CASE STUDY
State Government

The State of Arizona
## Improved Risk Visibility & Protection with RiskSense

CUSTOMER PROFILE

The State of Arizona is the 14th largest state in the United States with a population of close to 7 million residents. Within the State's government resides the Arizona Strategic Enterprise Technology (ASET) office. The ASET office, in alignment with the strategic missions of state agencies, develops and executes the statewide information technology strategy, as well as provides capabilities, services and infrastructure to ensure the continuity of mission critical and essential systems for the State of Arizona. The goal of ASET is to transform Arizona into a nationwide leader of advanced IT strategies, methodologies, services, and business processes. In 2017, there are 133 agency boards and commissions working with 100,000 assets.

"With the RS³ Score, I can have productive business conversations with people who know little about IT and security. They can look at that score and understand our overall risk."

– Mike Lettman, CISO of State of Arizona
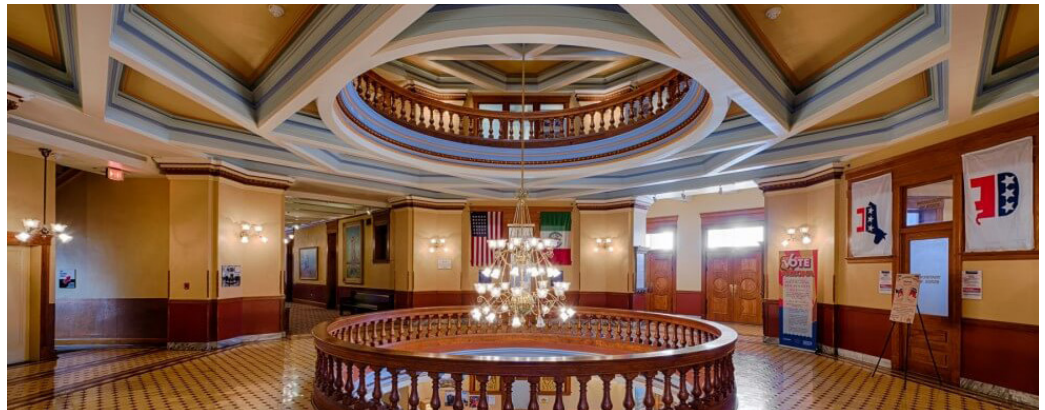
THE CHALLENGE

When Mike Lettman joined the State of Arizona as the Chief Information Security Officer in 2012, collaboration between state agencies was a major challenge. With the State of Arizona being a federated state, not many of the 133 agencies talked to one another, let alone knew who the other managers were. Mike and his team needed to figure out what the State's biggest security issues were and how they were going to protect against them. At the time, nobody seemed to know what those threats were, as there were no metrics being kept. The State lacked visibility into what their biggest vulnerabilities were.

Additionally, there were two breaches that took place in South Carolina and Utah around the same time that Mike joined. His CIO was intent on not making the same mistakes that the other states had. This put pressure on the team to make sure they found a way to provide visibility so that state agencies could see where they were at risk and what critical assets might be impacted.

Mike was given an initial budget to make the necessary changes. He needed to figure out how to take that budget and use it to effectively protect the State. He wanted to find solutions that were going to protect the State of Arizona against actual attacks, with the ultimate goal to build true visibility in the State's IT infrastructure; first from an attack perspective and then from a vulnerability perspective. Plain and simple, the State of Arizona needed to know where their biggest risks were.

THE SOLUTION

To address their main challenges, the State of Arizona needed to look internally first. Mike worked on building relationships with the FBI, multi-state ISAC, and Homeland Security in order to gain a better understanding of the general attacks that governments faced. After they determined what those attacks were, the team started to build visibility into their system. The State started to collect metrics on what types of attacks they were seeing and tracked them over time. Once they gathered this information, their next step was to do a technology assessment to find out what solutions were available and what other government agencies were already using to help them make a more informed decision.

"The RiskSense Platform has provided clear visibility into our IT environment and improved our security resiliency."

– Dan Wilkins,
Sr. Information Security Engineer,
State of Arizona

The State of Arizona team knew that they needed a solution that protected the State from actual attacks and provided the visibility they so desperately needed. They were looking for a tool that would clearly show them where their vulnerabilities were, score their agencies so they knew how each was performing over time, and they wanted all of this information to be in one platform. Another big selling point for Mike was a solution available in the cloud versus on their premises.

These were some of the main factors that drove the State of Arizona to select RiskSense through a competitive bid process. Because they had done a technology assessment, they knew the cost and decided that on top of having everything else they needed, RiskSense was also the best economical decision.

Their initial goal was to provide clarity to State agencies so they knew what was being attacked and where they were vulnerable. The RiskSense Platform delivered not only the visibility on what vulnerabilities were present in their IT infrastructure but what ones were the most critical based on their business criticality. No other vendor could provide this.

THE RESULTS
When the RiskSense Platform was first implemented, agency staff were given on-site training. The team wanted to make sure that every agency was trained and comfortable.

The first real test came less than a year after implementation when the "Bash Bug" struck. At the time, RiskSense was able to alert Mike and his team and identify where they were vulnerable to this exploit. The State and its agencies were able to remediate any vulnerabilities before the attackers could strike.

The Platform proved to be a major time and cost saver for the team. Instead of having to log in to 15 different platforms, all of their information was available in one single pane of glass, and they no longer needed to invest in multiple solutions.

When the partnership between RiskSense and the State began, there was a focus on vulnerability counts. Over time that evolved into utilizing the RiskSense Security Score (RS³). Mike and his team use that score to track how agencies are doing and help guide their improvement through best practices. One agency in particular started with a score of 568, and they were able to improve their score to 762 within 60 days.

The RS³ score increased their ability to communicate with top level executives, which was another benefit. The score allows executives to easily understand the State's risk position and trends over time.

NEXT STEPS
When their journey with RiskSense started, the State of Arizona was focused on vulnerability data. They shifted the focus to a business conversation about risk. Looking to the future, the State is dedicated to maintaining visibility into their risk and constantly improving their security posture. Over the next year, they have a goal of getting every agency to a RS³ score of 700. Additionally, Mike wants to start leveraging their scores to lower premiums on cyber insurance they are required to have as a federated state. Finally, the State of Arizona continues its close partnership with the RiskSense team and provides suggestions for feature enhancements and product updates to help improve the RiskSense Platform.

WHY RISKSENSE
Determine whether any of your business critical assets are at risk.
Gain insight on how your cyber adversaries operate based on RiskSense Platform threat intelligence.
Synchronous delivery of findings in near-real time.
Get comprehensive recommendations for remediation actions.
Minimize your attack surface and cyber risk exposure.

Contact Us Today to Learn More About RiskSense
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