

Alterman

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467

analyst investigation hours saved over a 20-day period.

7m 58s

average time for Darktrace to autonomously detect and respond to potential threats.

Headquartered in San Antonio, Texas, Alterman is a leading electrical contracting company known for delivering complex projects with precision and reliability.

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■ **Cybersecurity Engineer**

Alterman



A High-Performing Business Requires High-Impact Security

With more than a century of experience delivering complex electrical construction projects, Alterman has built a reputation for precision, reliability, and operational excellence. The regional powerhouse is considered a trusted expert, one that major technology companies have relied on for mission-critical data center projects.

As the company continued to grow and take on increasingly high-profile projects, leadership recognized the need to invest in a modern cybersecurity program that could scale with the business.

Building a Dedicated Security Function

Like many growing organizations, Alterman’s Technology Team historically managed cybersecurity alongside other responsibilities. As the company expanded and industry requirements evolved, leadership made the strategic decision to establish a dedicated security function with the right tools and resources.

“Cybersecurity was part of the job, but we knew that to protect our growing operation properly, we needed dedicated focus and modern capabilities,” recalls Kayla Pacheco, who began her career at Alterman on the service desk before becoming a Cybersecurity Engineer.

Protecting Reputation, IP, and Operational Continuity

As the company grew and competitive pressures increased, leadership identified key areas requiring enhanced protection:

- **Safeguarding** intellectual property including project workflows, schematics, design processes, and efficiency methodologies
- **Protecting** reputation and customer trust through robust data security
- **Ensuring** operational continuity for field teams and project managers who depend on critical systems
- **Addressing** human-driven vulnerabilities through security awareness and training

“Reputation is everything in our industry,” Walter says. “It determines who trusts you with their projects. If partners trust us with their data centers, we have a responsibility to protect the data that comes with that.”

Traditional Tools Require Modern Augmentation

Alterman’s leadership recognized that traditional security tools, while valuable, required significant manual effort to operate effectively at scale. With a focused team managing multiple responsibilities, they sought a solution that could provide continuous monitoring and rapid response.

The goal was to build a modern security program with dedicated staff, executive backing, and tools capable of protecting a growing, complex operation. The foundation of that strategy would be a solution that could understand Alterman’s unique environment, protect its people, and multiply the effectiveness of its Cybersecurity Team.

Darktrace Brings Visibility, Precision, and Always-On Protection

In 2022, Alterman selected Darktrace as a cornerstone of its enhanced security program. “Darktrace became the force multiplier we were looking for,” Pacheco says. “We needed something that could watch our environment 24/7, complementing our team’s efforts.” The flexibility proved to be an immense benefit. “Darktrace learns what’s normal for us. That’s why it catches things we’d never think to look for.” Walter agrees, “Darktrace doesn’t force us into someone else’s mold. It learned our patterns - our seasonal file transfers, our project workflows, the behavior of our high-trust users. That’s what makes it so effective.”

Darktrace immediately became a central source of truth for Alterman’s Cybersecurity Team, providing comprehensive visibility across the environment.

Real-Time Detection and Response

Darktrace identifies unusual file movement, unauthorized access, privilege misuse, and anomalous behavior - even from trusted users. In one instance, the system detected unusual data movement patterns and responded immediately. “Darktrace contained the activity before we even had eyes on it,” Pacheco explains. “It bought us the time we needed to investigate properly. That’s exactly why we rely on it.”

In several cases, when the Cybersecurity Team had limited availability, Darktrace automatically escalated suspicious activity to Darktrace’s cybersecurity support team, ensuring continuous protection around the clock.

Enhanced Visibility During Employee Transitions

Managing security during employee transitions is a priority for any organization. Darktrace provides enhanced monitoring during these periods. “Darktrace flagged a high-risk situation and elevated alerts faster than I could finish writing the email to HR,” Pacheco says. “It gave our leadership confidence that we had full visibility across our environment.”

