

STOCK MARKET INDICATORS



We have written lots of articles about technology and what's coming next. Everyone has their preferences with regard to devices, operating systems, software and Apps and, everyone uses their equipment differently: from the student to the working mother to the corporate CEO or a country's President. But one aspect affects everyone uniformly: **CyberCrime**. By this we mean any form of malware, botnet, phishing, virus, hacker or identity thief that invade our lives – and they are everywhere. Today's cybercriminal is often not an individual but a criminal organization operated by tech professionals who then fund other illegal activities; their global reach allows crime to be committed at lightning speed. *INTERPOL* itself is involved in the detection and prevention of digital crimes (IGCI). Now fighting cyber crime can be seen as a prime factor even in the stock markets.

The recent security breaches at *J.P. Morgan* (potentially affecting around 76 million households), *Walmart*, and other major firms have served to highlight how critical this issue is. It is logical that with the proliferation of Smartphones, tablets and laptops and their mobility around the world this has served up a tremendous opportunity for illegal activities. Costs incurred by companies affected have already surpassed \$1 Trillion. By observing stock market prices, one can see that even tech companies such as *Intel* (owns *McAfee*) and *Cisco* (owns *ThreatGRID*) are investing time and money in fighting cybercrime – and market managers and investors know this is a growing influence. It is not about pure technology any more. Another observation made is that major banks are not sufficiently equipped to fend off these cyber attacks...lending a lack of confidence in their stability and adding to their existing problems.

With the burgeoning threat of these kinds of attacks, more new firms are forming and others who have been in the background are gaining importance: *Identity Theft 911*, *Credit.com*, *CyberSponse*, and *Palo Alto Networks* to name a few. The next-generation security vendors are now watching their stock prices rise simply because their businesses are in the limelight. For example, *Palo Alto Networks* watched its target price rise from \$110 to \$120 in one day and the company is currently worth \$7.8 billion – not too shabby for a company whose IPO was just in 2012. For those in the stock market as well as those not, taking a closer look at how certain companies trade is a great indicator of things to come. So the next time you get angry or frustrated because your E-mail provider or bank are asking you to confirm your identity, remember they are looking out for your best interests....as well as their own.