

Cybersecurity and compliance issues created by coronavirus



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WHAT SPECIAL ISSUES DO BUSINESS FACE WHEN DEALING WITH CORONAVIRUS?

When we hear about Coronavirus, most of us think about all the horrible things - getting quarantined, being in a hospital - these are all very scary. But even in light of these devastating situations and times, it's important that businesses continue to keep running. And how do we do that? I think one of the most important ways, not only in terms of keeping morale within the company, but a more important way in order to continue the business is to allow for some flexibility. So working from home is one of the commonly seen methods of dealing with Coronavirus in Hong Kong, for jobs that actually allow this type of execution of work. A lot of companies have boosted their IT systems to allow for remote working access. And in order to account for any potential compliance issues, there has been an increase in relation to the types of technologies and approaches that businesses can take. For example, if it is a work from home type of situation, a lot of businesses have adopted a two-factor authentication system, so as to allow a certain network (usually containing sensitive data or a client data) to only be accessible not only with a password, but also with a notification sent to the employee's phone so that they can type in the password when it's triggered. So that's a two-factor authentication. A lot of regulatory authorities actually have guidelines on the use of this in terms of technological tools. So this is something that a lot of businesses have been looking into for the past few years. But with the Coronavirus in place, I think a lot of businesses have pushed further into developing this system of working. Another commonly seen trend that businesses in Hong Kong have now started to apply is teleconferencing. Usually meetings are taking place face-to-face, especially if there's sensitive data being discussed. But now, it's best to avoid face-to-face contact, which is why a lot of businesses have now taken to not only conducting telephone calls for meetings, but also telephone conferencing. Without naming names, I understand many of these programs actually allow you to share your screen so that the participants can all be on the same page when a discussion is taking place. For companies, that is a very helpful tool, but they should also be aware of how to manage these screen-sharing situations. So in order to push forward to keep these teleconferencing meetings in play, many companies have actually circulated policies to employees as to how to make use of these conferencing systems, how to ensure that privileged or confidential data is not accidentally disclosed while presenting in these conferences, and



also how to ensure that - if there are parties that have to do breakout sessions - how to ensure that the sessions are actually separated so that the main meeting room participants will not be privy to the conversations that are taking place in the breakout sessions. These are some ways in order to deal with maintaining data or confidential data in certain situations.

HOW CAN COMPANIES PROVIDE A SAFE WORKING SPACE FOR EMPLOYEES?

One way, which I mentioned earlier, is by way of remote working. This allows for company employees just to completely stay at home. But sometimes that's not really feasible for the type of operations that the company may run. So, another way, that many businesses are now trying to implement, is flexible working hours

so that employees can avoid rush hour traffic and they can avoid crowds during lunchtime in order to change their lunches. These are very practical ways of dealing with how to manage, or at least lower, the risk of employees being in contact with a virus, and also to allow the employees a feeling of more confidence that the companies are willing to be flexible about help to maintain their safety. ■



Hin Han Shum speaking at our Digital Wealth Asia Forum in Hong Kong



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