

Pay Now or Pay Later: Obtaining ROI from Security Solutions

Before a credit union can put a security spending plan together, they must first cover three basic items. First, they need to know what their current security posture is, then what it is they need to protect, and finally what they need to do to get to appropriate levels of protection. Because it is impossible to fix everything and there is no such thing as 100% security, credit unions must strive to reach the level of security that best fits their organization.

This process of measuring, benchmarking and setting risk levels is ongoing and is different for each organization's environment. There are 30 – 50 new security vulnerabilities that appear every week, and there is simply no way that any credit union could respond to all of these security alerts. They must focus not only on those that directly affect them, but those that have the highest priority among that group of vulnerabilities. At the end of the day, reducing risk in a corporate environment requires prioritization and taking the most cost effective actions that address the most important risk factors for each particular credit union and their unique IT infrastructure.

One method of putting numbers behind security vulnerability is an emerging standard called CVSS that Qualys has been closely involved with developing. The Common Vulnerability Scoring System is designed to provide open and universally standardized severity ratings of software vulnerabilities. This effort should go a long way towards helping organizations prioritize the severity of vulnerabilities.

Delivered as an automated service over the Internet, QualysGuard makes it easy for credit unions to get a handle on their network topology, understand their security vulnerabilities and quickly prioritize the patching process. In addition to monitoring the vulnerability management process from end to end, Qualys also keeps track of remediation efforts. Our clients can run assessments as often as required, and we create a closed loop between the scanned results and the trouble tickets generated; in other words there is full visibility and no remediation effort can "slip through the cracks."



Terry Ramos
Director of Strategic Development

The real benefit of the On-Demand model in security is that it takes away any burden from Qualys' clients, and it delivers tremendous cost savings over manual discovery methods. Our clients do not have to deploy, maintain, and update any vulnerability management software because we handle all of those details for them. We deliver intuitive and easy-to-read reports that provide both executive-level summaries for senior management and detailed technical analysis for the IT staff and auditors. By automating the entire vulnerability management lifecycle, credit unions know exactly where they stand and how they are reaching their goals of securing their infrastructure in a timely manner.



Terry Ramos is the Director of Strategic Development for Qualys responsible for strategic direction, market alignment, partnerships, and integrated technologies. Terry has been in the Information Technology industry for fifteen years with the last seven focused on information security. Prior to Qualys, Terry was a Regional Technical Manager at VeriSign, where he was responsible for Sales Engineering in the Enterprise Sales Division. Before VeriSign, Terry was a Senior Technical Security Manager at SBC where he was responsible for network security architecture and helped design SBC's perimeter security infrastructure. Terry Ramos is a CISSP.