

Expertise you can trust

By the Numbers: Third Quarter 2021

A downturn in breach events this quarter contrasts with an increase in the number of individuals impacted per incident. Hacking is still the leading breach type, and networks continue to be the favorite target for attacks.

Down, but Not Out

In this quarter, **148 large breach events** were reported to HHS, which is fewer than last quarter. However, the number of individuals impacted reached a new high for this year of **12 million**.

Together, **hacking** and **unauthorized access** represent **90% of all reported events** this quarter, affecting **99% of all victims**. By contrast, only **nine breach events** occurred this quarter in the categories of loss and theft.

Business Associates/Business Partners

All but one of the attacks on business associates this quarter involved hacking or unauthorized access.

While the number of breaches impacting business associates has improved, the need to assess business associates' security has not changed.

Don't just sign a business associate agreement and hope for the best. Investigate what processes and practices they have in place to identify and mitigate

their vulnerability to hackers. Ask if solutions like multi-factor authentication are protecting critical systems.

Network Attacks

70 events targeting network servers were reported this quarter. While that is down from last quarter, the result was nearly **10 million** individuals impacted.

Is That Email Genuine?

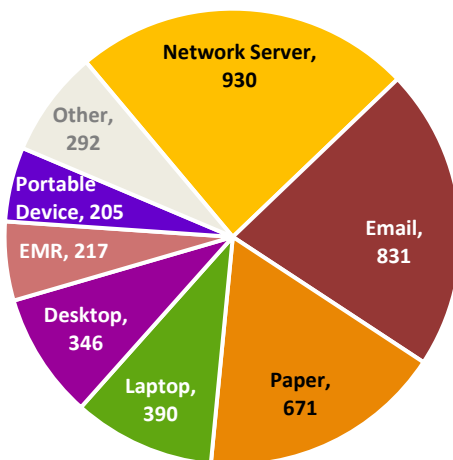
Email continues to be a major access point for ransomware attacks this quarter.

Email was once again the **second largest** source of data breaches, with **48 reported incidents** impacting over **one million individuals**.

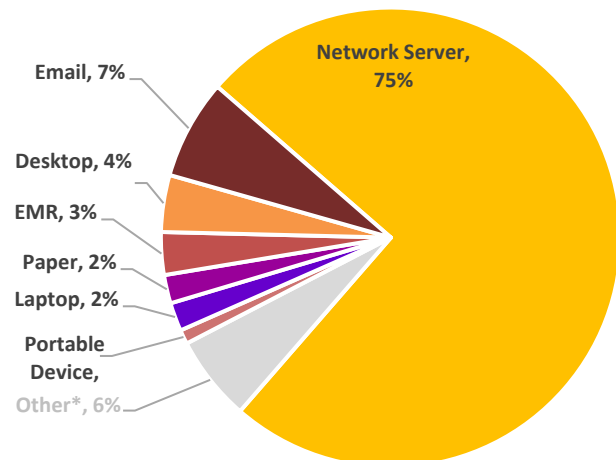
Bad actors still succeed in persuading people to click on links or open infected attachments, giving malware and ransomware an opportunity to gain access.

Anti-phishing campaigns and drills are great ways to raise awareness and promote safe email practices.

