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Hawaii's Office of Enterprise Technology Service delivers encryption as a service with Thales

Protecting government has never been more of a challenge: The demand for online, transparent access to services and records is rapidly increasing, meanwhile the corresponding attack surface grows exponentially. The State of Hawaii tackled this situation head on.

Todd Nacapuy, chief innovation officer for the State of Hawaii, oversees the Office of Enterprise Technology Services (ETS), which is tasked with providing governance for information technology programs, projects and services across the state's executive branch. He explained, "We have defined seven CIO priorities for ETS to ensure an effective, efficient and open government: IT Workforce Development, IT Governance, Services-Oriented Infrastructure, Enterprise Projects and Programs, Open Government, Cyber Security, and IT Cost Transparency."

Business challenge

As the State of Hawaii tries to make more and more of its data accessible to the public under the open government initiative, it is ETS' duty to mitigate the inherent new risks. Much of the data that the State holds is considered personally identifiable information (PII), and regulations – such as the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI-DSS), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs), and Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) – require the data to be protected by encryption.

Michael Otsuji, the State's IT development officer, noted, "We are constantly making our organization aware of the potential cost of a breach, as well as what would happen if data was exposed; including the effort of clean-up that would have to be undertaken."

"Our goal was to implement data access on a just-in-time basis: only enabling an entrée to information as and when an authorized user really needs it," recalled Nacapuy. "We wanted to deploy an encryption solution for our enterprise projects, and at the same time extend an 'encryption-as-a-service' offering to all of the State of Hawaii departments that wish to more tightly secure their data."

Technical challenge

Deploying encryption as a last line of defense became a key initiative for ETS particularly when it implemented a second data center – to serve as a back up to the primary site – that was located in a shared facility. "Even though the center is physically secure, we don't have exclusive control of the space," explained Nacapuy, "And we wanted the data to be unreadable if our other defenses were breached – for example, if someone stole a server – we needed the data to be useless to them."

> " Thales has become a critical offering within our services-oriented infrastructure for end-to-end encryption as well as data at rest."
>
> – Todd Nacapuy, chief innovation officer, Office of Enterprise Technology Services, State of Hawaii

> " Thales has been a wonderful partner and has enabled us to offer state-of-the-art encryption services to all of the State's departments."
>
> – Michael Otsuji, IT development officer, State of Hawaii

Solution

ETS evaluated vendors with encryption solutions, assessing them to find the optimal solution to meet its needs. Having reduced the options to a shortlist of contenders, a proof-of-concept with each was undertaken to determine individual speed, cost, ease-of-use, and overall capabilities.

Nacapuy recounted, "Vormetric Data Security (DSM) by Thales stood out because of Vormetric Transparent Encryption with its support for a wide variety of file formats and data states – such as data at rest – combined with Vormetric Key Management handling the rolling keys. It also demonstrated impressive speed at processing the encryption and decryption of files."

Having made the decision to standardize on the Thales solution, rollout began with ETS educating the various departments about the new encryption service. ETS took on a consultative role to fully understand the specific compliance regulations that needed to be achieved by each group and to ensure the appropriate information became secured by Vormetric Transparent Encryption.

Otsuji stated, "The response to ETS offering the encryption service has been very enthusiastic because it's not just a nice-to-have it's now a requirement for many departments, and with Thales we make it so easy and efficient."

Results

Nacapuy concurred, "It's very efficient for us because management of the Vormetric Transparent Encryption is so simple. It enables us to accomplish more with less because of the flexibility it offers in terms of spanning all of the data types across the business entities that we service."

"Thales has been a wonderful partner," recounted Otsuji, "Putting on presentations for the departments and being extremely involved in the successful adoption of encryption by them."

Just-in-time data access

"We've listened to the operational needs of our colleagues and are able to take a business-centric approach to the capabilities we offer," observed Nacapuy. "And Thales has become a critical offering within our services-oriented infrastructure for end-to-end encryption as well as data at rest."

He concluded, "Our move into the new paradigm of only enabling access to data as and when authorized users really need it is one of the primary catalysts behind our investments in leading-edge security solutions like Thales. DSMs is a key contributor to delivering just-in-time access conveniently and efficiently."

Keeping everything secure in the Aloha State

Business need:

- Identify encryption solution to achieve compliance with a broad range of regulations
- Data only accessible on a just-in-time basis

Technology need:

- Secure multiple data types and states
- Support dual data center operations

Solution:

- Vormetric Data Security Manager by Thales

Result:

- Cross-departmental, cross-facility security
- Major regulatory compliance requirements addressed easily and effectively
- Protection for data from cyber and physical breaches
- Encryption now offered as a component ofservices-oriented infrastructure
- Move to just-in-time information access

About Thales

The people you rely on to protect your privacy rely on Thales to protect their data. When it comes to data security, organizations are faced with an increasing number of decisive moments. Whether the moment is building an encryption strategy, moving to the cloud, or meeting compliance mandates, you can rely on Thales to secure your digital transformation.

Decisive technology for decisive moments.

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