2020 has seen a surge in ransomware cases, with organisations falling victim across a wide range of sectors and geographies. The BAE Systems Threat Intelligence team has been tracking this closely. Here we present five key factors behind this perfect storm, as well as statistics on the scale of the problem.

1. Phishing
2. Exploits (e.g. in VPNs)
3. RDP
4. 3rd Party/MSP
5. +Others

Phishing
Exploits (e.g. in VPNs)
RDP
3rd Party/MSP
+Others...

Network intrusion options

actions taken on victim network

Propagate
Exfiltrate
Data
Encrypt Data

Actions taken on victim network

Criminal groups are more skilled, with pen test tools being used extensively.

Increase the Status
- Publish sample data on blog
- Threaten further leaks
- Full data leak / auction

Data theft and extortion tactics are working, and are being copied by more groups.

If no ransom is paid

Ransom payments are fuelling the cycle.

Demand
ransom

Data theft and extortion tactics are working, and are being copied by more groups.

If no ransom is paid

Criminal collaboration and service model is growing.

Victim blog tracking – the scale of the problem

We have gathered blog publications indicating a total of over 800 ransomware victims by operators of 15 different ransomware campaigns.

18%
61%
7%

Victims from industrial and manufacturing sector
Victims have annual revenue less than $50m
Victims have annual revenue over $1bn

260%

Increase in number of victims identified on ransomware blogs between April and September 2020.

~10%

Of victims removed from ransomware blogs, indicating potential ransom payment.

Victims in the United States:
Victims in Europe:
Victims in the Rest of World:

Global distribution of ransomware victims

Ransomware operators are using many different access routes.

Victim blog tracking – the scale of the problem

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