Arelion

Press Release

Over 90 percent of manufacturing and automotive leaders display chronic lack of faith in current AI-based cybersecurity, Arelion research reveals

Decision-makers believe that hackers are more likely to trick AI-based cybersecurity tools than those operated by humans

Stockholm, May 13, 2025 – According to a new report from Arelion, over 50 percent of manufacturing and automotive decision-makers see cybersecurity as their top network challenge, recognizing that – despite the benefits that it can offer – artificial intelligence (AI) facilitates a never-ending cycle of cyberattack and defense. Overwhelmingly, 90 percent of leaders in both industries believe that hackers are more likely to trick AI-based cybersecurity tools than those operated by humans. Almost one in four (24 percent) say that they are already facing DDoS attacks specifically engineered to circumvent AI-driven cybersecurity defenses, which only worsens these concerns.

The survey conducted in the US, UK, France and Germany, and the report entitled *"Industrial networks: can AI do the heavy lifting?"* offers insights into the critical – and sometimes conflicting – effects of AI on enterprise networks in the manufacturing and automotive sectors.

Across both sectors, 70 percent of respondents expect DDoS attack mitigation to be largely driven by AI (as opposed to humans) within four years. When asked where they felt AI will have the biggest impact, manufacturing leaders primarily say real-time detection and response (cited by 32 percent), while automotive leaders suggest that dynamic and adaptive defense mechanisms, and incident response and management, will feature prominently (28 percent cited for each).

AI Raising Multiple Concerns

When measuring the claims for AI against genuine business benefits, 57 percent of senior network decision-makers do not believe that it has been overhyped and state that they are already seeing real benefits across their businesses. While 19 percent think that AI has been overhyped in the short-term, they foresee substantial mid- to long-term benefits. When looking at the findings of Arelion's broader, cross-sector survey, it is evident that manufacturers (62 percent) are already deriving more benefits than other sectors. Even so, 33 percent of decision-makers in the automotive sector remain wary, saying that they may implement AI but are currently unsure if such technologies will achieve all the claimed benefits.

On a positive note, 69 percent of enterprise network decision-makers in the manufacturing and automotive sectors are comfortable with increased AI integration in their network operations, with over

half of respondents (57 percent) believing AI will cut their network costs over the next three years. Even so, a significant minority (37 percent) foresee AI having the opposite effect, causing costs to rise.

Notably, however, manufacturing and automotive sector leaders are concerned that AI is:

- Making network operations more complex
- Increasing infrastructure costs
- Causing a loss of workforce competency and skills
- Resulting in increased bandwidth consumption.

Commenting on the results of the survey, Mattias Fridström, Chief Evangelist at Arelion, said, "These radical, far-reaching impacts of AI mean that enterprise network operators need support. Organizations cannot cope with the complex impacts of AI on their own. They need assistance in the form of external resources, expertise and collaboration – particularly when it comes to cybersecurity."

"Manufacturing and automotive organizations looking to mitigate the evolving cyber threats from AI need to be prepared for the long haul. Our research suggests that enterprise network decision-makers need to take account of key AI-related issues when considering their network strategy and their choice of network provider."

Study Methodology
The research was conducted on behalf of Arelion by Savanta, a global leader in digital data collection. An online survey was carried out in the second half of 2024 with 510 industry leaders in the US, UK, Germany and France. Respondents come from a range of industries, and this report focuses on 103 (20 percent of the full sample) from the manufacturing and automotive sectors.

All participants in the research work for enterprises with more than 2,000 employees. All are involved in decision-making regarding their company's network development strategy (including data center, cloud and connectivity), with 60 percent having the last word and final sign-off responsibility for this area.

About Arelion
Arelion solves global connectivity challenges for multinational enterprises whose businesses rely on digital infrastructure. On top of the world's #1 ranked IP backbone and a unique ecosystem of cloud and network service providers, we provide an award-winning customer experience to customers in 128 countries worldwide. Our global Internet services connect more than 700 cloud, security and content providers with low latency. For further resilience, our private Cloud Connect service connects directly to Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, IBM Cloud and Oracle cloud across North America, Europe and Asia. Discover more at www.arelion.com and follow us on LinkedIn and X.

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