies represent valuable targets for attackers seeking to access personally identifiable information about their customers. The companies themselves are rarely the targets. Information technology vendors often have troves of high-valued customer data and our research uncovered ransomware groups are particularly enamored with targeting these organizations.

These types of breaches often have wide-ranging ramifications as was seen with one breach in 2022 that is still causing issues. An IT vendor was compromised and at least 10 of the customer's experienced breaches as a result. One such customer was a cyber insurance provider which had a significant amount of useful information attackers can use for planning other ransomware attacks.

Overseas subsidiaries are once again a major vulnerability for Japanese companies as exemplified in a Tokyo-based Fortune 500 company which was compromised through a Singaporean subsidiary and subsequently compromised 62 other organizations including government customers. Among them may have been the Japanese military.

Gaming:

The gaming industry is also an interesting target as Japan has a particularly strong market in videogaming with many of the largest companies based there. In July 2022, the ransomware group BlackCat (believed to be the rebranding of DarkSide) compromised the gaming company behind titles such as Elden Ring and Pac-Man. Again, it is believed that the compromise came from partners or subsidiaries outside of Japan.

These are just a few of the impacts attackers have had on the Japanese technology and media industries in just the last few years. For more on this sector and several others, read the report.