Pharmaceutical Company Discovers Gaps and Improves Security through In-Depth Assessment

It’s not enough to know your environment may be vulnerable – you must know where weaknesses lie, and how to fix them.

A large pharmaceutical company is responsible for sensitive information assets and must maintain strict compliance requirements. Because the company works in all phases of prescription drug creation, including research, design and manufacturing, it is vital that all data remain secure. Any form of a data breach could result in reputation damage, financial loss and stolen intellectual property.

The company needed a trusted partner to perform an in-depth security assessment of its information technology assets to gain a high-level view of environment security and identify vulnerabilities.

What was the best way to approach this challenge?

- Perform an external penetration test, including a security assessment of technology assets to identify vulnerabilities and meet compliance requirements.
- Test current network protection around intellectual property, sales numbers and financial information.
- Provide the client with detailed information about the effectiveness of current security measures.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Organization Size: Approximately 1,000 employees

Organization Industry: A pharmaceutical company

Challenge: To remain compliant with internal requirements, the organization needed to complete an external penetration test and assessment.

IMPACT

- Continued compliance with internal requirements
- Made aware of previously unrecognized vulnerabilities
- Received recommendations to remediate issues
- Knowledge transfer from consultants
SECURITY ASSESSMENT SERVICES: Identifying Areas of Weakness

Information Gathering
To start, Optiv performed "blind" data gathering, or research of publicly available information about the company. By gathering this public information, Optiv now had the same level of company knowledge that an attacker could legally access.

Testing
Using this data, the team identified a list of potential attack scenarios. Then they performed a vulnerability analysis asset test and focused penetration testing. During this phase, Optiv worked as a hacker, performing network vulnerability exploitation, network monitoring, system pivoting, custom scripting, privilege escalation and proof of concept exploitation.

Analysis
After all testing was complete, Optiv met with the client to discuss the project activities, attack scenarios, findings and recommendations.

Learning Best Practices and Protecting Assets
Optiv consultants showed the company's team exactly how an attacker might infiltrate their environment. The company cited a high level of professionalism and technical knowledge as a valuable benefit and described Optiv's consultants as "special forces." As a result of the project, the client:

- Identified previously unknown security issues that could have led to a breach.
- Received specific recommendations for improving security.
- Met internal compliance requirements.
- Allowed its security team to remain focused on future projects and business goals.

Optiv is the largest holistic pure-play cyber security solutions provider in North America. The company's diverse and talented employees are committed to helping businesses, governments and educational institutions plan, build and run successful security programs through the right combination of products, services and solutions related to security program strategy, enterprise risk and consulting, threat and vulnerability management, enterprise incident management, security architecture and implementation, training, identity and access management, and managed security. Created in 2015 as a result of the Accuvant and FishNet Security merger, Optiv is a Blackstone (NYSE: BX) portfolio company that has served more than 12,000 clients of various sizes across multiple industries, offers an extensive geographic footprint, and has premium partnerships with more than 300 of the leading security product manufacturers. For more information, please visit www.optiv.com.

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