



# 2022 SONICWALL CYBER THREAT REPORT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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**SONICWALL**<sup>®</sup>

CYBER THREAT INTELLIGENCE FOR NAVIGATING  
THE UNKNOWN OF TOMORROW.

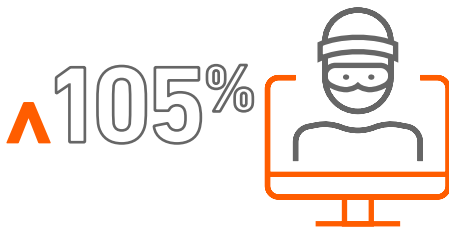
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Over the past 12 months, SonicWall Capture Labs threat researchers have diligently tracked the meteoric rise in ransomware, as well as trends and activity across all threat vectors. By compiling these findings in the *2022 SonicWall Cyber Threat Report*, we've ensured that small- and medium-sized businesses, government agencies, enterprises and other organizations have the actionable threat intelligence needed to combat the rising tide of cybercrime.

This *Executive Summary* offers a high-level overview of the year's most critical findings. For a more in-depth look at SonicWall's exclusive threat data, download the full report.

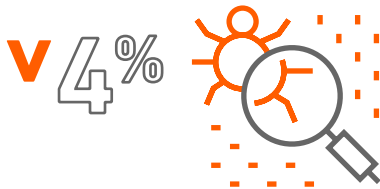
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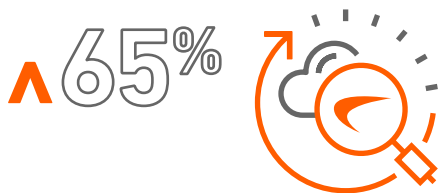
### **RANSOMWARE'S SAVAGE REIGN**

In 2021, SonicWall threat researchers recorded 623.3 million ransomware attacks globally — an average of 2,170 attempts per customer. This total marked a **105% increase over 2020 and more than triple the number seen in 2019**. The U.S. and the U.K., where attack volume jumped 98% and 227% respectively, suffered the brunt of the spike.



### **MALWARE MAY BE HEADED FOR A REBOUND**

Malware was slightly down again in 2021, marking both a third-straight year of decrease as well as a seven-year low. But while the overall trend is still positive, it's going in the wrong direction. **An uptick in attacks during the second half of 2021 almost completely erased the 22% drop** in malware that researchers had recorded at the midyear point, bringing the total decrease for 2021 to just 4% — less than a tenth of the 43% decrease logged in 2020.



### **RTDMI™ GETS SMARTER, FASTER, BETTER**

2021 was another banner year for SonicWall's patented Real-Time Deep Memory Inspection (RTDMI) technology. In Q4, **RTDMI found more never-before-seen malware variants than in any quarter since its introduction in 2018**. A total of 442,151 never-before-seen malware variants were identified in 2021, a 65% increase year-over-year and an average of 1,211 per day.



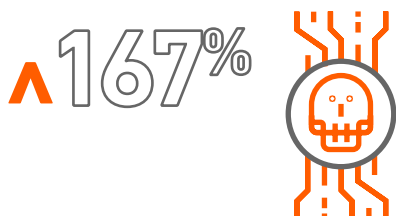
### **IoT MALWARE SHOWS SIGNS OF STABILIZING**

IoT malware volume rose 6% in 2021, totaling 60.1 million hits by year's end. While this isn't good news, it's at least better than it has been: In 2019 and 2020, IoT malware volume rose 218% and 66%, respectively. **With no corresponding slowdown in the proliferation of connected devices, this suggests that attack volumes may be leveling off.**



### **CRYPTOJACKING: BIGGER THAN EVER**

Cryptojacking continued to surge last year, rising 19% globally to 97.1 million — **the most attacks that SonicWall Capture Labs threat researchers have ever recorded in a single year.** This increase was reflected in every region except Asia, where attack volume dropped 37%.



### **ENCRYPTED THREATS SHOW TRIPLE-DIGIT INCREASE**

Encrypted threats increased sharply in 2021, climbing to 10.1 million attacks — a 167% increase year-over-year. In August, the number of **encrypted attacks broke the 1 million mark for the first time, then continued to rise, reaching nearly 2.5 million by year's end.**

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As a best practice, SonicWall routinely optimizes its methodologies for data collection, analysis and reporting. This includes improvements to data cleansing, changes in data sources and consolidation of threat feeds. Figures published in previous reports may have been adjusted across different time periods, regions or industries.

### **About SonicWall**

SonicWall delivers Boundless Cybersecurity for the hyper-distributed era and a work reality where everyone is remote, mobile and unsecure. By knowing the unknown, providing real-time visibility and enabling breakthrough economics, SonicWall closes the cybersecurity business gap for enterprises, governments and SMBs worldwide. For more information, visit [www.sonicwall.com](https://www.sonicwall.com) or follow us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



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