



Appian partners with SMX to remove the barriers from government innovation

Case Study



Situation

Navigating ever-stricter government regulations can make it difficult for companies like Appian to quickly deliver innovative solutions for entities such as the Department of Defense

Overview

Appian is a low-code platform that allows customers to discover, build and automate critical processes. More than two decades ago, they began working with the Department of Defense, creating software that the government would then implement in their own infrastructure. To take this relationship to a deeper level would require Appian to have Impact Level Five authorization; one that comes with very strict compliance and security stipulations from the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP®).

Appian partnered with SMX to not only meet these standards, but to exceed them.

Robert Groat, Executive Vice President for SMX, explains how this has been beneficial to Appian, specifically for the Appian Government Cloud offering, which allows customers to easily design cases, workflows, key data, dashboards and tasks,

“What we did with Appian Government Cloud is add a lot of controls that are specific to the Department of Defense and also to the civilian agencies that run more sensitive workloads.”



Solution

SMX Elevate distills 35 years of experience implementing, securing and operating government missions at the highest impact levels into a compliant operating environment running on AWS GovCloud

SMX knows that speed is of vital importance to companies like Appian.

For its 35-year history, SMX has focused primarily on federal spaces such as the Department of Defense, along with federal civilian agencies, state government and local ones, too.

“Historically, if you look at software companies, they want to move really quickly. Get features out the door. Develop cutting-edge items,” explains Robert Groat, Executive Vice President for SMX. **“Then you’ve got the federal government on the other side of this, operating at a very different speed and a very different cadence.”**

It's the ability to mesh these two worlds that are the key to SMX's success. The company's experience on both sides of the equation makes it possible for them to bridge the gap between organizations that operate at a very different cadence.

This commitment continues, even through ever-increasing levels of security. The latest example is High Baseline, which FedRamp introduced to account for the government's most sensitive, unclassified data in cloud computing environments.

Groat explains how their government experience has changed over the years, **"In the early days of Amazon Web Services, a lot of what we were doing in the government sector was carrying over to banking or healthcare because of their high regulatory and compliance burden."**

Recently, the market began to go in the opposite direction. What was available to consumer segments could actually be implemented in the government sector, despite the extensive regulations that come along with it.

Outcome

Appian builds on the SMX Elevate platform, giving them the ability to rapidly offer the government secure, compliant and flexible solutions needed for their missions.

"It's exciting to securely bring cutting-edge capabilities to our federal customers," Groat says. "and we do it in a cost-effective way that's quick and easy to adopt. Now that we have AWS taking care of all of the underlying hardware and infrastructure, we apply our controls on top of that. So we've gone from a multi-month, multi-year process to now. We can have a new environment up in a week that the customer is ready to use with all the controls and security inherited and ready."

This rapid adoption is vitally important for customers like Appian who have deep connections to government programs. This includes the Defense Information Systems Agency which utilizes Appian Government Cloud to improve the administration and awarding of contracts. Which is why staying up to date (and ahead of) the latest security controls is so important to Appian. It's also why they knew their best choice was to maintain a strong partnership with SMX.



Future technology changes will, of course, bring even more tightening of security controls. The hottest topic currently is Artificial Intelligence. Appian is able to invest in that area as well, leveraging SMX's rapid adoption of technology and securely offering it to Appian's end customers.

And at a speed that is much faster than they could ever do alone.