SECURE IMPACT

How and why the penetration testing industry needs to change.

We share the key webinar insights from our panel of experts.

James Lyne
Secure Impact

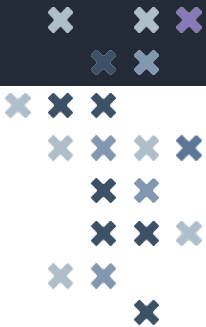**Robin Smith**
Aston Martin

Matthew Bryant
118 118 Money

Giorgia Cacace
Secure Impact

When did penetration tests stop adding value to businesses? Insights from our recent webinar.

July 2022

For many CISOs and security leaders, a penetration test has become the same report year-on-year without any clear road map for practical change. In a poll taken during the webinar, 50% of the audience stated that their last penetration test lacked any actionable insights. There is clearly demand for cyber security services that actually drive business value – so how can we get there?

Why do we need to talk about penetration testing?

According to James, pen tests have lost value and become commoditised...
- Pen tests have become quicker and cheaper, reduced to a checklist exercise in scanning, running generic tools, and then celebrating it – where is the real benefit for CISOs and companies?
- Vendors have lost sight of the original goal of a pen test which is to increase resiliency against attackers and to enable your security teams to do better.
- Pen test findings need to be applied to your business's unique threat model to create actual security outcomes.

What are the issues with current suppliers?

Robin has found vendor relationships transactional rather than value adding..
- Pen testing is no longer the collaborative, engagement and partnership that it should be.
- Vendors today approach it simply as a transaction, recommending ad-hoc compliance driven pen tests which won't help you achieve your security goals.

Matthew thinks pen tests have become a tick box exercise..
- Pen tests should lead to actionable improvements in security, and not serve as a vehicle for companies to solely tick a box.
- Shared learning for the CISO and security team is critical to the value of pen tests. Pen testers – the experts – should be bringing you unique insights and helping you address skills gaps in the team. If you're getting a clean bill of health, you need to ask yourself, what was the benefit?

What are effective approaches to penetration testing?

Robin believes intelligence-led pen testing creates positive business outcomes..
- Pen tests can be extremely valuable if they are intelligence-led. They should consider the rest of the business, create links, and provide insights. A good pen test should help you communicate with the board security problems and issues, and your approach to addressing them.

"Pen test vendors seem to 'stack it high, sell it cheap' and that worries me. I want value but quality is what makes a pen test worth doing for companies and I wonder if the pen test sector understands that. There is this race to the bottom on price that manifests so many issues for customers due to lack of value."

Matthew Bryant // 118 118 Money

- These tests should help you to continuously monitor and manage finite resources, and to form a strategic risk assessment that gives you an actionable roadmap.

Matthew uses pen test reports to help to demonstrate ROI..
- Currently a 'good' pen test is seen as a report with lots of bad findings. Pen test reports can also help to shine a light on the good work too, demonstrating to the rest of the business where processes are working and we're getting it right.
- Many pen testers need to improve the post-testing period engagement, to help our teams to build better outcomes by understanding the findings and verifying that we've addressed them.

James advises a purple team approach to pen testing..
- Pen testers should take time to learn about your specific requirements and goals for the test, and have the ability to challenge you where needed.
- Take a purple teaming approach and your results will be better informed, and you will continuously train the blue team on what they might have missed.
- Make sure you have an actionable roadmap on steps to take next, and that it is aligned with your business maturity and staffing.

S E C U R E ×
I M P A C T

Watch the recording on demand now

▶
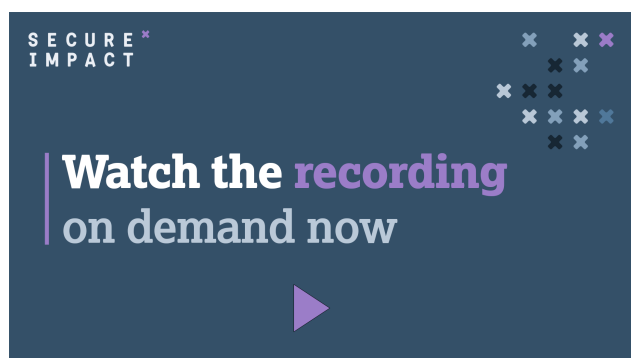
How can SI help?

Secure Impact is disrupting the industry with business-oriented cyber security services. CISOs and security teams have real challenges which likely won't be solved with 'silver bullet' products, automated scans, or generic reports. Our penetration tests are business-oriented, bespoke to your risk profile, and geared to creating learning outcomes for your team. Let's change pen testing together!

If you believe in these themes, would like to contribute to a webinar, or have pen testing needs, please contact Giorgia Cacace: gcacace@secure-impact.com

SECURE ✕
IMPACT

Your security team.

Your security team.

We understand you have real business challenges which likely won't be solved with commoditised scans, tick box exercises or generic reports. Our GIAC-certified team can help create real business outcomes for you and your team through collaborative offensive and defensive engagements.

From penetration testing to digital forensics and incident response, we promise services which are business-oriented, bespoke to your risk profile, and geared to achieving your security objectives.

We partner with CISOs and security teams from the FTSE 100 to VC-backed scale-ups, creating shared learning outcomes for our clients, and developing a roadmap to improve their cyber security maturity.

Secure Impact Ltd.
The Old Bull Pens, Sezincote, Moreton-In-Marsh, Gloucestershire, GL56 9AW
© 2022 Secure Impact.

Want to discuss how we can help your business? Contact us to learn more.