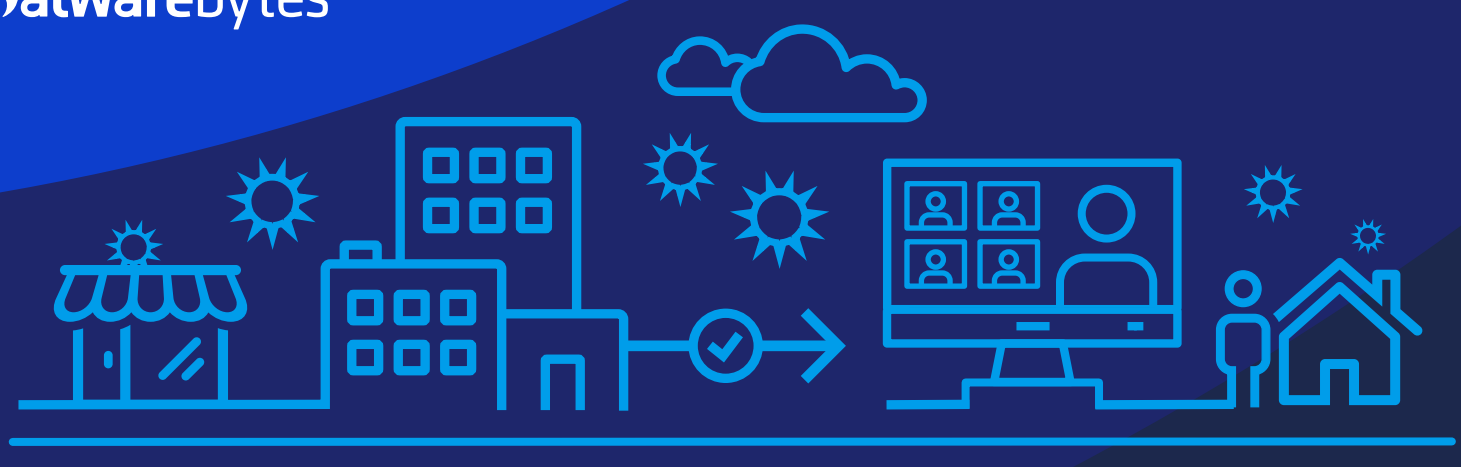
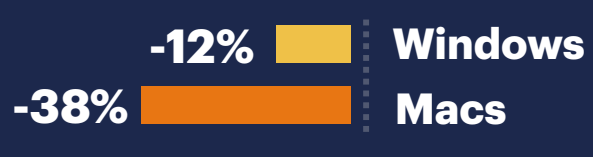
Malwarebytes



Exploring the State of Malware in 2021

Last year, threat actors continued to evolve their approaches and tactics—away from sheer numbers and toward more damaging, higher-precision attacks.

Fewer attacks



More damage

Staggering, record-setting demands from ransomware operators who hit:

Exploiting uncertainty in a difficult year

In 2020, attackers took advantage of COVID-19 and other disruptions to:

1 Exploit fear

As COVID-19 spread, cybercriminals pounced:

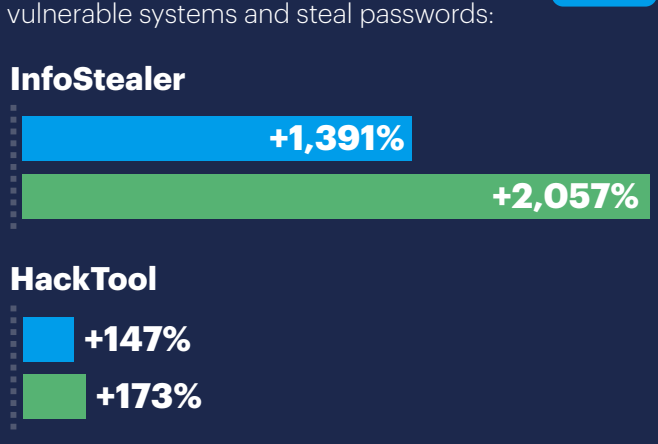
- → **Bogus health tips**
- → **Fraudulent requests for "charity donations"**

18M

By April 2020, Google was blocking **18 million** COVID-related spam emails every day.

2 Gather intel

Bad actors used more hacking tools and info-stealing malware to identify vulnerable systems and steal passwords:



3 Upgrade and evolve

Cybercriminals upped their game with more sophisticated tools and techniques:

- → **RagnarLocker**
  Learned to evade detection by hiding inside virtual machines
- → **RegretLocker**
  Sped up virtual hard drive encryption
- → **Egregor**
  Leaked stolen data through a "shame website"

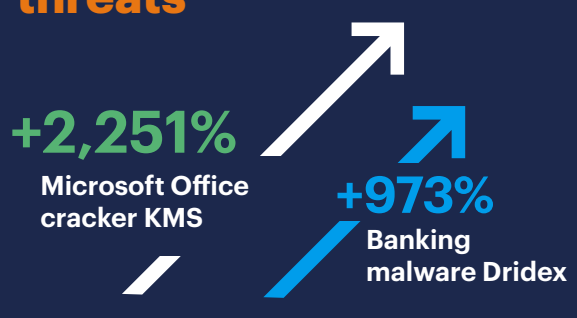
4 Attack

In 2020, targeted threats spared no one:

- → **Ransomware**
  forced hospitals to divert surgeries
- → **Cyberattacks**
  disrupted distance learning
- → **Egregor**
  successfully attacked Barnes & Noble, K-Mart, and Ubisoft
- → **Hackers**
  extorted $100M by threatening to publish sensitive data

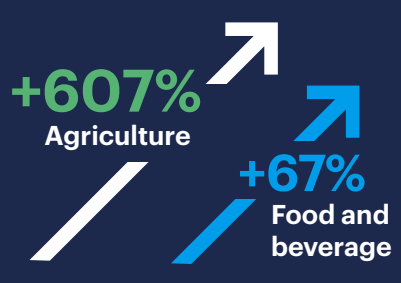
Evolving risks for businesses, services, and people

Evolving business threats



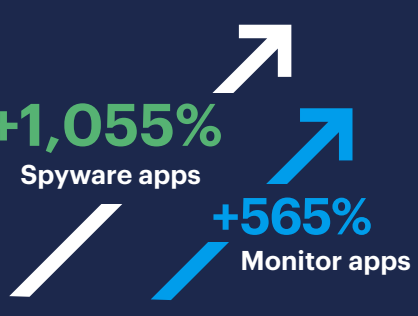
Attacks on essential services

Throughout the pandemic, industries that remained open become favorite targets for cybercriminals:



A jump in personal invasions

COVID-related lockdown orders helped fuel a surge in stalkerware-type applications from January through December of 2020:



Sneakier attacks

In 2020, one threat actually pretended to be another type of attack to mask its true intentions:

ThiefQuest

- → Masqueraded as Mac ransomware
- → Stole valuable data in the background

21,000 detections in 2020

Cybercrime will always evolve.

Learn more about the latest threats

malwarebytes.com/business

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