SecurityScorecard

horizon media

CASE STUDY

Horizon Media

Horizon Media, Inc. is a global leader in the performance-driven application of data and marketing insights. With estimated billings of $8.7 billion and over 2,300 employees, Horizon is the second-largest US media agency according to COMvergence data. Recognized as one of the world's ten most innovative marketing and advertising companies by Fast Company, Horizon Media has been named Media Agency of the Year by MediaPost, Adweek, and AdAge and is known for its highly personal approach to client service.

THE **CHALLENGE**

Counting many of the largest companies in the world as its clients, a vital competitive differentiator for Horizon Media is its robust data governance policy, so a critical part of progressing through a deal is a conversation around corporate data security. Richard Arenaro, Chief Information Security Officer at Horizon Media, proactively leads these conversations and advises clients on its data governance matters and the organization's cybersecurity resilience program, as measured by SecurityScorecard's "A" rating.

Horizon is always looking to improve systems and processes to better serve its clients, information security and data management/ cyber threats is one such critical area, so we partnered with SecurityScorecard. Arenaro's central challenge was to improve Horizon Media's cybersecurity posture and demonstrate an objective, transparent view of its security program. In short, Horizon Media needed to quickly embrace the new challenges around data governance and information security and ensure its clients that their sensitive data would be kept safe.

Arenaro's prior experience working with vendors in the security ratings space made him worry about using third-party platforms to help conduct security assessments. Other platforms were often too complicated and required hours of training. Additionally, the outside assessments did not provide a quick and easy path to vulnerability remediation, and Arenaro was concerned that without a measurable way to demonstrate progress, morale amongst the Information Security team would suffer.

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THE **SOLUTION**

Horizon Media turned to SecurityScorecard after a client invited them into the Platform asking them to discuss various aspects of their security rating. Coincidently, Arenaro met Aleksandr Yampolsky, CEO of SecurityScorecard, at a conference—so compelling was the potential business value of the platform, that Horizon Media signed up for the Platform within a month. "We were looking to drive the point home to our clients that we have a robust, transparent information security program and that we take safeguarding their data very serious," Arenaro said. "We consider SecurityScorecard a key piece of our strategy to gain customer trust."

Continuous, Non-intrusive Monitoring

SecurityScorecard provides Horizon Media with constant monitoring of the firm's online presence and digital infrastructure. The ongoing tracking includes observing risk categories such as application security, IP reputation, patching cadence, network security, and passwords exposed.

Real-time Insights

Point-in-time IT security risk assessments can find vulnerabilities at a single moment, but they leave the firm at risk for a breach in between assessments. Now with SecurityScorecard, Horizon Media reviews its security ratings daily and also looks at the risk scores of their clients or potential business partners. Arenaro added that "compared to other third-party assessments, SecurityScorecard's reports are a lot more accessible and easier to understand."

Risk & Remediation Prioritization

The daily bombardment of identified weaknesses can make it difficult for organizations to understand the order of importance. With the help of SecurityScorecard, Horizon Media's team can easily locate, escalate, and prioritize goals, with the feeling that they are all marching in sync towards the same goal.

Customer Service

Horizon Media's onboarding experience was fast and easy. The organization was up and running just a few days after a launch call with the SecurityScorecard Customer Success Team. Arenaro loves that SecurityScorecard is intuitive and easy-to-use. The product provides instant data and visibility into the remediation process and— when necessary—the team can get their questions answered fast.

Rapid Increase in Security Ratings Scorecard

Horizon Media began using SecurityScorecard in September 2018 to assess the company's overall cybersecurity posture, which meant scanning external indicators to determine risk. Leveraging SecurityScorecard's intuitive ratings platform, Horizon Media made strategic changes to the company's IT infrastructure and increased the company's cybersecurity hygiene to an "A." As a result, the company now easily manages its online footprint and reduces reputational risk.

Instant Scorecard Remediation

Using SecurityScorecard, Horizon Media can more easily locate a vulnerability and execute a goal to remediate the weakness. "SecurityScorecard's responsiveness has been incredible. Our team doesn't have to wait for 6-months for an update; we can gain immediate visibility into the information that was calculating the risk posture," Arenaro said.

Improved Team Engagement

Arenaro added that SecurityScorecard's on-demand information and real-time updates allows for "quick-wins" which help to keep the team motivated and boosts overall team morale. "We're able to use the data in our various team meetings to show that we are making a difference, and our work does matter," he said.

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Executive Reporting & Competitive Benchmarking

Horizon Media also uses SecurityScorecard data points on monthly "report cards" to the company's senior management. Data points include how the company stacks up against competitors and what improvements the organization needs to make in their information security program. SecurityScorecard data points enable more indepth conversations and decision making at the management level.

Positive Return on Investment

Arenaro stated that SecurityScorecard enables the firm to obtain a competitive advantage in business conversations, which helps drive revenue or reduces risk. "The information provided by SecurityScorecard allows us have serious conversations and assists in winning deals —so the platform pays for itself in that regard," Arenaro commented. He added that, from a client trust standpoint, Horizon Media can now offer its clients "peace of mind as part of the package, which is unique from a competitive perspective. Because SecruityScorecard is a reputable, independent assessment source, Horizon Media can be more transparent with clients when it comes to reporting their cybersecurity rating.

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CONCLUSION

With the help of SecurityScorecard's ratings and company's compliance policies, the firm is able to maintain a perfect Scorecard rating, and thus delivers on its promise to secure and protect its customers' data. Additionally, Horizon Media is uniquely positioned in the media advertising industry to leverage its 'A' cybersecurity risk rating, which offers them a significant competitive advantage, especially for 'big name' deals.

"As more cybersecurity breaches reach the headlines, our partners are asking us to do better risk management. They want to make sure that they are partnering with the very best," Arenaro said. "I look at our utilization of SecurityScorecard as a way to differentiate ourselves in the marketplace." He added that Horizon Media has plans to expand its usage of the SecurityScorecard Platform to include thirdparty risk management.

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ABOUT SECURITYSCORECARD

Funded by world-class investors including Silver Lake Partners, Sequoia Capital, GV, Riverwood Capital, and others, SecurityScorecard is the global leader in cybersecurity ratings with more than 12 million companies continuously rated. Founded in 2013 by security and risk experts Dr. Aleksandr Yampolskiy and Sam Kassoumeh, SecurityScorecard's patented rating technology is used by over 25,000 organizations for enterprise risk management, third-party risk management, board reporting, due diligence, and cyber insurance underwriting. SecurityScorecard continues to make the world a safer place by transforming the way companies understand, improve and communicate cybersecurity risk to their boards, employees and vendors. Every organization has the universal right to their trusted and transparent Instant SecurityScorecard rating.

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