

## RESEARCH:

# 667% INCREASE IN SPEAR-PHISHING ATTACKS TARGETING OIL INDUSTRY BETWEEN THE END OF FEBRUARY AND MARCH



### Hackers target oil industry

Recent research shows that the oil industry while coping with COVID-19 pandemic must also remain abreast of threats to stay safe from hackers. Barracuda cybersecurity researchers identified a 667% increase in spear-phishing attacks between the end of February and the following month.

### An example

One such campaign targeting oil companies all over the world occurred on March 31, whereby hackers impersonated a well-known engineering company with experience in on- and off-shore energy projects. The messages asked recipients to submit equipment and material bids for the Rosetta Sharing Facilities Project.

### Bid-related forms used

The emails also contained two attachments, which were supposedly bid-related forms. Downloading them infected a user's system with a type of trojan spyware not previously seen in other utility industry cyberattacks.

### Concentrated attack

A more geographically specific spear-phishing attempt targeted the gas sector on April 12. It centered on a relatively small number of shipping companies based in the Philippines. The emails asked them to send details associated with an oil tanker vessel and contained industry-specific language.

SOURCE:

CYWARE

REFERENCE:

Security Affairs