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As battle widens, Israeli cyber security firms lead from the front

With Internet security a rapidly growing business globally, Israeli firms are amongst most sought after • Waterfall Security Solutions employs hardware-based unidirectional fiber optic links to protect against attacks from external networks.

Ilan Gattegno



Internet security is a rapidly growing business, with firms in Israel among the most sought after for their innovation and success. | Photo credit: Reuters

As the "cyberwar" widens, and nations' critical infrastructures come under increasing attack, Internet security firms are increasingly filling the void of vital online security – a void created not only because the firms are far ahead of many government agencies, but also because of the rapid nature of the new form of warfare itself.

Hackers are known to spread their attacks across a wide field of targets, although it is important to distinguish between attacks against private companies' Internet sites from those against the vital strategic infrastructures of nations. The latter include electricity grids, banks and financial institutions, water and transportation systems, as well as other systems in which disruption could seriously affect the daily lives of millions of people.

Internet security is a rapidly growing business across the globe, with firms in Israel among the most sought after for their innovation and success.

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Israeli company Waterfall Security Solutions, for instance, provides a range of cyber security services for industrial networks and critical infrastructures and has patented a unique closed-system technology. The company took part in the 2012 Annual Cyber Security Convention on Monday in Petach Tikva, alongside a wide range of cyber security firms. The convention focused on highlighting tools, market trends, threats, continuous improvements in Israeli cyber security organizations, and foreseeable cyber security improvement trends. According to its website, Waterfall Security Solutions is a provider of "unidirectional security gateways and data diodes for process control systems, SCADA systems, remote monitoring and segregated networks, enabling secure and real-time data transfer, from critical networks to external/business networks."

The company specializes in non-routable communication systems, a patent technology consisting of hardware-based unidirectional fiber optic links. The technology physically enforces unidirectional replication from the industrial network to the corporate network and segregates the industrial network, making any inbound data flow physically impossible. A country or company's utilities' critical assets are protected, the company says, against any cyber attacks, incoming viruses or human errors originating from external networks.

Waterfall says its products have been deployed in many critical national infrastructures, homeland security agencies and mission critical environments in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia and Israel.

Cyber security firms are divided into four groups: software developers, consultants who formulate the best practices and cyber security policies, programmers who integrate security systems into existing platforms, and firms which specialize in simulating cyber attacks (so-called "white-hat hackers") to find breaches in the system and improve security.

On Monday, a consortium of cyber security firms met with managers of Israeli sites who had suffered attacks, as well as others who are potentially at risk, to assess their vulnerability and decide which cyber security tools to employ. Access to several Israeli sites from Arab countries has been blocked.

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