

Simplifying PCI DSS Certification and Bolstering Security with SISA Tipper - Data Discovery Tool



Snapshot

Client Industry: Banking and Financial

Country: Singapore

Challenge: Unencrypted sensitive data stored in multiple formats

Solution: SISA Tipper helped identify and pinpoint data and location

Benefits: PCI DSS Certification and improved security posture

The Risk of Unencrypted Data Storage

Storing unencrypted sensitive information is considered a high-risk element in information security. The banking and Insurance industry is exceptionally at risk since companies in this domain are often required to store large volumes of sensitive financial information of clients on their systems.

When one of the largest insurance companies in the world, based out of Singapore, decided to go in for a PCI DSS certification, it faced a challenge with identifying all the credit card information stored within its systems in complex formats.

The client followed a practice of scanning hard copies of hand-written applications with unencrypted credit card information. These documents were stored in PDF or image formats across the environment in multiple orientations. As a result, the company found that it had about 240 terabytes of card holder sensitive information across the network and e-mail servers.

As part of the requirement for the PCI DSS certification, the company needed to find the sensitive information stored across the environment and keep it secure with controls. Apart from the certification process, the company was keen to ward off any potential data breaches and ensure top-notch security for its customers' data.

Says the CIO of the company, *"The primary challenge for us was to pick the offending files with different orientations and different contrasts from within our systems. We also needed to identify words like "Credit Card" / "Card" / "VISA" / "Masters" and find minute details regarding their exact location right down to the page number details."*

Since the client environment was quite complex, it imposed several limitations with respect to performing the scans. The operation involved finding relevant data from a host of 0365, .pst and .ost files as well as Dynamic IPs, which was extremely challenging.

A Unique Solution to Find Complex Data Types

Given the sensitive nature of data and complexities involved, SISA approached the project through a phase wise

development. A Proof of Concept (PoC) was done first to ensure that the SISA Tipper tool was indeed suitable for the company's particular use case. The full-blown execution of the project was done only once the efficacy of the approach was ratified through the PoC.

To ensure complete coverage, the team leveraged the Machine learning algorithm and keyword-based search options in the SISA Tipper tool. The tool was able to scan the files quickly and read files with 600 inputs. The tool was able to flawlessly pick relevant files with words such as "Credit Card" / "Card" / "VISA" / "Masters" etc., which led them to the clear path details with page numbers. SISA also overcame the challenge of Dynamic IP by implementing the option to add target using IP address and Host name.

"We were really blown away with SISA's ability and willingness to customize its approach to meet our unique requirements. We had access to 24/7 support and the team was always enthusiastic and willing to help. The SISA Tipper tool was extremely useful for us to get PCI DSS Certification in a timely manner, given the complex environment with multiple types of data."

– CIO, Leading Insurance Service Provider

Seamless Certification and Improved Security Posture

With the SISA Tipper tool, the insurance company was able to identify scattered sensitive data from its complex environment, and act on it as appropriate. SISA Tipper also helped complete the scans within its stipulated timelines, thereby ensuring that the certification process was completed on time.

Beyond the certification process, the exercise helped improve the security posture of the organization significantly.

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