

It's Here and We Like It! nCircle Integrates a Full Vulnerability Management Solution

Abstract

On February 6, 2008, nCircle, a leader in security risk and compliance management, announced the release of their dynamic Web analysis product WebApp360. The integration of WebApp360 into the nCircle product portfolio will allow organizations to address vulnerabilities more fully at a network, system, and a Web application level. This integration of dynamic analysis functionality into a system level vulnerability scanner has been highly anticipated by the security community. With the release of WebApp360, nCircle has released the first commercially-developed product with full integration between system and Web scanners.

Context

Risk to IT is typically considered to be the vulnerability of an organization multiplied by corresponding threats and the business impact of those threats. Unfortunately, threat can be an elusive target for security professionals to identify and even more difficult if not impossible to address. Consider, for example government-sponsored cyber attacks. Attackers in these scenarios have little, if any, fear of reprisal. At this stage in the evolution of such threats, short of a declaration of war by another government there is little

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that can be done to remove the threat. No business can expect to succeed without exposing itself to some threats – and nowhere is this more evident today than with modern Web applications, where direct interaction with the application is required for the business to reach its target audience. Simply put, many systems face direct exposure to threats that defenses alone cannot remediate.

Threat removal is therefore not typically the primary method used to reduce the risk to information technology resources and capabilities. Instead, organizations focus their risk reduction efforts towards reducing the number of vulnerabilities inherent in their infrastructure,

applications, and systems. This is accomplished through vulnerability management strategies that often function as a catalyst for organizations to address issues in their underlying pre-production processes such as infrastructure design, software development lifecycles, and configuration management.

Unfortunately, creating a vulnerability management strategy in these areas has required organizations to adopt multiple independent technologies and management utilities. This has created complex reporting mechanisms and processes for security departments and auditors. As a result of the growing need for simplified vulnerability management in multiple technology arenas, vendors are now beginning to integrate multiple vulnerability assessment methods into a single management utility.

Event

In response to the market demand for integration between system level and Web application vulnerability assessment, nCircle, a leader in security risk and compliance management, has released its new dynamic Web analysis product, WebApp360. WebApp360 is

a “black box” Web application vulnerability scanner already integrated into the strong portfolio offered by nCircle. This addition allows business units tasked with ensuring specific levels of vulnerability remediation to seamlessly integrate application vulnerability assessment into their existing system-level vulnerability assessment strategies.

WebApp360 is integrated into nCircle’s industry-leading products in vulnerability and configuration management. In particular, WebApp360 will work to complete the assessment cycle by adding functionality to assess Web applications for issues specific to the application environment. This augments nCircle’s IP360 solution, which identifies vulnerabilities in the infrastructure and in systems through automated assessment. The information taken from both of these assessments can then be combined with additional nCircle products such as the Security Intelligence Hub, which works to create centralized reporting and customized risk management dashboards. Of course, this is only one of the products that nCircle has created to assist organizations in their efforts to reduce risk in IT.

Key Ramifications

Meeting new and expanding requirements for assuring security and related compliance requirements is a difficult task for even the most mature organization. This is especially true in application security assessment, where many organizations have failed to establish processes and procedures that effectively address security issues.

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The creation of WebApp360 as an extension of the IP360 product line allows organizations to seamlessly integrate application assessment not only into their technical capabilities, but also into their already existing vulnerability mitigation processes, where nCircle’s products already function as the technical cornerstone. Organizations wishing to create a comprehensive vulnerability management program that fully covers Requirement 6 of the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS) will merely need to extend their existing vulnerability management program to deliver reports to developers and application management teams in addition to systems and security administrators. These values are further enhanced by nCircle’s configuration audit capabilities acquired with Cambia. Together, system- and application-level vulnerability assessment coupled with configuration audit and control capabilities provide a solution complement that addresses multiple regulatory mandates, such as PCI DSS Requirement 11 as well as Requirement 6—two of the most difficult requirements for many subject organizations to achieve, and a rare combination to bring together under the umbrella of a single vendor’s solution set.

This more comprehensive reporting capability will allow organizations to leverage the technology and processes that have already demonstrated success with system level vulnerability mitigation. Adding application security to the simplified processes and capabilities for which nCircle’s IP360 product line is already recognized will allow organizations to leverage the same technology that has functioned as a catalyst for success in system level vulnerability mitigation. This significantly reduces the time spent on technology adoption and educating decision makers.

EMA's Perspective

nCircle has already created a trusted name in this arena through their system-level vulnerability scanning solution, IP360. By integrating a Web application security scanner, nCircle stands to expand its business through the confidence that security professionals already have in its products, further asserting them as a leading vulnerability management solution for applications, systems, and infrastructures.

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EMA acknowledges that the power of the WebApp360 software may not be as mature as some other Web application scanning company's software. However, this factor is more than offset by the comprehensive nature of the nCircle solution set that covers multiple areas of vulnerability assessment and risk remediation. The value of adding WebApp360 to this complement is that it allows organizations to utilize a single product set and market-accepted process to address security issues. This enables organizations to more easily leverage nCircle's product line to mitigate vulnerabilities and IT risks across a much wider spectrum than most competing solution sets, and in a much more cost efficient manner.

EMA believes that many often overlook the fact that security is not ensured through assessment but rather through the mitigation of the findings of the assessment. nCircle has asserted itself in this regard through specifically designed products that assist organizations in the much larger issue of mitigating the risks identified in the assessment process. Utilizing these same tools that have created efficiency in vulnerability remediation at a network and system level, nCircle will assist those who adopt their technologies in filling in holes in their application security strategy as well.

Enterprise Management Associates, Inc.
5777 Central Avenue, Suite 105
Boulder, CO 80301
Phone: 303.543.9500, Fax: 303.543.7687, Web: www.enterprisemanagement.com

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