

5 REAL-WORLD

INTERCONNECTIONS THAT IT TEAMS OVERLOOK

Uncover and utilize five IT interconnections to
grow your business

Introduction

As organizations grow, IT teams tend to become more segmented to meet the demands of specific areas of expertise. In the beginning, startups and small organizations may have a two or three-person IT team, but as the business expands, technology implementation increases, requiring IT teams to expand.

Consequently, IT teams develop specialization in different areas based on the direction of business expansion. Functional areas emerge within IT teams, with large companies often having a dedicated ITSM team serving as the central hub for operations, supporting employees with services essential for their core tasks.

IT operations teams focus on ensuring infrastructure health while security teams prioritize maintaining a healthy security posture for the company. With time, each of these teams develops expertise and a narrow focus within their functional areas, potentially losing sight of their interconnectedness and the impact of their actions on other areas of IT.

Understanding these interconnections is crucial to enhancing overall operational efficiency. In the upcoming sections, we will explore several real-world interconnections that IT teams often overlook. By recognizing and leveraging these interconnections, IT teams can optimize their operations and improve efficiency.

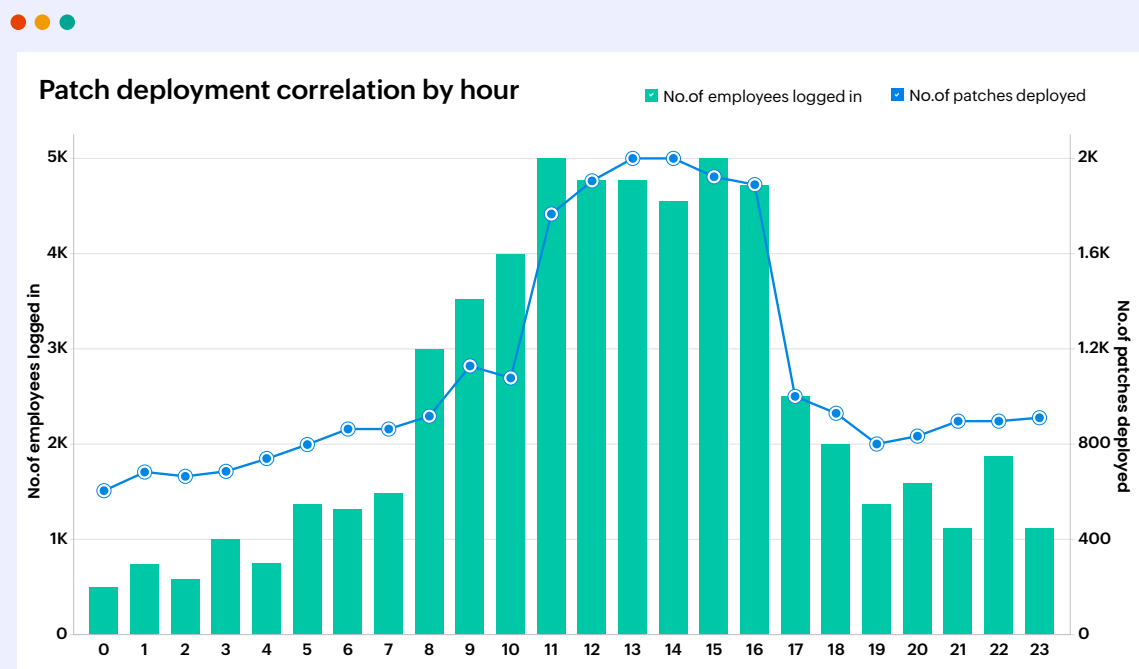
Vulnerability and employee attendance rates

Organizations prioritize enhancing their security posture and minimizing the risk of security attacks through a fundamental practice: regular endpoint patching. This becomes particularly crucial when popular software vendors disclose new vulnerabilities, as it becomes a race against time to patch endpoints and reduce susceptibility to attacks. While IT teams are efficient in deploying patches, the speed of installation is influenced by various factors, the primary one being the online presence and network connectivity of end users for the patch to be downloaded and installed successfully.

