Kon Leong, ZL Technologies: Unstructured Data Analytics Becomes More Prevalent In 2021

This is part of an ongoing 2021 predictions series. We've asked top cyber experts to contribute their insights and expertise to provide a look ahead at what the new year may bring to cybersecurity.

2021 Prediction: Kon Leong, CEO and Founder, ZL Technologies

Unstructured analytics will be increasingly adopted as companies seek to uncover insight into their dark data—and their workforce.

"The impact of the 2020 pandemic will be remembered for the many forms of disruption it caused. In the greater scheme of things, the impact it has had on our workforce is significant —especially the shift to remote work. Now that this shift has been initiated, it is difficult to put the genie back in the bottle. From a management perspective, it creates challenges, not the least of which being understanding its effect on performance and keeping track of employees.

Therefore, in 2021, companies will begin seeking insight into this now-virtual workforce through analysis of employee-created data such as emails, files, and collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams. When harnessed, this dark data can offer insight into an organization's workforce, answering fundamental questions: Who are the top performers? What risks do we face, such as an insider threat? How is the workforce performing while remote? While the analytics capabilities to answer such questions have existed for some time, they've remained dormant due to the complications of managing this unstructured data and…structuring it. Data preparation has been both a decisive bottleneck and a resource and time drain in effective analytics. However, in 2021, a convergence of information governance and analytics may very well lead to a fast lane in bringing analytics to data and effectively bypassing much of the cleaning, scrubbing, and headaches."

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