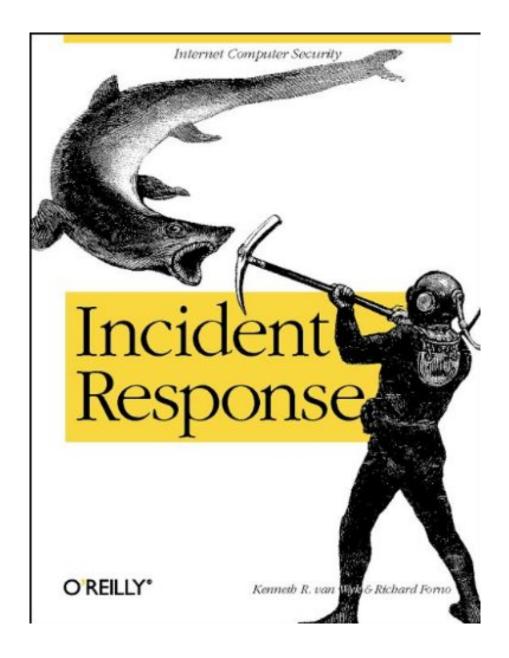


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Seventy percent of businesses reported security breaches in 2000, and the rate is on the rise. Is your organization ready to respond to such an incident head-on? Will you be able to tell whether an incident is an attack or a glitch in the system? Do you know how to assess the possible damage from an incident? Incident Response shows you how to answer questions like these and create a plan for exactly what to do before, during, and after an incident. The authors of Incident Response draw on years of experience developing and taking part in incident response teams at the highest levels of government and business. They guide you through both the technical and administrative details of effective incident response planning as they describe:

- What incident response is, and the problems of distinguishing real risk from perceived risk
- The different types of incident response teams, and advantages and disadvantages of each
- Planning and establishing an incident response team
- State of the Hack® information about different types of attacks
- Recommendations and details about available tools for incident response teams
- Resources available to incident response teams

Whatever your organization's size or purpose, Incident Response shows how to put in place an incidentresponse process that's as planned, efficient, and businesslike as any other IT operation in a mature organization. Incidents happen, and being able to respond to them effectively makes good business sense.

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3 of 3 people found the following review helpful.

Good for organizing IR team

By Anton

At only 200 or so pages, the Incident Response is too brief to qualify as the Bible of Incident Response, but it certainly comes close. This excellent manual by two renowned security experts describes the administrative measures needed to create, train, maintain and operate an information incident response team. It also sheds light on sniffers, intrusion detection systems, vulnerability scanners, computer forensics utilities and other

"tools of the trade" for the emergency response professional.

Co-author Kenneth R. van Wyk helped found CERT/CC, chaired the FIRST organization and helped launch the first commercial incident response team in the US. His collaborator, Richard Forno, established the first computer incident response team for the US House of Representatives, served as Chief Security Officer for the domain registry Network Solutions and has written a book on information warfare.

Together, they have produced a book that will be most useful to large companies -- since smaller ones just cannot afford a dedicated internal emergency team. However, they also discuss the considerations of choosing an outside team (public or commercial), which will definitely help smaller companies, as will the simple steps for handling incidents before the response team flies in. The team lifetime is outlined in a clear and concise manner: planning, reporting, staffing, training, developing procedures and testing them in real life. Additionally, van Wyk and Forno explain the logical steps to take in case of a penetration and they have optimized these steps for deployment under pressure.

Overall, Incident Response is a great book to own if you are an information security professional or an IT professional wearing the "security hat." It is also extremely useful if you are a manager tasked with creating a response team, because it can serve as a summary of special knowledge developed in the area.

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Good management level introduction to incident response

By Ben Rothke

Anyone who has flown on a commercial airliner knows well of the pre- flight safety briefings. From the water floatation safety cushions to the oxygen masks, it's the cabin crew's duty to ensure that every passenger is briefed. Why is this safety briefing so vital? Because when a passenger is gasping for air at 39,000 feet, it is unlikely that they will get a response when they press the flight attendant call button.

In many ways, computer incident response is akin to airplane safety; you need to know

what to expect when the inevitable occurs. If an organization attempts to manage things

ex post facto -- whether it is a depressurization at cruise level or a hack attack - their response will invariably fail. As such, the need for IT-based incident response strategy is crucial.

Why is incident response a necessity? According to data from the Computer Security Institute (and backed-up by many other security surveys), more than 70% of businesses reported security breaches in the year 2000. While 70% may have answered the survey affirmatively, the reality is that every business on the planet has security breaches. It's simply a matter of how effectively they handle the incident. System and network hacks are to be expected; how well they are handled, and how the damage is mitigated is up to the organizations and their respective incident response teams.

Although I used the airline example, the authors of Incident Response compare it to fire fighting. Incident response is akin to firefighting in that it involves the coordination of various disciplines, namely: prevention, planning, detection, analysis, containment, investigation, eradication, and post-incident analysis.

The difference between a fire and incident response is that whereas a fire can be extinguished with perhaps one or two of the controls just mentioned, effective incident response requires that all eight of the controls be effectively carried out. Another difference between firefighting and incident response is that humanity has thousands of years of experience in putting out fires. Computer security, however, has only been around for a few decades. From an incident response perspective, the CERT/CC (Computer Emergency Response Team Coordination Center) is only 13 years old. The fact that Smokey the Bear is older than information security and incident response should be humbling to those in technology.

The problem within many elements of corporate information technology is that they don't

understand the intricacies involved with incident response. With that, Incident Response provides a non-technical introduction to the rudiments of setting up an incident response team. Many technology managers don't know the difference between Certs candy and the CERT organization. For those managers, this book will be a good start toward teaching them how to deal with the inevitable.

Overall, Incident Response is a thorough introduction to incident response. The authors go into detail about defining what an incident is and analyzing its various components to show how a multi-disciplinary approach is required to rectify the situation. Those of us in technology easily understand the need for incident response; unfortunately, many IT managers think that incident response can be handled in a much more informal and unofficial way. Such an erroneous management attitude will only lead to many undetected security incidents.

Although Forno and Van Wyk give a good overview of incident response, the topic is far too broad to be thoroughly covered in this monograph alone. For those who need a deeper and more technical look at incident response and its associated field of computer forensics, the following books will likely be beneficial:

• Incident Response: A Strategic Guide to Handling System and Network Security Breaches by Russell Shumway & Gene Schultz, New Riders Publishing 2002; ISBN: 1578702569 2002

• Incident Response: Investigating Computer Crime by Chris Prosise & Kevin Mandia, McGraw-Hill Professional Publishing 2001; ISBN: 0072131829

• Computer Forensics -- Incident Response Essentials by Warren Kruse & Jay Heiser, Addison-Wesley 2001, ISBN: 0201707195.

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Very helpful - management oriented, not techno-geeky

By Gina Reynolds

The book is a great introduction to incident handling, and is appropriate for both systems folks as well as their managers. This is not the heaviest security book in the world and that's because it doesn't get bogged down in the nitty-gritty technology stuff of computer security. (If you want a hand-holding how-to-do-it book, there are others better suited.)

Rare for a technology book, they take a management approach instead of a purely technical one, and thus probably means they have a wider target audience that will benefit from it. Also, the book isn't Unix- or Windows- based, what they talk about is handy for any computing platform for any size company.

However it does do a great job of introducing you to incident response - why it's needed and what options you have for it. They are correct that it is a process not a solution.

The tools section is a good overview and introduction - by no means complete - and the authors even say that it's not all-incompassing. I guess we all know how fast software changes, and that it's impossible to cover everything.

See all 8 customer reviews...

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