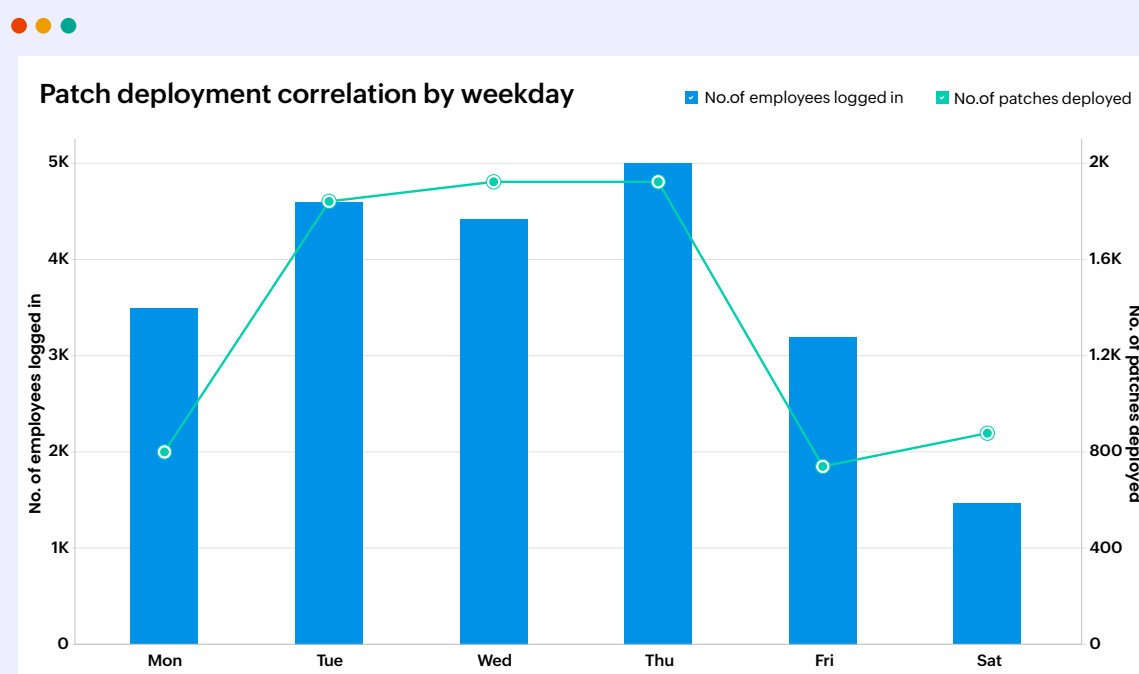
This situation becomes even more complex in a hybrid work model where employees can work both remotely and in the office with varying hours. To achieve a high success rate in patch deployment, the triggering of patches must occur when employees are available and connected to a reliable network. IT teams must have a clear understanding of employee attendance patterns to ensure optimal patch coverage within the organization.

Two key aspects should be considered while assessing employee availability: the time window during which the majority of employees are accessible throughout the day and the specific days of the week when most employees are connected online.

To gather this valuable information, IT teams can integrate their systems with HRMS software to collect employee check-in and check-out data. By visualizing this data, it becomes easier to identify patterns. Overlaying the patch deployment schedule onto this visualization provides insights into the success rate of deployments during hours when most employees are available and online. This comprehensive understanding allows IT teams to strategize and schedule patch deployments effectively, maximizing their effectiveness and minimizing disruption to employees.



In companies where hybrid work arrangements are prevalent with employees not present on all days of the week, it is crucial to determine which days the majority of employees are available. Overlaying the patch deployment success rate on this data yields similar findings. Visualizing this information reveals a clear pattern: the deployment success significantly improves on days when the majority of the workforce is available.



