

InfoWatch: Fighting cybercrime with linguistic skills

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(from left) InfoWatch technology development director Ekaterina Pshehotskaya and lead linguist Tamara Sokolova are professionally trained linguist from the Moscow State University.

InfoWatch, a cybersecurity firm, is taking a unique approach by harnessing the skills of linguist and blending them with technology in combating data leakage.

When the term cybercrime is mentioned, most people envision a group of people hacking into an organisation's systems.

But what is less known is that more often than not, data is not so much stolen as it is leaked by the organisation's own employees.

This is what Russian cybersecurity firm InfoWatch is currently trying to prevent with its unique take on cybersecurity, which focuses on analysing the pattern of internal communications.

InfoWatch technology development director Dr Ekaterina Pshehotskaya believes linguistics is the key to identifying and preventing data leakage.

“There’s a global increase of data leaks in every field of business. While the picture we get from popular culture is of people hacking into systems, quite often data is leaked through social engineering, through insiders and even through physical transfer of data. From our own research, we found that for the first half of 2014, employees were responsible for 71% of leaks!” she said.

Whereas current antivirus and Internet protection suites usually protect inbound data traffic for the network and devices, InfoWatch monitors data movement at all stages in the internal network and utilises a Data Leakage Prevention (DLP) system to control the distribution of confidential information, which can trace leakages to the exact user/point within the network.

“Data leakage prevention analyses data traffic and even the behaviours of users to find unusual occurrences. We then zero in on these and delve further to track the leakage to its source,” said Pshehotskaya, who added that the linguistics experts at the core of InfoWatch’s DLP solution are in more demand than ever as the need for those with an understanding of different native languages is growing.

Pshehotskaya added that the solution works for detecting outbound text and images but not sound-based source, such as information divulged by customer service personnel.

However, she said that InfoWatch is continuously developing and improving its offerings and she does not rule out the audio-based detection technology being incorporated into the solution in the future.

[Source](#)