Q2 '21 Breaches - Data Location



Q2 '21 Patient Impact - Data Location



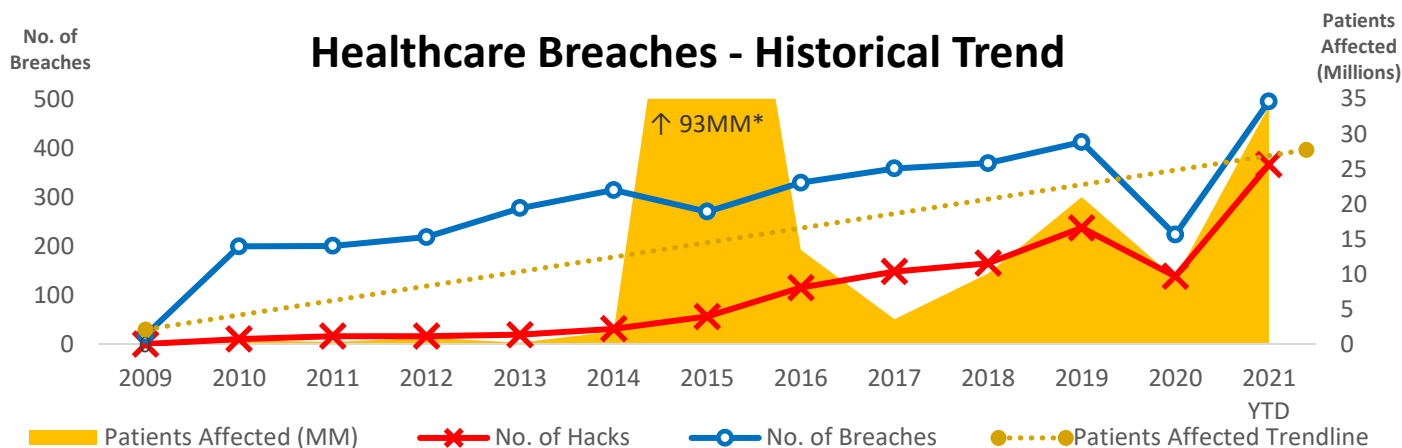
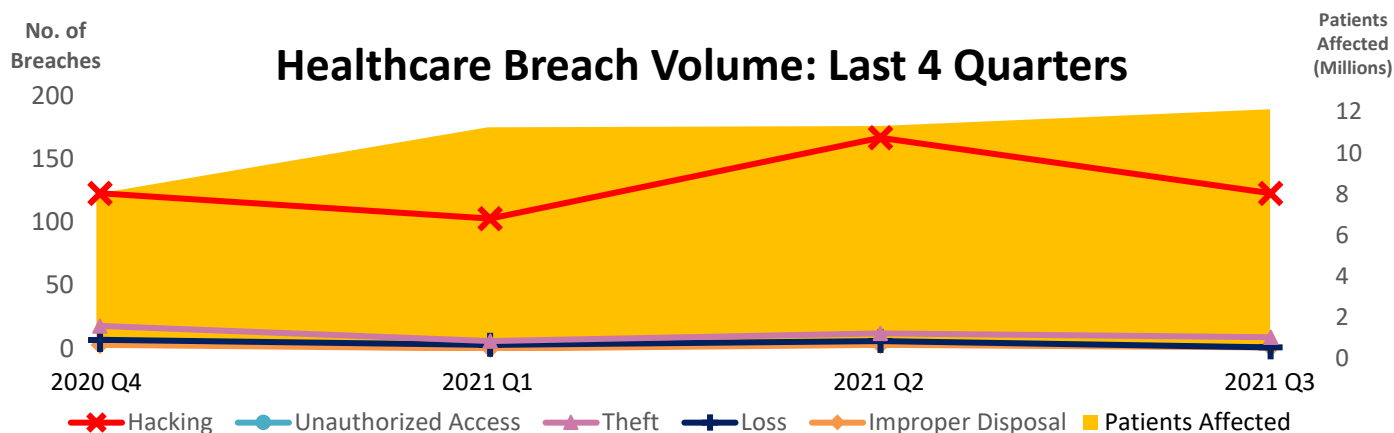
By the Numbers: Historical Trends

From 2009 to September 30, 2021, **3,882 breaches** that affected 500 or more patients were reported to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), for a total of **292,022,330 patients** affected.

Hacking and **unauthorized access** were the most common data breach types reported, jointly responsible for **94% of all impacted patients**. Only **nine breach events** this quarter were attributed to **loss and theft**.

As of the end of Q3, business associates and business partners have reported **1,050 incidents**, or **27% of all breaches**, impacting **106,508,861 patients**, or **37% of the total** since reporting began.

In this quarter alone, **32% of the breaches** and **35% of individuals impacted** were victimized due to events affecting business associates.



*Off chart due to 78.8MM impacted by 2015 Anthem breach

Breach Breakdown – 2009 to present:

Exploit Type	Number of Incidents	% of Total Incidents	Number of Patients	% of Patients
Hacking	1415	40%	223,345,837	80%
Unauthorized Access	978	26%	17,000,307	6%
Theft	943	24%	26,318,164	9%
Loss	208	5%	8,306,239	3%
Improper Disposal	101	3%	1,990,037	1%
Other*	89	2%	3,163,499	1%

Source: https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/breach/breach_report.jsf

* Category discontinued in 2010