Life Sciences Cybersecurity Executive Roundtable Meeting Summary
January 14, 2020

Life sciences cybersecurity executives sat down for a conversation with research scientists from Cybersecurity at MIT Sloan (CAMS) at our fall roundtable, generously hosted by Anthony Murabito and Wave Life Sciences. Following a meet and greet and reception, participants discussed important challenges their teams encounter during the "burning issues" session. Following this hot topics discussion, CAMS Researcher, Dr. Keman Huang, shared MIT research and led a discussion about the cybersecurity risks of storing information in the Cloud.

Hot Topics

The first topic discussed was ***board reporting***: How does the board interpret risk and how do companies prove security? Currently boards are looking for the results of a cyber security audit; boards want to know where the gaps are in security and what the organization is doing to mitigate them. Boards are required to have a cyber security expert on staff now, but all board members are becoming more aware of cyber issues and risk. Because of this, they often request information on how a company is training their employees in security awareness and risk management. When the CIO presents information to the board, they should provide a road map for data management and plans for the future regarding the adoption of new services like Cloud.

The second topic of discussion was ***vendor security*****:** How can executives protect their companies from vendor breaches? When it comes to 3rd and 4th level vendors on the supply chain, obtaining access to these vendors at all is a hurdle. As when dealing with any outside company, you have to have a certain level of risk you are willing to tolerate. When choosing primary vendors, requiring them to have cyber security insurance is crucial. Many vendors try to implement contracts that dissociate them from the consequences of a breach. Legal responsibility is low with these contracts, so find vendors with insurance and develop a relationship with them so everyone knows who the company is relying on.

CAMS Research Presentation

Dr. Keman Huang, CAMS Researcher, presented on *Misconceptions About Cybersecurity in the Cloud and the Role of Cybersecurity Providers.* No one thinks their security is ever enough, but what do companies have to provide to be secure in the cloud? Does the cloud provider take care of all the security? Dr. Huang seeded a discussion about competencies and skills needed for managing cybersecurity in the cloud. Cloud is treated as another procurement issue; traffic management, configuration, auditing: all of these are extentions of IT. Organizations may assume when they choose Cloud they are getting elevated security, and for small or medium sized businesses this might be better than what they had, but configuring Cloud correctly does not mean configuring security correctly. Cloud providers should be run through a rigorous vender assessment; it cannot be assumed that the severs are secure just because basic security measures are built into the service. It's necessary to make sure that the Cloud security is linked to the non-Cloud security practices.

About Cybersecurity at MIT Sloan

Cybersecurity at MIT Sloan brings together thought leaders from industry, academia, and government with MIT faculty, researchers and students to address strategy, management, governance and organization of cybersecurity of critical infrastructure using an interdisciplinary approach.

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