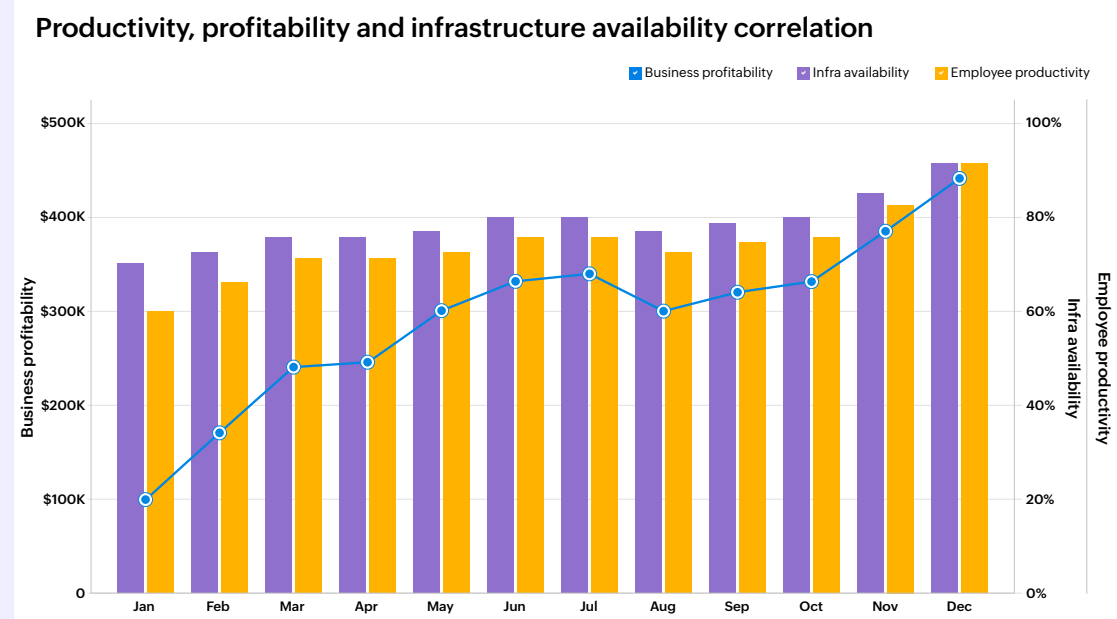
By aligning patch deployment schedules with employee availability, organizations can ensure timely and efficient deployments, minimizing delays and ensuring critical patches are pushed without unnecessary interruptions.

Infrastructure responsiveness and revenue

Considering IT is the backbone of a business and is responsible for enabling employees to work at their full potential, it is crucial not to overlook the direct connection between IT and the revenue generated by the organization. The profitability of the business relies on high levels of employee productivity. IT teams play a vital role in this by ensuring that the technology provided and supported by IT is fast, responsive, and reliable, thereby supporting employee productivity.

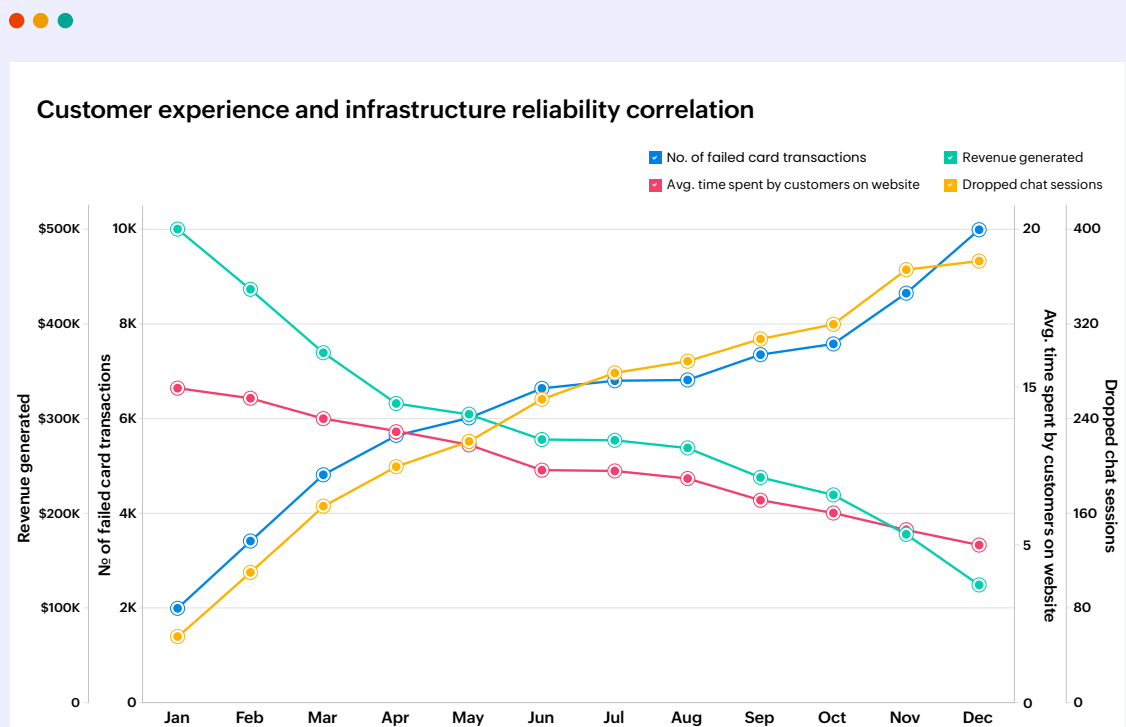
To quantify the impact of IT on productivity and profitability, it helps to assign a dollar value to the hours lost due to decreased productivity. Through the following analysis, variations in employee productivity can be examined alongside the availability and responsiveness of the IT infrastructure.

