Protect the Individual, Protect the Enterprise, Protect Society

Experts universally recognize that humans are the weak link in information security. Yet while vast amounts are spent to protect individuals in their roles as employees, these same individuals also have a personal digital life, as consumers, where they are not only less protected, but where their activity can create risk that transfers to their employers.

To close this gap in defenses and protect their customers, enterprise security vendors must add tools to protect individuals in their personal lives, too.

Conceptually, simplified versions of many of the same information security tools and best practices used by large organizations can be applied to protect individuals. Just as there is a reference architecture in the enterprise world, one can envision a parallel architecture for consumers, backed-up by an extensible suite of services that integrates a range of offerings across the security and privacy ecosystem.

However, enterprise security vendors are ill-equipped to respond to the consumer market, where effectiveness must be matched by simplicity. Competition and customer requirements have driven enterprise vendors to deliver increasingly complex products, often including new capabilities that have been acquired from other companies and lack seamless integration. These factors work against the ease-of-use that consumers demand.

The failure to take a holistic approach to cybersecurity is one contributing factor to the constant drumbeat of cyberattacks and data breaches that has gravely damaged trust in the ability of organizations to protect their customers.

Diminishing trust further intensifies demand for tools that provide stronger personal control over one's identity and privacy. While some people are blissfully willing to share intimate personal details in social communities, people generally have quite different views when it comes to the impersonal, commercial realms of their life. When vendors fill-up their inbox with unwanted email, share their email address with related parties, fail to act on their unsubscribe requests promptly, if at all, and then even fail to prevent a breach of their address, users are justifiably outraged, but bereft of tools to take control.

Companies that respond to these individual and collective public needs for tools that marry simplicity with effectiveness will provide a great service not only for individuals but for the organizations that employ them and society overall.

ManyMe is one company working to provide individuals with stronger privacy, security and control in their personal digital lives. For more information, please visit ManyMe.com to watch the short introductory videos and create a free account.