cyera

Case Study

Genuine Parts Company Closes a 40-Petabyte Data Blind Spot to Safely Enable AI With Cyera

How GPC replaced a guess about its sensitive data with a real number, and turned it into $45 million in quantified risk reduction in six months.

"If you really want to be sincere and understand where your risk and exposure is, there's only one solution that will give you that and that's Cyera."

- Damian Apone, Director of Global Retail Cybersecurity, Genuine Parts Company

$45M	95%	532B	98%
Quantified risk removed in six months	Classification true positive rate	Sensitive records mapped	High-risk cloud issues resolved in six months

Genuine Parts Company has kept cars and industrial equipment running since 1928. Today, it operates more than 10,800 locations across 17 countries with over 65,000 teammates. Like most companies at that scale, GPC grew in large part through acquisition, and every acquisition brought its own systems, clouds, and data. This left GPC with a sprawling, decentralized estate spanning AWS, Azure, GCP, SaaS applications, and on-premises environments, with more than 18 separate cloud environments across the three major providers.

Cyera sat down with Damian Apone, Director of Global Retail Cybersecurity at GPC, to discuss how his team, after deploying Cyera, went from being unable to answer a basic question about that estate to reducing quantified risk by $45 million in six months. Apone owns data protection at GPC, and he is fond of a line that frames the stakes plainly: “It's 11:30. Do you know where your data is?” For years, GPC could not answer that question with confidence. This is the story of what GPC and Cyera changed together, and what the team found once it could finally see where its data lived

Company Profile: Genuine Parts Company

About: Global distributor of automotive and industrial replacement parts, best known for the NAPA Auto Parts and Motion brands. Founded in 1928 in Atlanta.

Industry: Automotive and industrial parts distribution

Headquarters: Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Employees: 65,000+

Footprint: 10,800+ locations across 17 countries

Data estate: ~40 petabytes across AWS, Azure, GCP, SaaS, and on-premises

Products used: Cyera DSPM, Cyera Omni DLP, Cyera Agent Guardian

The Question Behind 40 Petabytes of Guesswork

“If you don’t know where it’s at, you can’t protect it,” Apone says. Before Cyera, GPC operated in what he calls a “we didn’t know” state. The company estimates its data footprint at about 40 petabytes, and the Microsoft 365 tenant alone holds several petabytes. Prior to Cyera, the team had a data protection tool in place, but it only covered the Office 365 environment and unstructured data. Everything else, cloud or on-premises, sat outside its view.

That gap was not a tooling oversight so much as a structural limitation of the available tools. Legacy platforms forced a tradeoff: structured or unstructured, cloud or on-premises, but never both. As Apone put it, no single platform could cover everything, so the team stitched together multiple tools that did not integrate with each other. Every handoff between those tools was a place where sensitive data could quietly fall out of view.

That structural gap is what pushed GPC to build a business case for a dedicated data security platform. The goal was twofold: to understand where sensitive data lived and understand the risk exposure that came with it. The team started down the DSPM path, and evaluating vendors is what finally put a real number behind what had only ever been a guess.

Off by 500%: The Number That Rewrote the Business Case

During the proof of value, Apone's team learned just how far off their estimate had been. “We were probably off by a factor of 500%,” he says. Even a narrow slice of the environment made the case - just 2% of the estate revealed roughly $145 million in exposure. Apone sums it up in two words: “eye-opening and astronomical.”

More Than Nine Vendors Tested. One Clear Winner.

GPC evaluated more than nine DSPM providers before narrowing the field to a handful for hands-on testing. Two things separated Cyera DSPM from the rest: scanning speed and accuracy. “Cyera was over 95% true positive rate and the next closest provider was only at a 53% true positive rate,” Apone says.

> "Speed, scale, accuracy are all the key things that make Cyera different from everyone else... Cyera was over 95% true positive rate, and the next closest provider was only at 53% true positive rate"

The rollout moved at a pace unlike anything Apone, a project manager with more than 25 years of experience, had seen in his career. GPC began in March 2025. Within six weeks, Cyera had scanned the entire global Office 365 tenant, multiple petabytes of data that comparable tools had taken more than six months to cover. From June, the team turned to its 18 cloud environments and finished scanning them by October. Then came on-premises, ground earlier tools could not cover at all. Cyera scanned 82 million NetApp files in 40 days, and GPC deliberately pushed its file shares to test the limits of scale. “We have zero fear in our ability to scale to 40 petabytes,” Apone says. “We’re over halfway there now already.”

“This single-handedly is the most impactful and well-executed implementation I’ve ever witnessed in my entire career,” Apone says. The team saw measurable risk reduction almost immediately. Within the first 30 days, 28% of high-risk sensitive data was removed, and within six months, 98% of high-risk cloud data issues were resolved.

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What Full Visibility Uncovered: Alert Noise, Shadow AI, and Access Sprawl

Visibility at that scale did not just answer GPC's original question. It surfaced problems the team did not know it had, one layer at a time.