When employees experience delays due to break fixes or encounter sluggish and unresponsive systems, their productivity is significantly hindered, preventing them from efficiently completing their tasks. This analysis provides a comprehensive view of the relationship between infrastructure responsiveness, employee productivity, and overall profitability by presenting these metrics together in a unified view.



In situations where IT also supports customers' interactions with the business, such as websites where customers learn about the organization's offerings or chat portals for sales and support questions, the significance of this correlation becomes even more pronounced. Customers often choose to avoid doing business with companies that provide a poor digital experience. As a result, IT teams, who are directly responsible for managing and maintaining the company's digital footprint, play a crucial role in driving revenue generation.

The analysis presented below serves as a visual representation of this relationship. It highlights the impact of IT performance on customer experience, customer satisfaction, and ultimately, the revenue generated by the business. By assessing key metrics related to the digital touchpoints, IT teams can identify areas for improvement, optimize customer interactions, and enhance the overall revenue-generating potential of the business.



Recognizing this correlation is vital for IT teams to understand the critical nature of delivering services in a timely manner. It serves as a reminder of the direct impact IT has on customer experience, productivity, and, ultimately, the success of the business. By demonstrating the tangible benefits of IT services in terms of customer satisfaction, revenue generation, and overall business performance, IT teams can enhance their visibility and position themselves as indispensable contributors to the company's success.

Infrastructure acquisition time frames and employee productivity

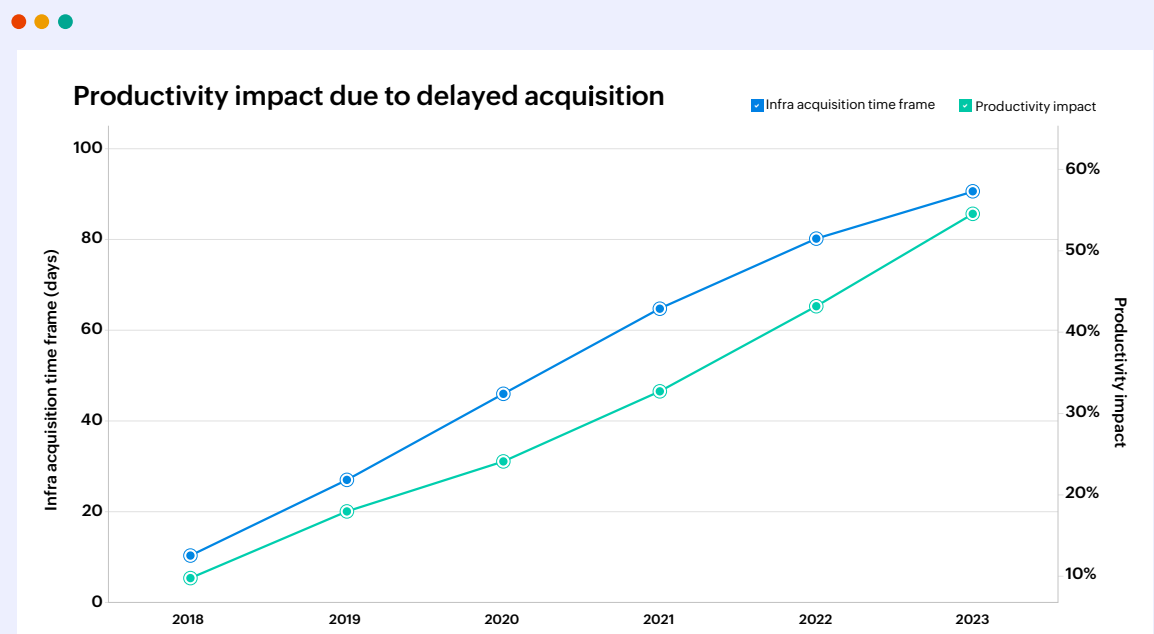
Maintaining high levels of employee productivity is a key focus for organizations, and while morale and motivation play important roles, the availability of necessary infrastructure components is equally critical. These components can include software, hardware, or access permissions to existing infrastructure. Timely asset provisioning is essential to enable employees to perform their day-to-day tasks efficiently and maximize productivity.

