



SURPRISE PHONE CALL CONFIRMS: CYBERSECURITY PROVIDER SERVES AS WATCHDOG THAT NEVER SLEEPS

Criminals barking up the wrong, hacker-proof tree

It started out like many other Sundays when the phone rang. Price Beazley, Chief Technology Officer at Midlothian, Va.-based Village Bank and Trust Financial Corp., was in his home cooking pancakes for his children when he answered the 7 a.m. call.

'You have a problem,' he was told by DefenseStorm Chief Information Security Officer Bob Thibodeaux, who called from Seattle at 4 a.m. Pacific Time to inform Beazley that a Russian hacker's attempt to infiltrate a Village Bank system had just been thwarted. Although the hacker tried to worm into a hole left open by one of Village Bank's online platform consultants, DefenseStorm shut the threat down before any damage was done.

"It just smacked me in the face that the threat is real," Beazley recalled. "DefenseStorm did exactly what they said they would do – alerted us when a cybersecurity issue threatened the bank. It is so rare that a sales pitch lives up to reality, but with DefenseStorm, it did."

From that summer 2018 day on, Beazley and the entire executive team at Village Bank, a 10-branch community bank in the Richmond, Va., area, sleep better knowing DefenseStorm is always working to keep its account holders' money secure.

PROACTIVELY ADDRESSING BANK'S TOP PRIORITY: CYBER RISK

Before partnering with DefenseStorm in December 2017, Village Bank's IT team proactively conducted phishing and social engineering tests. However, Beazley knew more was needed to bolster cybersecurity and compliance, especially since addressing cyber risk was the board of director's top priority.

He was surprised to find Village Bank's former cybersecurity vendor supplied just one lackadaisical, inconsistent, 24-hour-old report from the bank's firewall. "Twenty-four hours in cybersecurity is years, and we needed real-time capability," Beazley said. "If somebody's on your network, they've done a lot of damage in 24 hours."

While evaluating Village Bank's cyber risk, cybersecurity readiness and maturity using the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) Cybersecurity Assessment Tool (CAT), he came across another free online risk profile and domain maturity evaluation tool from DefenseStorm. After determining that Village Bank had some cybersecurity risks to further address, he went shopping for a new provider.

"I gained so much value from the free DefenseStorm tool that I asked for a demo," Beazley said. "I was blown away by the capabilities, including the real-time anomaly detection, the fact that it's in the cloud, and all the platform had to offer. Plus, DefenseStorm is laser-focused on banks of our size – not the Bank of Americas, the Capital Ones, the Chases," he said. "And when they came on-site to round out the final presentation, it was radically apparent to everyone in the room that it was the right choice."

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– Price Beazley
Chief Technology Officer
at Village Bank and Trust



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DefenseStorm provides a fixed-price, co-managed solution that includes real-time cybersecurity and cyber compliance for regional- and community-sized banks and credit unions. Its TRAC™ (Threat Ready Active Compliance) Team uses machine learning and rich content to curate threats and triggers most relevant to Village Bank so it can meet compliance and security needs around the clock.

Plus, DefenseStorm's Active Compliance™ engine makes proving compliance with state, federal and intellectual property (IP) auditors a continuous, real-time discipline rather than a situational exercise.

After what Beazley describes as the "easiest deployment I've ever witnessed," the DefenseStorm team stayed another two-and-a-half days to ensure the platform was running correctly and to train his team. And since this time in February 2018, the DefenseStorm team responds every time it's needed.

ASSURANCE OF A WISER ADVISOR WATCHING YOUR BACK

Beazley describes the DefenseStorm team as a true cybersecurity partner that does more than keep Village Bank safe from cyber criminals.

Along with ensuring cybersecurity and compliance and alerting the bank of anomalies, the TRAC team even informs Village Bank when an employee clicks on something they shouldn't, or is accessing their work email while vacationing outside of the United States.

"I feel like we've got a wiser advisor, always there to go above and beyond," he said. "During site visits, Bob Thibodeaux and his team have spent time talking to us about trends and best practices because they want to educate us and make us more cyber-minded. I learn something new every time I interact with the platform and the DefenseStorm team."

Beazley, who has an engineering background, describes the DefenseStorm platform as well-designed, intuitive and as easy to use as his iPhone. It gives him as little or as much cybersecurity and compliance information as he's looking for. "It's done so much good for us, that I love to retell the story to others," he said.

"And that one phone call on that Sunday morning- that proved their value. That gave us the assurance that no matter when an anomaly or a cyberattack occurs, DefenseStorm is our eyes and ears that will always have our backs. In fact, having DefenseStorm as a partner is better than having a full-time cybersecurity engineer on staff."

