

# 2010 Symantec SMB New Year's Resolutions

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The New Year has always been a time for looking back to the past, and more importantly, forward to the coming year. It's a time to reflect on the changes we want or need to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. Symantec predicts that 2010 will be the year for SMBs to make resolutions that will protect their businesses, employees and customers all year long. Symantec has outlined the following resolutions for small businesses to follow in the New Year.

1. **I will take a self defense course for my information and infrastructure**—As small businesses combat an increasingly sophisticated threat landscape, employees remain the strongest defense in protecting an organization's information. Unfortunately, according to a 2009 survey from the National Cybersecurity Alliance (NCSA) and Symantec, only 28 percent of U.S. small businesses have formal Internet security policies, and just 35 percent provide any training to employees about Internet safety and security. Awareness of the risks and available safeguards are the first line of defense for the security of information systems and networks. SMBs should implement a security awareness program with training and guidelines to enable employees to carefully consider the security implications of their online behavior.
2. **I will make security a focus this year**—In order to protect their business and customers, SMBs will need to make security a priority in 2010. According to a recent Symantec survey, 33 percent lack even basic antivirus protection. With the rise of polymorphic threats and the explosion of unique malware variants observed in 2009, traditional approaches to antivirus, both file signatures and heuristic/behavioral capabilities, are not enough to protect against today's threats. Approaches to security that explore ways to include all software files, such as reputation-based security, will become key in the New Year.
3. **I will stay away from "phish and spam"**—It will be important for SMBs to protect themselves from malicious spam and phishing attacks in 2010. A recent Symantec Security survey noted that 42 percent of SMBs do not have an antispam solution. Dealing with spam and phishing can be a headache for any organization, and ignoring its prevention may lead to productivity and monetary loss for the business. The best way for SMBs to protect themselves is to deploy mail and web security software as well as stay informed of the tactics spammers and phishers are using to trick email and web users.
4. **I will be careful not to go "rogue"**—In the New Year, SMBs can expect to see the propagators of rogue security software scams take their efforts to the next level by hijacking users' computers, rendering them useless and holding them for ransom. Symantec has already observed some rogue antivirus vendors selling rebranded copies of free third-party antivirus software as their own offerings. Educating employees on rogue software, and deploying your own trusted antivirus and endpoint protection solutions will safeguard your business from these rogue vendors.
5. **I will have a backup plan**—Since an SMB's main focus is their customers, it is important to have a backup plan in times of disaster. Right now 47 percent of SMBs do not have a formal disaster preparedness plan, according to a recent Symantec disaster preparedness survey focused on SMBs. Having proper backup and recovery solutions in place is essential to prevent outages in times of disaster, as outages can be detrimental to a small business. It not only upsets the customer, but can lead to them evaluating competitors as a result.

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