Rapid Threat Prevention

Darktrace also prevents malware incidents, including one case where a user opened what they believed was a PDF file but was instead a malicious JavaScript payload attempting to reach out to a command-and-control server. “Seeing Darktrace block that communication after the script executed was a huge relief,” says Walter. “It’s the peace of mind any Cybersecurity Team wants.”

Building a Smarter, Safer Workforce with Targeted Training

Darktrace’s AI-driven phishing simulations quickly identified which departments would benefit most from targeted security awareness training. “It took something that used to be time-consuming and made it precise,” Pacheco says. “We no longer hope people are learning - we know they are.”

Proactively Identifying and Reducing Exposure

Alterman now uses Darktrace to map potential attack paths, prioritize vulnerabilities, and bring real-world scenarios into tabletop exercises. “It gives us a realistic picture of how an attacker could move,” Pacheco notes. “That’s been incredibly valuable for our incident response planning and data loss prevention work.”

Driving Security Maturity and Operational Efficiency at Scale

Continuous Improvement in Security Posture

Since implementing Darktrace, Alterman has made significant strides in its security maturity. Using Darktrace's internal risk scoring and security posture assessment, the team has systematically improved from their initial baseline to a B+ rating within a year. "That improvement was significant," says Pacheco. "It reflected not just the work our team put in, but the direction Darktrace gave us on what to prioritize. And with continued focus, we're working our way up to an A."

From Alert Management to Strategic Focus

Darktrace's Self-Learning AI now autonomously detects and responds to 91% of all potential incidents, averaging just 7m 58s per incident from detection to resolution. Realizing efficiency gains - like saving 467 analyst investigation hours within just 20 days - means the Cybersecurity Team can focus on strategic initiatives, including:

- Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) **preparation** (a federal cybersecurity standard for contractors and subcontractors)
- Policy **development**
- Data-loss **prevention**
- Business application approval **workflows**
- Broader governance **initiatives**

"We can finally build the program we always envisioned," shares Walter. "I'm now able to be more strategic," adds Pacheco. "Darktrace handles the day-to-day noise so I can focus on the projects that strengthen our entire organization."

Greater Responsiveness and Confidence During High-Stakes Events

The team cites major improvements in incident response speed and executive confidence. Pacheco explains, "With Darktrace, I can tell our executives with certainty that we have comprehensive visibility and protection. That trust is priceless." Walter agrees: "Darktrace being able to analyze and respond across the network and endpoint takes a huge weight off our shoulders."

Measurable Improvement in Work-Life Balance

The personal impact on the team has been meaningful. "Before Darktrace, I felt like I had to be glued to my screen," Pacheco shares. "Now I can walk away, focus on a project, and trust that Darktrace will take the first action if something serious happens. That's a huge mental shift." Walter adds, "Having one place that correlates activity across the environment gives us peace of mind. It's exactly what efficient Cybersecurity Teams need."

Strengthening Customer Trust and Competitive Advantage

Alterman's cybersecurity investments have become a business asset. When a major technology organization selected Alterman for major data center projects, they made something clear: other contractors couldn't even bid unless Alterman performed the electrical work. That trust, earned over years, is now reinforced by the company's robust cyber posture.

"As a 100-year-old company, we're proud of the reputation our field teams have built," says Pacheco. "But protecting the data behind those projects is just as important. Darktrace has helped us safeguard that trust."

A Stronger Defense for a Stronger Future

Alterman plans to deepen its use of Darktrace across the environment, including:

- **Integrate** Darktrace with Microsoft Sentinel for unified visibility
- **Implement** Darktrace for automated endpoint and incident workflows
- **Extend** protection across new VPN technologies and distributed offices
- **Continue** building toward an "A" security rating "Darktrace has a long-term place in our environment," says Walter. "As we grow, Darktrace will grow with us."

"We're only getting stronger," Pacheco says. "Darktrace has given us confidence, enhanced visibility, and world-class support that we will use to protect our company for the next hundred years."