Customer Success Story

The Company
McAfee - Protection You Can Trust

McAfee, Inc., headquartered in Santa Clara, Calif., creates best-of-breed intrusion prevention and risk management solutions. McAfee’s market-leading security products and services help large, medium and small businesses, government agencies, and consumers prevent intrusions on networks and protect computer systems from critical threats. Additionally, through the Foundstone Professional Services division, leading security consultants provide security expertise and best practices for organizations.

The Challenge

Chuck Jenson recently accepted the challenge of creating a course on multi-layered security for McAfee customers and prospects. As Technical Course Developer for McAfee, Jenson’s goal was to teach administrators and managers how network and host-based Intrusion Prevention Systems (IPS) can detect and prevent attacks. To illustrate this, Jenson knew his students must not only witness, but actually execute a real attack against a target network. He knew that attacking a network would be the best way to help them understand the complexity of network and host-based attacks. Furthermore, Jenson knew that these “attacks” needed to be more than a vulnerability scan. “In this situation, a scan just doesn’t cut it. A scan only tells you what the potential vulnerabilities are, it does not tell you if they are exploitable. To test any kind of IPS, you must attempt to penetrate it to see if it is doing its job and protecting your network.”

Solution Summary

“CORE IMPACT IS THE ONLY PRODUCT THAT PROVES YOU CAN GET INTO A NETWORK AND VERIFIES THE FACT THAT THE IPS IS DOING ITS JOB PROPERLY. WHEN IT COMES TO NETWORK OR HOST-BASED IPS, YOU MUST RUN A PENETRATION TEST WITH CORE IMPACT TO BE SURE THAT YOU ARE SECURE”

Chuck Jenson,
Technical Course Developer,
McAfee

However, before implementing his new course, Jenson needed to solve one critical issue: he would not have the time in his class to teach his students how to become attackers. So, after going through a review of available products, Jenson came to the conclusion that only a professionally designed penetration testing product could solve his problem. Jenson was aware of open source options, but he quickly discounted them. “I think there are trust and quality issues with open source tools. No one QAs the code, and the tools require a significant level of expertise to operate. While they were free in terms of dollars, the cost was prohibitive due to the considerable time requirements.”

The Solution

Ultimately, Jenson turned to CORE Security and selected its product, CORE Impact, the only comprehensive penetration testing product for assessing specific information security threats to an organization. The product enabled Jenson’s students to quickly and efficiently exploit vulnerabilities in their target networks, demonstrating the types of intrusions they need their IPS to prevent.

With CORE Impact, any network administrator can now safely and efficiently determine exactly how an attacker can get control of their valuable information assets. You no longer have to be an expert or even a security specialist to perform this critical type of assessment which tests the security of your network, identifies what resources are exposed, and determines if your current security investments are actually detecting and preventing attacks.
The Result

Jenson can now focus his course completely on IPS. “Now my students, with no previous experience, can penetrate a network in less than 30 minutes, from install to compromise, and that allows me to teach our IPS products better than ever before. I couldn’t do that with any other product. Impact is the best teaching tool I have, bar none.” CORE Impact Pro efficiently demonstrates how an attacker can get around host and network based IPS. “Using Impact’s client side exploits I was able to show how quickly and easily some exploits, can circumvent network-based security systems and compromise internal user’s machines directly.”

Jenson also found that the reports generated by Impact were exceptionally useful to his students. “The history and findings reports gave my students the detailed information they needed to make the critical improvements necessary for improved security. You can’t successfully deploy an IPS without tailoring it to your specific environment. You have to be sure that the system is optimally configured, and that means testing and then evaluating the findings.”

“CORE Impact is the only product that proves you can get into a network and verifies the fact that the IPS is doing its job properly. You can see the lock, but you have to try it to see if the doors are really secure. Until you run CORE Impact against an IPS, you can not be sure that you are completely secure. Unfortunately, security technologies are often deployed in a vacuum, and you need to verify that these technologies are functioning effectively and providing a proper return on investment. When it comes to network or host-based IPS, administrators and managers must run a penetration test with CORE Impact to be sure that they are secure.”

“UNTIL YOU RUN CORE IMPACT AGAINST AN IPS, YOU CAN NOT BE SURE THAT YOU ARE COMPLETELY SECURE. UNFORTUNATELY, SECURITY TECHNOLOGIES ARE OFTEN DEPLOYED IN A VACUUM, AND YOU NEED TO VERIFY THAT THESE TECHNOLOGIES ARE FUNCTIONING EFFECTIVELY AND PROVIDING A PROPER RETURN ON INVESTMENT.”