There are two common approaches to asset acquisition: just-in-time procurement and pre-stocking. Just-in-time procurement ensures budget efficiency by initiating procurement only when requests are made. However, it requires well-refined procurement logistics to ensure timely delivery. On the other hand, pre-stocking aims to avoid delays by maintaining a running stock of commonly requested or used assets. However, the downside is the risk of over-procurement and assets remaining unused due to variations in demand.

While both approaches have their pros and cons, organizations should strive to minimize productivity losses for employees dependent on these assets by striking the right balance between the two approaches. A hybrid model can be employed, switching between pre-stocking during times of business expansion and just-in-time procurement during other periods.

Another option is to pre-stock essential resources, such as workstations, while utilizing just-in-time procurement for other resources, like software.

Regardless of the chosen method, it is essential to monitor and mitigate the impact to productivity caused by asset provisioning delays. This can be measured by equating the duration of delays in infrastructure acquisition to the productivity impact, i.e., the time spent waiting for assets beyond their promised delivery date.



Keeping track of these comparisons is crucial, as it allows organizations to refine their procurement processes and take timely corrective action. When delays in asset provisioning begin to significantly impact critical projects, monitoring and analyzing the data can provide insights into areas that require improvement.

By identifying recurring delays or bottlenecks, organizations can implement necessary adjustments to mitigate the negative impact on projects and their progress. This proactive approach ensures that procurement processes are continuously optimized, enabling smoother operations, enhanced productivity, and successful project outcomes.

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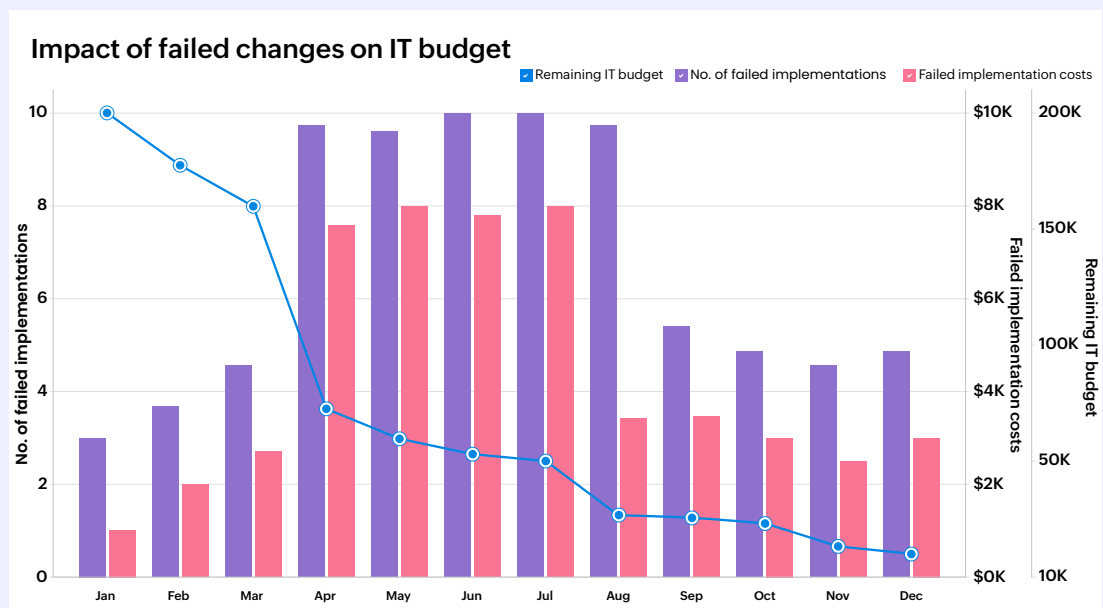
Failed change implementations and cost savings

