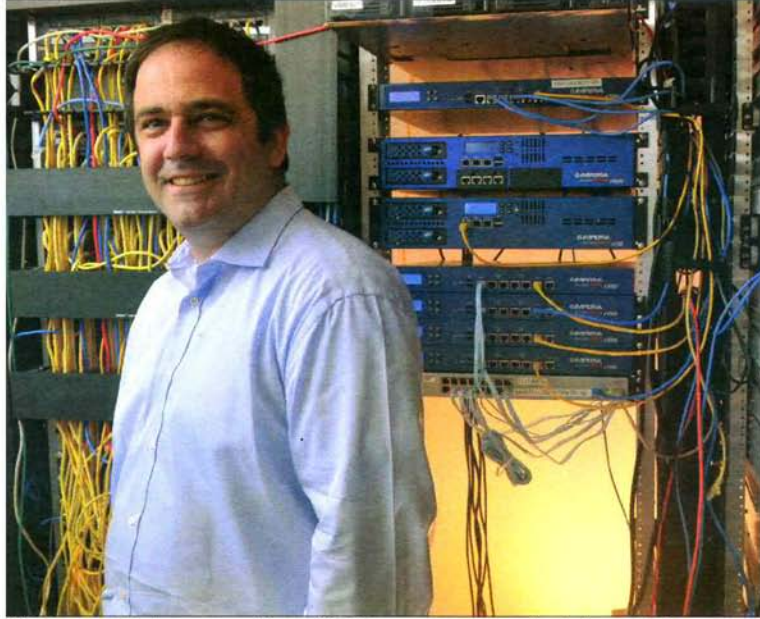


BEST SECURITY COMPANY

CEO Kramer predicts the company will grow 40 to 50 percent year over year for the foreseeable future.

Imperva throws one-two punch at security threats

BY JANET KORBLUM
San Francisco Business Times Contributor

Everybody knows that if you want to stop a hacker from stealing data, you have to keep him out of your network.

But what happens when that hacker is already inside?

That's the question Redwood Shores-based data security company Imperva has asked and answered, said CEO Shlomo Kramer.

Traditionally, data security protection has been about locking out intruders, just as physical security firms focus on locks to keep intruders out of a building.

WINNER

IMPERVA

HQ: Redwood Shores.

Employees: 250 plus.

What it does: Data security for companies and governments.

CEO: Shlomo Kramer.

Founded: 2002.

Funding raised: \$40 million.

Growth: 30 percent growth from 2008 to 2009, 57 percent growth first quarter 2009 to first quarter 2010.

But these days, it's not enough to keep the bad guys from entering the network, Kramer said. Bad guys can often get into the networks legitimately. Just about anyone — including thieves — can become bank customers or join health companies that keep our health records. Employees also have access to data.

"Security is moving from the problem of protecting the infrastructure assets of the networks to protecting the data of the organization," Kramer said.

Imperva offers a two-tiered solution: its products help companies protect their information. And when necessary, those products can decide on their own to lock down data from inside the network.

"We have a web application firewall product that will provide protection for the web applications against the hackers sitting in Russia and we have a database activity monitoring solution that will provide protection against the internal

marketing analyst accessing the database," Kramer said.

That one-two punch makes Imperva "a fairly innovative company," said Chenxi Wang, principle analyst at Forrester Research. "The combination of both capabilities gives customers a more complete view of what happens with your data."

The rest of the security industry is moving, like Imperva, to protect actual data and not just networks, but Imperva was a leader in this.

With more than 250 employees, Imperva is on a path of growth, Kramer said. It grew revenue 30 percent from 2008 to 2009. And in the first quarter of this year it saw a 57 percent increase in growth compared with the same quarter last year.

"The most important information is the data in the data center — the credit card, the patient information," Kramer said. "That was the vision that started the company and that is still a very unique vision in the market."

Because of that vision — and because the global market is far from saturated, Kramer sees a lot of room to keep growing, at "40 to 50 percent year-over-year."

Happy customers are behind that growth. TechSoup Global, a nonprofit that helps other nonprofits with technology, chose Imperva to provide security after the company experienced an attack, said Richard Collins, director of security. TechSoup didn't lose data, but it took their systems down for a few days.

"We liked the interface and the ability to control policies in a very discreet manner," Collins said.

And of course, they also got a great deal on price. "We are very pleased with the product."

Despite its success, as a small company in the security field Imperva needs to stay both innovative and nimble as they compete with Cisco, Microsoft and IBM, said John Pescatore a Gartner Group analyst.

"It takes a lot of innovation to make sure you get noticed," Pescatore said. And, he added, Imperva is "very well positioned to take advantage of the growth."

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