

# 2018 to see more ransomware attacks, cyber-extortion: Expert

DT News Network  
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**Manama**

**R**ansomware and cyber-extortion will continue to rise in 2018, according to Scott Manson, Cybersecurity head - Middle East and Africa, Cisco.

2018 will bring more connectivity, digital transformation initiatives, and data to companies, along with new cybersecurity threats and landscape changes making cybersecurity one of the most crucial issues that need to be addressed in the present scenario, Manson opined.

“Incidents like WannaCry and Netya illustrate, our adversaries are becoming more and more creative in how they architect their

attacks. But in the end, it’s more about who has not been breached vs who is the latest. The world of cybersecurity witnessed changes frequently with security experts trying to gain know-how about what is happening and how they can mitigate it. The universal fact is that we have to accept that we can’t protect everything, but we can find a way to control what matters the most,” he commented.

His cybersecurity predictions for 2018 includes more IoT attacks that will be motivated by financial gain, increased automation in cybersecurity response and continued growth in the use of ransomware and cyber-extortion tools.

“Shift in focus from protection to prevention,



Scott Manson, Cybersecurity Lead - Middle East and Africa, Cisco

historically IT firms focused heavily on perimeter network security to protect networks from cyberattacks. However, recent breaches have shown that perimeter security alone

isn’t sufficient to combat persistent threats. By focusing on more proactive and offensive approaches, rather than strictly defensive, that help detect and respond to possible

threats rather than react, it is possible to stop threats before they expose the organization to risk. In the future it will most likely move to prediction of what’s coming before anything happens,” he said. “It’s only a matter of time before every house and company is connected through the Internet of Things (IoT). We predict that as many as 1 million new connections per hour will be added to the internet by 2020 expanding the attack surface and making IoT vulnerabilities more critical and more dangerous. IoT will move from being seen as a massive security risk in the enterprise, to a critical part of an Enterprise’s security posture. To meet the security challenges of the IoT — an attack surface that is both

growing rapidly and becoming increasingly difficult to monitor and manage, a proactive and dynamic approach to security, and a layered defense strategy, are the keys to protecting IoT devices from infection and attack — or at least, mitigating the impact when some are inevitably compromised by adversaries,” he stated.

“Unfortunately, ransomware attacks will almost certainly become more pervasive and varied in 2018. Some attacks will adhere to the brute-force model of infect, lock and extort, while others will be more sophisticated. Evolutions in ransomware, such as the growth of Ransomware-as-a-Service, will make it easier for criminals, regardless of skill set, to carry out these attacks.

## BIC National Day Fest from Thursday

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**B**ahrain International Circuit (BIC), the home of motorsport in the Middle East, is all set to host this year’s BIC National Day Festival, from Thursday.

The festival is one of the biggest annual events in the country. This year, it will be held at the BIC premises in Sakhir for four successive nights until December 17.

“There will be something for everybody at the festival, including a shopping bazaar featuring dozens of stalls representing local businesses, a wide variety of children’s activities and a play area, cultural and musical performances, and plenty of food and beverage outlets, plus so much more,” said a BIC press release.

The live music will be highlighted by some of the Arab world’s most popular artists who will be performing live on each night of the festival.

Big names such as Hanan Reza, Khalid Fouad, Najwa Karam, Asala and Majid Al Mohandis will be taking to the main stage at the BIC vending area to delight the kingdom’s music lovers.

Hanan Reza and Khalid Fouad will be the first to perform on the night of December 14.

Lebanese songbird Najwa Karam will then be taking to the stage on December 15, followed by Bahraini superstar Asala on December 16. Arab sensation Majid Al



The festival is one of the biggest events in the country

Mohandis will then bring the curtains down on the festival with a fantastic live show on December 17.

Aside from the concerts, another major attraction of the National Day festival will be the back-to-back nights of

spectacular fireworks displays, taking place December 16 and 17.

Gates will be open from 4pm to 10pm on each day. Tickets cost 500 fils apiece for each day and they are available at the entrance.

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