Planned changes within an organization are typically implemented with the goal of enhancing services for end users. However, change implementations represent significant investments in terms of cost and effort. Unfortunately, not all changes are successful, and failed implementations can accumulate over time, draining the IT budget.

While organizations often closely monitor their IT spending, the lack of effective return on investment (ROI) calculations for infrastructure expenditures can result in unnoticed cost drains, such as failed change implementations, which can ultimately harm the company by limiting resources available for critical needs.

It is crucial to account for the effort wasted on failed changes when calculating cost drains, and this can be done by assigning a dollar value to the expended effort. While this may initially seem like a complex task, IT analytics solutions like Analytics Plus simplify the process by enabling custom metrics. These metrics can multiply the per-hour cost of technicians by the time spent on failed change implementations, providing a clear and quantifiable measure of the associated costs.

By gaining deeper insights into the financial impact of failed changes, organizations can streamline budget management and resource allocation. Identifying these cost drains and implementing corrective measures allows organizations to optimize their IT investments, ensure efficient change implementations, and allocate sufficient resources to critical business needs.



Visualizing the dollar value of change implementations drives accountability and encourages IT teams to carefully assess scope of work involved in implementing the change. It prompts close monitoring by change managers and boosts success rates, leading to a better ROI and improved employee outcomes.

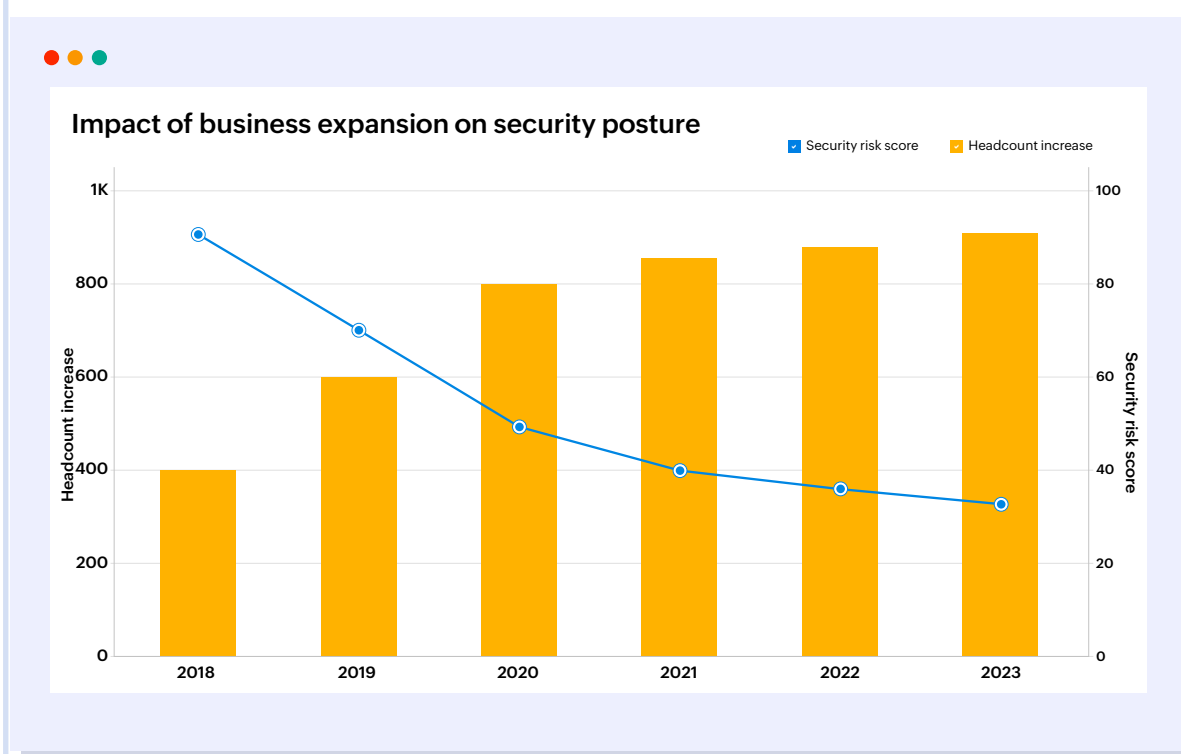
Business expansion and the security posture of an organization

