

DISCOVERY STREAMLINES FIREWALL AUDITS AND SIMPLIFIES THE CHANGE WORKFLOW

Leading Financial Services Organization Improves Responsiveness to its BUs, Gains Confidence in Regulatory Compliance and Preserves Security Infrastructure

AlgoSec Business Impact

- Reduce time spent preparing for regulatory audits from weeks to seconds
- Increase responsiveness to firewall change requests
- Extend life of hardware assets by reducing the size of firewall rulesets
- Reduce risks and gain visibility into the change process

Background

Discovery Limited is a South African-founded financial services organization that operates in the healthcare, life assurance, short-term insurance, savings and investment products and wellness markets. Founded in 1992, Discovery was guided by a clear core purpose — to make people healthier and to enhance and protect their lives. Underpinning this core purpose is the belief that through innovation, Discovery can be a powerful market disruptor. The company, with headquarters in Johannesburg, South Africa, has expanded its operations globally and currently serves over 4.4 million clients across South Africa, the United Kingdom, the United States, China, Singapore and Australia.

Operating in the highly regulated insurance and health sectors, Discovery monitors its compliance with international privacy laws and security criteria, including PCI-DSS globally, Sarbanes-Oxley and HIPAA in the US, the Data Protection Act in the UK, and South Africa's Protection of Personal Information Act.

Challenge

During its early years, the company managed its firewalls through an internally developed, legacy system which offered very limited visibility into the change request process.

Customer Name

Discovery SA

Line of Business

Financial Services

Headquarters

Johannesburg, South Africa

Firewall Solutions

Check Point, Cisco, Juniper

Discovery.co.za

"We grew faster than anyone expected," says Marc Silver, Security Manager at Discovery. "We needed better visibility into what changes were requested to which firewall, for what business need and also to ensure proper risk analysis."

Discovery's growth necessitated a rapid increase in the number of firewalls deployed, and the corresponding ruleset sizes. The time required to audit them grew by orders of magnitude, ultimately taking up to three weeks per firewall. The IT Security team of four engineers recognized that it needed a fresh approach to manage risk and ensure compliance.

Solution

Discovery chose the AlgoSec Security Management Solution to deliver automated, comprehensive firewall operations, risk analysis and change management. Silver states that compared to AlgoSec's competitors, "AlgoSec has a more tightly integrated change control, and is easier to manage. Another big advantage is how it finds unused rules and recommends rule consolidations," says Silver.

AlgoSec's integration with Request Tracker (RT) change management system was also important in Discovery's selection of a security management solution. "We use RT for our internal ticketing system, and the stability of AlgoSec's integration with RT met our requirements. AlgoSec's visual workflow is clear, easy to understand and more mature than the others we evaluated," adds Silver.

Results

Since implementing AlgoSec, Discovery has found its security audits running more effectively. Discovery relies on AlgoSec's built-in compliance reports to address Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA, PCI-DSS, and other national and international regulatory requirements. "Every year internal auditors would take our entire rulesets for each firewall pair and tell us where we needed to make improvements. AlgoSec now allows us to submit an automated report to our auditing team. It tells them what our security state is, and what needs to be remediated. The total process used to take three months. Now, in a click of a button, we can get what took two to three weeks per firewall to produce manually," says Silver.

Discovery has also found an unexpected advantage: "AlgoSec tells us what rules are in use and what rules are not. For one firewall, we were able to remove 30,000 rules. A firewall with 500,000 rules isn't going to cope as well as one with 100,000 rules. By optimizing our devices, AlgoSec saves us money in the long term by enabling us to delay upgrading to a larger firewall," adds Silver.

In conclusion, Silver states that "Now we can see what is and isn't happening in our security system. It has made a much bigger impact than we thought it would. With AlgoSec's policy optimization, and the time we save on compliance, AlgoSec has given us a much stronger competitive edge than we had six months ago."



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Marc Silver,
Security Manager,
Discovery SA



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