The first was alert noise. GPC runs Microsoft Purview under its E5 licensing for insider risk, and layered Cyera Omni DLP on top of it. Apone describes Purview as the muscle enforcing data loss prevention, and Omni DLP as the intelligence behind it. Purview acts on rules, and Omni DLP decides which alerts are worth acting on in the first place. Over a four-week window, Cyera analyzed 27,472 of Purview's alerts and sorted them by what actually needed attention.

Alert Outcome (4-week sample, 27,472 total)	Volume	Why It Matters
Confirmed false positive or informational	17,414 (63%)	Never should have reached an analyst in the first place
Purview flagged High - Cyera's context showed it wasn't	5,087 (18%)	Full business context, not just rules, prevented wasted investigation time
Confirmed High/Critical, routed to an analyst	1,043 (3%)	The alerts actually worth a person's time

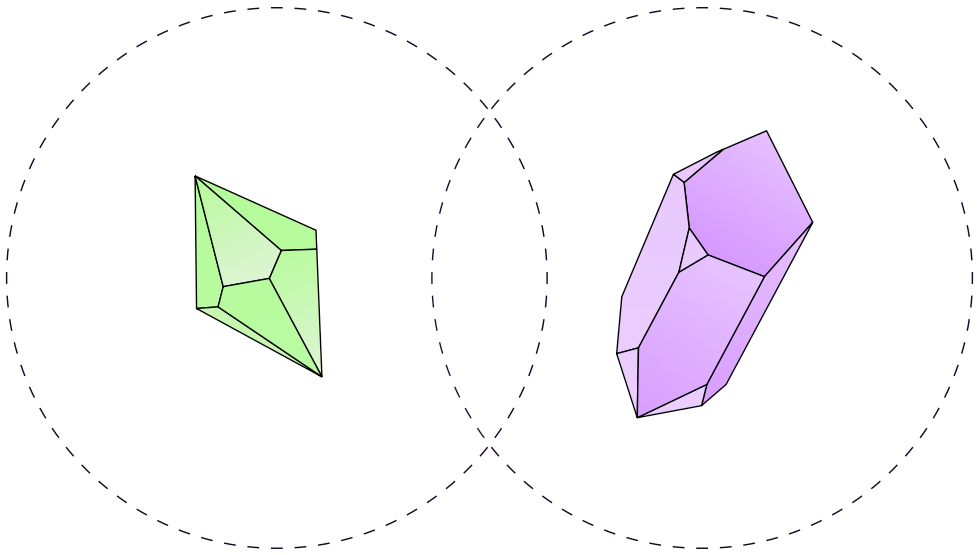
The third layer was identity. Apone is emphatic that Cyera is "not just a DSPM, it's not just a DLP." Because the platform maps who and what can reach sensitive data, it revealed how many accounts had access to it. "That was very eye-opening," Apone says, describing the moment the team saw how many accounts could reach hundreds of thousands of sensitive records. That finding pushed GPC's security and identity teams to move past checkbox SOX access reviews and toward least privilege. The team has also started pairing Cyera's classification with Microsoft Purview and MIP sensitivity labeling, so data marked confidential can be automatically excluded from Copilot and other LLMs.

$45 Million Later: Data Protection Falls Off the Top-Five Risk List

"The ability to reduce our overall risk exposure by $45 million in six months is unheard of."

Six months in, GPC can describe its risk in financial terms, not just technical ones. The team reduced quantified risk exposure by $45 million, and data protection moved on GPC's risk register from a top five risk to near the bottom of the list, about 12th of 13. Cyera has mapped 532 billion sensitive records across GPC against a roughly 40-petabyte footprint that is now more than halfway scanned, with under 0.06% of sensitive data remaining at high risk. As Apone puts it, the platform makes a three-person team "more effective, more efficient, and more cost effective," and gives him a way to translate exposure into what he calls "the currency of a board, which is currency."

Apone's advice to peers evaluating data security platforms is blunt: "Not only can I spell DSPM, but I understand what it does." Now, across 40 petabytes and 17 countries, Genuine Parts Company does, too.



By the Numbers

Metric	Detail
Prior estimate gap	Sensitive record estimates were off by a factor of 500%, per Apone
Sensitive records mapped	532 billion across GPC
Data footprint	Approximately 40 petabytes, more than halfway scanned
Classification accuracy	Over 95% true positive rate, versus 53% for the next closest provider evaluated
Scan speed	Global Office 365 tenant scanned in six weeks. 82 million on-prem NetApp files scanned in 40 days
Cloud rollout	18 cloud environments scanned, March to October 2025
Risk reduced	$45 million of quantified risk removed in six months
High-risk remediation	28% of high-risk data was removed in 30 days. 98% of high-risk cloud issues resolved in six months. Under 0.06% remain
Alert triage	Of 27,472 alerts analyzed over four weeks, only 1,043 (about 3%) needed analyst attention - cutting Omni DLP alert-review time from ~30 minutes to ~2 minutes per alert
Risk register movement	Data protection moved from a top-5 risk to ~12th of 13

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