The Reality of Cybersecurity in Lebanon Progress and Silver linings

Hisham Itani

Chairman and CEO of Resource Group Holding (RGH)

There hasn't been a time when Cybersecurity has been more central to our lives than it is today. The rise of smart phones, wearables and virtual reality applications like Pokemon go, are only some examples of how technology is changing the world and our understanding of big data. The world's information is growing at indescribable speed, and so is the need for its proper protection.

Cybersecurity is defined as the protection of computers, network, programs and data from unintended or unauthorized access, change or destruction. It is crucial not only to individuals, but also to governments, militaries, corporations, financial institutionsand all other entities, who own and transmit a great deal of confidential information. Unfortunately, cyberattacks and cybercrimes are all too common and are escalating in terms of sophistication, making issues of security more pressing than ever. In other words, the need to protect delicate business and personal information, and to maintain national security is immense, to say the least.

Lebanon has come a long way in terms of cybersecurity, picking up pace and meeting global trends. With 70% of the Lebanese population being internet users (World Bank, June 2016), this piece of information comes as no surprise. Of course, there's more to it than just that. This increase escalated the need for a proper weapon against cybercrime, raising an alarm to the Ministry of Interior and Banque du Liban, who have started directing their efforts towards finding solutions. Meanwhile, the private sector has been playing a major role in this regard. Inkript, a subsidiary of RGH Holding, is a Lebanese company specialized in security printing and identification solutions. The success of Inkript was capitalized into new ventures with one essential common denominator: technology. Its parent company RGH made major investments into early stage R&D and attracted Lebanese brains and talents from all over the world to create a center of excellence where in-house systems are developed and are competing with global players. As the groupfurther invested in new production

> *The rise of smart phones, wearable and virtual reality applications are only some examples of how technology is changing the world.*
>
> *The world's information is growing at indescribable speed, and so is the need for its proper protection.*

technologies, it allowed Inkript, its subsidiary, to proliferate until it reached one of the most exciting milestones in security today, biometric identification.In fact, the whole Group's portfolio extended quickly to cover security printing, smartcard manufacturing, various biometric identification solutions, telecom infrastructure and managed services, international gateway management, cyber security and secure communications solutions, mobile applications, lottery, gaming solutions and others.

The presence of RGH is a definite silver lining,keeping Lebanon up to speed in terms of cybersecurity. In fact, the full infrastructure has been developed to produce the new electronic and biometric passports for the Lebanese Republic, acting as evidence that Lebanon is indeed on the right track.Attaining strong cybersecurity however is a global concern, one that even developed countries continue to struggle with. As the old systems of security are proving their inability to cope with today's big data, the daily search for better means of cybersecurity is continuously underway. Nonetheless, keeping in mind the dedication and hard work at play, we are confident that Lebanon will soon outperform itself as well as many countries in the region in cybersecurity.

DIGITAL. SECURE. SMART.

INKRIPT

SECURITY PRINTING &
IDENTIFICATION SOLUTIONS

An RGH company, Museum Tower, Street 17, Sector 66, Mathaf 2058 6007, Beirut, Lebanon
P.O.Box 116-5090   Tel +961 1 412 000   Fax +961 1 412 899   www.inkript.com