Connected security

Integrating security across different environments, platforms, key to securing supply chain

Agencies should take a unified and holistic approach to cybersecurity so they can better protect their increasingly interconnected and expanding enterprise against growing cyber threats.

This strong security should extend across heterogenous environments and to the supply chain that organizations rely on to get the products and services they need to operate effectively.

Offering security-as-a-service can help deliver it across heterogenous environments in a unified way, which is better than bolting on third party security products as an afterthought. Microsoft, for instance, offers a suite of security solutions that secures its own platform, but also extends to other platforms including Linux, Macs, iOS, and Android.

"This reduces our customers' total cost of ownership and it's also improving their holistic security posture because it's so tightly integrated," said Anne S. Johnson, corporate vice president of Security, Compliance & Identity Business Development, at Microsoft.

> **"Simplicity is one of our goals, because with the threats increasing, we don't want it to be complex for customers to think about securing their hybrid environments."**
>
> **– ANN S. JOHNSON, CORPORATE VICE PRESIDENT OF SECURITY, COMPLIANCE & IDENTITY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MICROSOFT**

There can be a lot of disconnect within hybrid environments, which is why Microsoft takes a "heterogenous approach" to its security products, processes, recommended architectures, and the people it hires to support these solutions, Johnson said.

"We know there are hybrid and disconnected environments, we recognize there are legacy environments, and we recognize there are things that are not going to move to the cloud," she said.

As a result, Microsoft wants to secure all those environments, provide up-to-date tools, real-threat analysis, expertise, and give organizations an end-to-end view to make it simple.

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customers to think about securing their hybrid environments," she said. "We want to make the tools easy for them to use."

Microsoft also does a lot of up front work with regulators and agencies before new regulations come out, so that when the final rule or regulation is released its platforms are "well prepared" to become compliant as quickly as possible, which also benefits its customers.

This includes support for the new cyber maturity model for cloud. Microsoft has already begun the engineering efforts related to CMMC and is making progress with its maturity model so that its solutions will be compliant.

"It is our commitment to make sure that our solutions will always be compliant with the regulations as they become a requirement for government agencies, or even for non-government agencies," she said.

Support across commercial and government environments is important, said Brad Berkey, Global Business Strategy, Microsoft. "We (offer) that parity across those environments in terms of supportability."

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The company also helps organizations adapt to more cloud-native capabilities without having to start over. For instance, it has published reference architectures and best practices, offers migration paths and the tools to help agencies migrate, and offers consulting services and works with partners to help organizations move seamlessly to the cloud.

"The notion of partners has been part of our DNA since day one," Berkey said. "It really sets the baseline of what we are doing."

Global threats are evolving every day, bad actors are becoming more sophisticated and government agencies are some of the most targeted entities. The company, Johnson said, wants to be sure it is enabling the government to secure the country.

Microsoft offers products that include Microsoft Defender for Endpoint that is able to detect and block threats in real-time at the end point and within other solutions, such as Microsoft Office.

The company is also constantly looking for emerging threats from sophisticated actors, offers incident response support, and works with partners who can help customers keep ahead of and respond to threats.

Microsoft can take the trillions of threats it sees on a daily basis, put them in a machine learning engine, gain insight on who these threats are targeting, and use its solutions to block them.

"Combined with our human intelligence and human response capability and our partners' capability really should give the government a high level of confidence that we are going to do everything we can to keep them secure and keep them ahead of these threats," Johnson said.

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