Leading Mortgage Financier Secures Move to the Cloud With Illumio

Fortune 500 company reduces ransomware risk by taking a Zero Trust approach across its hybrid cloud environment

Business Goals

In helping millions of Americans secure mortgage financing, this leading lender is focused on getting people into homes – and keeping ransomware out of its IT environments.

But traditional security approaches (particularly network-based firewalls) were making it hard to keep up with the growing demands of its business operations and the increasing threat of cyberattacks.

At the same time, the company's leadership recognized that new public cloud platforms could bring greater flexibility, agility and speed to its organization, particularly in developing new applications for customers and its financial partners.

The advantages of the cloud are unquestionable, but the company's chief information security officer (CISO) recognized that as his organization modernized its digital infrastructure, it also needed more sophisticated security capabilities.

Technology Challenges

For years, Zero Trust and defense-in-depth have been part of the company's security strategy. But with ransomware on the rise, the need to reduce risk and ramp up protection for "crown jewel" systems and applications in a relatively flat network rose in importance to become one of the CISO's top priorities. Thus began his search for a segmentation solution, a crucial piece of the Zero Trust puzzle.

The CISO knew that his company's existing firewalls were no match for its troves of customer data. Going the traditional route of network segmentation would have required massive investment in high-throughput hardware, time and effort. Yet it still would not have delivered the needed levels of segmentation, control and flexibility.

Industry: Financial services

Environment: Modern and legacy applications running in a mix of on-premises data centers and the public cloud

Challenge: Consistently protect the "crown jewel" systems and applications — before, during and after a cloud migration

Solution: Illumio Core for visibility and application control, ensuring security in the move to the cloud

Benefits: Zero Trust control and confidence; intelligent visibility to guide smart cloud-transformation decisions; easier implementation and better cost savings than traditional solutions

"We're applying Illumio to create a much bigger ringfenced area, while still having smaller areas where we're protecting our most valuable information."

Senior VP and CISO
Financial Services Organization

And with a cloud transformation on the horizon, the company needed the ability to innovate faster. Consistent security and availability while moving applications to the cloud were key success factors to the segmentation project.

How Illumio Helped

Once the CISO, head of enterprise architecture, and head of operations and IT aligned on the best investment, they chose Illumio Core. They realized Illumio's Zero Trust segmentation is significantly more cost-effective and easier to implement than the hardware alternatives. It's also a proven way to stop the spread of ransomware and reduce the risk of a cyberattack.

Using Illumio Core, the team initially ringfenced its most valuable applications and segmented Windows systems deemed most vulnerable to malware. Their goal: better control of how resources gain access to the company's critical data and assets — and new levels of confidence.

Illumio Core's real-time map provided a simplified view of application behavior, upstream and downstream dependencies, and all traffic flows traversing the organization's data center and cloud environments. This benefits both application and infrastructure teams; it's also critical to application-migration planning. The map further lets teams model and test the impact of segmentation policies, ensuring applications won't break when policies are enforced.

As the company expands into the cloud, Illumio Core is a reliable enabler of transformation. The team's strategy includes implementing Illumio on legacy applications before rehosting in the cloud. They rely on Illumio for consistent and continuous security before, during and after the migration.

Results and Business Outcomes

Hardware costs and complexity averted: The team saved what would have amounted to millions of dollars in both spend and significant complexity using firewalls. It also gained the benefits of security built for a hybrid world — and a simpler approach to segmentation.

Zero Trust control and confidence: By applying Zero Trust segmentation to its "crown jewels" and areas of risk, the lender gained control. The company also became more confident about its ability to stop the spread of ransomware and cyberattacks.

Intelligent visibility for smart cloud migration: With Illumio Core's real-time map, the team can take the pulse of traffic flows and application behavior across both on-premises and cloud environments. That delivers insights to inform migration decisions while staying secure.

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> "Illumio has been incredibly helpful in identifying dependencies in upstream and downstream connections."
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> **Senior VP and CISO,
> Financial Services Organization**

Ransomware Happens

We give you the visibility to stop it from spreading

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About Illumio

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Illumio, the pioneer and market leader of Zero Trust segmentation, prevents breaches from becoming cyber disasters. Illumio protects critical applications and valuable digital assets with proven segmentation technology purpose-built for the Zero Trust security model. Illumio ransomware mitigation and segmentation solutions see risk, isolate attacks, and secure data across cloud-native apps, hybrid and multi-clouds, data centers, and endpoints, enabling the world's leading organizations to strengthen their cyber resiliency and reduce risk.