

stratum//security

Stratum Security Case Study: DDC Advocacy



Customer Profile

DDC Advocacy

Website

www.ddcadvocacy.com

Overview

Leading full-service advocacy firm

Industry

Public affairs

Challenge

Reduce application risk, satisfy compliance requirements

Stratum Security Solution

Web Application Security Assessment

Results

- Reduction in application security risk
- Improved customer relationship.
- Satisfied compliance requirements
- Compliance with PCI-DSS 6.6
- Validation positive practices such as patch and configuration management

//Organization

DDC Advocacy is a full-service issue advocacy firm that offers integrated strategy, communications, campaign, and technology services for public affairs. DDC Advocacy's leadership is a collective team of industry experts who structure advocacy programs that help a broad range of clients pursue their public policy objectives.

//The Challenge

Any organization that conducts business on the Internet must strike a balance between usability and security. DDC Advocacy wanted to validate that proper security controls were in place to protect sensitive information. "DDC Advocacy has a mature software development lifecycle and we are confident about our design, coding, and security practices, however we needed an independent verification that we were doing all the right things," says Chief Technology Officer, Laszlo Zeke. DDC Advocacy's web applications support hundreds of advocacy campaigns and utilize customers' confidential data. As part of their customers' third party vendor security management requirements, DDC Advocacy's customers require DDC Advocacy to undergo periodic security assessments of their platforms, services, and web applications. "The process to coordinate the scans with the customer, and then address the findings was cumbersome and expensive," explains Senior Vice President of Operations Mathew Newfield. "Each customer had different security assessment approaches, skills and requirements."

"We have had our environment tested many times but Stratum Security set a new standard for in-depth and thorough testing."

DDC Advocacy began looking for a security partner that possesses the experience, skill, and methodology to thoroughly assess their web applications and help them satisfy their customers' security requirements.

DDC Advocacy turned to Stratum Security.

//Approach

Stratum Security engaged DDC Advocacy's CTO and software engineers to understand the web applications' architecture, design, use cases, and role in the business. Once Stratum Security had an understanding of how the applications function, Stratum Security developed a detailed test plan that includes "abuse cases". An "abuse case" simulates the approach a well-equipped and motivated attacker would take to compromise the application.

Stratum Security then performed a detailed application security assessment of the DDC web applications. The assessment examined all functionality within each application. Any issues discovered by Stratum Security were communicated to DDC Advocacy who assessed, tested, and remediated the findings immediately. Each finding was documented in a deliverable that allowed DDC Advocacy to reproduce, analyze, and remediate the issue. The deliverable also contained an analysis of the positive application security practices DDC Advocacy software developers adhere to. Stratum Security also provided remediation support to DDC Advocacy after the audit to further improve the applications' security posture.

//Results

Prior to engaging Stratum Security, DDC Advocacy's customers had scanned DDC Advocacy's applications numerous times; however none used the intense and exhaustive approach that Stratum Security brings to bear. "We have had our environment tested many times but Stratum Security set a new standard for in-depth and thorough testing," said Zeke.

Once DDC Advocacy had addressed the discovered findings, Stratum Security delivered an enhanced report of findings that is suitable for distribution to DDC Advocacy's clients. This report provides DDC Advocacy's clients with the confidence they require and satisfies their compliance objectives.

DDC Advocacy reduced risk, improved their customer relationships, and improved operational efficiency by leveraging Stratum Security's assessment services. As a sign of DDC Advocacy's commitment to their customer's privacy and security, DDC Advocacy has contracted with Stratum Security to conduct regular application security assessments to maintain a strong application security posture.

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About Stratum Security

Stratum Security is an information security consulting company located in the Washington DC Metro area. Founded in 2005, we provide services to clients world wide. Our list of clients include large multi-national enterprises to small start-ups in numerous industries including finance, insurance, retail, public affairs, hospitality, health care, government, technology, energy, and telecommunications.