The primary objective of any business is continuous growth in revenue and value for customers. As businesses expand, their infrastructures and workforces also increase. While employees are valuable assets, they can also pose security risks if not managed properly.

Research consistently highlights that the biggest security risk to an organization is its people. User errors, insider threats, and susceptibility to social engineering attacks are major contributors to security breaches. People are often the weakest link in protecting digital assets from threat actors. The pace of business expansion, which involves onboarding new employees, is directly correlated with the overall security score, inversely impacting the security posture.

New employees need time to be educated on security best practices and effective handling of sensitive corporate data. Implementing a Zero Trust model can help protect organizations from exposing sensitive data to unaware or non-compliant employees. However, in the long run, organizations should strive to improve employees' knowledge of security best practices to mitigate overall risk at a fundamental level. Enhancing security awareness among employees is the most effective defense against cyberattacks. Therefore, visualizing and tracking rising risk levels in relation to business expansion is crucial to understanding how the security posture has evolved.

The report below shows the collective security score for the organization with risk scores assigned to employees based on factors such as tenure, job role, work mode, access permissions, and exposure to sensitive data. It compares this score with the number of employees onboarded each month, providing insights into how risk levels fluctuate with employee additions. Various factors, such as the organization's proactive approach to security awareness and employees' assessment scores, can influence the degree of change in risk levels.



Minimizing the gap between business expansion and security posture is crucial for organizations. It is essential to prioritize security awareness programs, actively train employees, and closely review access permissions when observing a significant widening of this gap. By taking proactive measures, organizations can bridge the divide and ensure that security practices keep pace with business growth. This approach helps to mitigate risks and maintain a robust security posture while supporting the organization's expansion objectives.

Conclusion

IT data is rich with correlations and interconnected events that are crucial to comprehend and monitor. Understanding these interconnections and tracking the ones that directly impact productivity is vital for organizations to maintain high levels of efficiency.

As businesses evolve and their internal systems become increasingly interconnected, organizations that recognize and leverage these interconnections gain a significant advantage, enabling them to stay ahead of the curve. By proactively analyzing and leveraging the insights from IT data, organizations can optimize their operations, drive innovation, and achieve sustained success in a rapidly changing business landscape.

About

ManageEngine Analytics Plus is a self-service, AI-driven IT analytics solution that helps organizations implement complex initiatives that address requirements of expanding businesses. Available on-premises and on the cloud, Analytics Plus visualizes IT data from several applications and integrates out-of-the-box with several popular IT applications such as ManageEngine ServiceDesk Plus, Jira, Service Now, Zendesk, and ManageEngine Endpoint Central. Analytics Plus features an AI-powered analytics assistant that responds to voice and text prompts to provide meaningful visualizations. This eliminates the need for a data analyst to aid help desk managers and reduces report building time while enabling organizations to make faster, data-driven decisions.

Kickstart your IT analytics journey with a free trial of Analytics Plus.

Want to learn more about the product before giving it a try?

Sign up for a free, virtual tour with one of our solution experts.

280K
customers
across the world

90+
products
and free tools

190+
countries
served

20+
years of IT
management experience

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