BOYNTON BEACH, Fla. - Joan Brunswick of Boynton Beach has a problem on her hands.

"I don't know," she told Contact 5 investigators. "That's my problem."

It started about a month ago. Brunswick got a call from her credit card company when she was told she had to change her credit card because a business she had shopped at had been hacked.

"Somebody hacked into his business and his business was compromised," she said.

But when Joan wanted to know which and whose businesses was hacked, her credit card company wouldn't tell her, she says.

"I think we have a right to be informed," she said. "That's really my point."

Cyber thieves are targeting businesses more frequently. In fact, a recent study by Ponemon Networks and sponsored by Juniper Networks, revealed out of 600 businesses surveyed, 90 percent claimed they had been hacked in the past year.

"The frequency and sophistication is growing so fast," said Stuart Galup, a cyber security expert who teaches IT security at Florida Atlantic University.

Galup says even businesses with safeguards in place are becoming vulnerable to creative business hackers.

"There are so many areas to which a breach can occur, that you really can't say 100 percent that a breach can't occur," he said.

State laws require credit card companies notify customers of a security breach. In Florida, customers must be notified up to 45 days after the breach occurred.

However, nothing on the books require merchants to identify themselves to customers.

"Unless it's a very, very large breach of security, you're never going to hear about it," said Galup.

Joan Brunswick doesn't agree.

"If it's millions of people you hear about...what's the difference," she asked.
But Galup said every breach may not be the result of a cyber thief looking to tap in on multiple customers' information.

"If it was one employee who stole one credit card, is it really fair to publicly identify that particular merchant," he says.

"A consumer has a right to be informed," Brunswick says. She said she plans on not giving up on her search for find out who hacked the business and why.

So what can consumers do to find out if a business has been hacked?

A merchant has the right to keep that information private. However, consumers can rest assured knowing credit card companies have insurance to reimburse you in the event bogus purchases are made using your account.

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