

Texas State Bank Finds Significant Value in TraceSecurity's Automated Risk and Vulnerability Solutions

About Texas State Bank

Originally chartered as a Community Bank nearly 100 years ago, Texas State Bank remains in the hands of the owners that live and work in the East Texas community it faithfully serves.

Assets
\$110 Million

Website
www.texasstatebank.net

Josh Cooper's first day at Texas State Bank was quite memorable.

His inaugural day as the bank's first full-time Vice President of IT just happened to fall on the day after federal regulators conducted a particularly thorough IT exam that identified several critical areas that needed immediate attention. Although Cooper had previously held multiple IT positions, he had limited experience in administering security services or evaluating IT compliance.



Fortunately, Texas State Bank had recently contracted TraceSecurity to provide the necessary software solutions for the bank to begin automating many of the risk management processes that were previously performed manually. Even though Cooper had limited experience in administering security services or evaluating IT compliance, he was able to leverage TraceSecurity's user-friendly software and technical support to quickly learn the processes necessary to bring the bank in line with compliance guidelines.

"I was new to banking and compliance, but I had very good resources at my disposal" says Cooper. "By reading the compliance questions and following the checklists contained in TSCM, I was able to logically break down the processes piece by piece and identify what was needed to become more compliant."

One of the primary tools he used in bringing the bank up to speed was the **TraceRisk** module of **TraceSecurity's Compliance Manager (TSCM)** software. TraceRisk analyzes the organization's vulnerabilities, threats, asset information and controls so that the user may assess specific areas of concern to determine the overall level of risk. The cloud-based software solution allows users to independently manage their processes locally while still having access to expert support and guidance.

According to Cooper, TraceSecurity provided expert technical support during his "breaking in period", claiming "the security analysts took a very hands-on approach by walking me through most of the necessary steps to perform the common procedures."

The Importance of Comprehensive Reporting

18 months after Josh Cooper assumed the IT responsibilities, federal examiners returned to Texas State Bank to scrutinize the changes that had been implemented since their last visit. He was able to use the reporting feature in **TraceSecurity's ComplianceManager** to generate detailed documentation of each compliance issue in question, as well as summary reports which contained all the necessary information the examiners needed to quickly wrap up the exam. Cooper recalls one set of examiners remarked that the ability to see specific policy reviews right alongside of the penetration and vulnerability reporting was especially helpful.

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"Both Federal and State examiners really like the reports compiled from TSCM," says Cooper. "They are able to use the summary reports to get the information they need, plus dig into the full report to identify any enumerated requirements."

A Focus on Continuous Compliance

Realizing that the key to a successful examination was having a commitment to “continuous compliance”, Josh Cooper and his team decided to adopt a proactive and comprehensive approach to security compliance. This methodology provides many positive benefits, including a higher level of organizational security and a more manageable IT security compliance program.

To accomplish the goal of continuous compliance, Texas State Bank relies on frequent penetration tests, conducted by analysts from TraceSecurity, with ongoing self assessments and risk analysis processes that are managed by the IT department through TraceSecurity’s software solutions. As a result, the bank has been able to consistently mitigate their bank’s risk exposure and improve their level of compliance.

In addition to conducting multiple penetration tests each year to verify the integrity of the organization’s software & hardware controls, Texas State Bank has also used TraceSecurity to assess their exposure to certain social engineering tactics. The results of these engagements have helped the bank reassess their mitigation strategies when dealing with external threats.

The Value of On-Demand Vulnerability Management Tools

One of the most useful tools in Josh Cooper’s IT security toolbox is TraceSecurity’s automated vulnerability scanner that is integrated into TSCM. Prior to Cooper taking over the IT Department, there was not a full-time administrator dedicated to overseeing the maintenance of the IT infrastructure and he suspected the bank’s IT environment was much different than what was currently documented.

“The topographical maps we had of our infrastructure were outdated,” remarks Cooper. “But I was able to use TraceSecurity’s vulnerability management tools to get a much more accurate view of our IT environment because they revealed what assets **actually existed**...not just what was on the topo map!”

Cooper also utilizes the scanner to detect any vulnerabilities that may be present in new IT assets before they are implemented into the live environment. He finds that one of the most beneficial aspects of TraceSecurity’s software solutions is how easy it is to schedule scans and assessments, remarking that “when adding new branches - or simply making infrastructure changes - a fresh scan is just a few clicks away.”

When organizations make changes to their IT infrastructure - even simply adding a few IT assets to the environment - they are usually required to conduct vulnerability assessments before making the changes permanent in a live environment. But Organizations that do not have robust vulnerability management solutions, like on-demand access to automated scanners, could be forced to wait on a team of analysts to arrive and conduct a manual scan of the system before pushing the asset live, thus creating significant delays and unnecessary costs.

For Josh Cooper, one particular experience proved the necessity and value of having scan results in his hands within hours, as opposed to days or weeks. After an outlying branch of Texas State Bank suffered damage from a hurricane, Cooper and his team had to quickly get the branch back up and operational. This entailed procuring spare equipment from various locations in order piece together a working IT environment for the affected branch. Once again, he turned to TraceSecurity’s vulnerability management tools to help ensure all vulnerabilities were identified before putting the branch back online.

“Having on-demand access to an automated scanner provides much more than just peace-of-mind,” claims Cooper. “It gives you the ability to perform frequent scans which, in return, acts as a sort of early warning system. Plus, scanning on a monthly or bi-monthly basis will help the organization compare their IT environment to the overall threat landscape. Frequent scans also reduce the amount of work you’d need to do prior to an IT Exam because the workload is spread out over time.”

Instead of viewing security compliance processes as an annual occurrence performed simply to meet compliance regulations, Josh Cooper has placed Texas State Bank on the path of “continuous compliance”. He’s accomplished this through a strong commitment to vulnerability management combined with frequent penetration tests, ongoing self assessments and comprehensive risk management processes that are managed through **TraceSecurity’s ComplianceManager**.

As a result, they can take a more proactive approach in;

- **Managing risks by identifying vulnerabilities and developing a mitigation plan before they become a problem**
- **Identifying vulnerabilities prior to deploying changes or introducing new assets to the IT environment**
- **Preparing for examinations by utilizing the robust reporting features native to TraceSecurity’s ComplianceManager**
- **Developing repeatable and automated processes that save time, money and effort**

ABOUT TRACESECURITY: TraceSecurity is a leading provider of cloud based Governance, Risk & Compliance (GRC) that assist organizations of all sizes achieve, maintain and demonstrate security compliance while significantly improving their security posture. Through a combination of software solutions and professional services, TraceSecurity helps clients address all critical components of a successful GRC program, including people, process and technology. For more information, call 877-275-3009 or visit www.tracesecurity.com.