

Numerica Gives TraceSecurity Credit for Protection Against Scams

CASE STUDY

With more than 70,000 members located throughout Central and Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho, Numerica Credit Union offers a full line of financial products and services. This makes compliance with industry regulations and protection of its members' confidential information critical to its business. Numerica recognizes that its members are placing their trust in the credit union to utilize the most advanced technologies and services to fulfill its goals of data privacy and security compliance.



The Decision to Change

Until December 2005, Numerica utilized a series of different accounting firms to meet these security challenges; that's when they learned about TraceSecurity at a conference. As Kelley Ferguson, Numerica's Director of Network & Security, recalls, "We were intrigued by the different levels of service and expertise, and we were very pleased with what TraceSecurity could offer."

"One of the biggest decision factors," says Ferguson, "was the hands-on expertise – it was far and away better than what was available at the accounting firm level, which was based more on policy than on real-life experiences. While TraceSecurity does manage our policies too, they have excelled as an interactive component."



A Higher Level of Security Awareness

Numerica's contract with TraceSecurity includes annual on-site vulnerability assessments, annual external penetration tests, quarterly external vulnerability assessments, and TraceSecurity Compliance Manager – a patented suite of ASP-based software products that combine asset database information, policy monitoring, vulnerability information, training and compliance surveys. Together these components ensure that Numerica is not only meeting regulatory and compliance standards, but also protecting their members from falling victim to identity theft.

Numerica also engaged TraceSecurity for its unique "social engineering" service, in which TraceSecurity attempts to gain unauthorized access to restricted areas to obtain classified information. In the case of Numerica, TraceSecurity performed several social engineering tests to uncover weaknesses in policy and training, including:

- *Phishing*, in which targeted members (friends or family of Numerica employees) received letters asking them to update their account information on a fictitious web site;
- *Vishing*, in which the members received a phone call, allegedly from Numerica, requesting them to call a toll-free number to update their accounts; and
- *Onsite Visits*, during which TraceSecurity security experts posed as fire inspectors and went to three Numerica locations attempting to gain access to the network, security system and customer data.



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In some instances, they were successful. Several members supplied them with confidential data, and they were able to access restricted areas at Numerica locations and walk away with hard copies of sensitive information.

According to Ferguson, the social engineering engagements “brought a higher level of awareness to the organization which allowed us to make internal changes based on the results of those tests.”

TraceSecurity also offers a one-day security awareness training session – another service Numerica opted to purchase. “We took a proactive approach with the training,” says Ferguson. “Normally, they provide internal training sessions. We asked them to do internal training for our staff as well as training for our members to come and learn about scams, identity theft and ways to protect themselves.”

Members were enthusiastic about the training and Numerica’s obvious commitment to safeguarding them against scams.



Proactive Security, Positive Results

Now, well into the second year of its contract with TraceSecurity, Numerica is experiencing great improvements to its overall security posture. “The benefits,” remarks Ferguson, “are a proactive security awareness program that ensures that our policies and procedures are up-to-date and in accordance with GLBA, as well as proactive real-life scans of our network that allow us to see what, if any, exploits there are and whether they need to be addressed.”

Numerica is taking advantage of the TraceSecurity software on its system. Ferguson notes that “Compliance Manager is an excellent guide for us with GLBA regulations. It’s something we must have for our state audit; it shows that we did have an independent third-party audit and that we’re in compliance with regulations.”

Most recently, Numerica implemented TraceAuthenticate, a unique cookie-based, multi-factor solution that goes beyond just user names and passwords to verify the identity of users, prompting them for additional information when they access their accounts online.

“We just rolled it out five weeks ago, and out of our 13,000 online bill-paying members, all but 300 of them were signed up within a month - without incident,” states Ferguson. “It’s been a very positive experience.”

Ferguson speaks favorably about his experience with TraceSecurity technical support as well: “One thing I’ve always appreciated about TraceSecurity is their willingness to help; it seems like they are always talking with a smile on their face. Working with them is always a positive, upbeat type of scenario, and that’s much appreciated.”

**If you are interested in experiencing the same benefits that Numerica achieved,
please visit the TraceSecurity Web site or contact them at (877) 275-3009.**

