

Achieving a Competitive Advantage Through Application Security

5 Key Takeaways From the Joint Veracode/IDG Research Survey Report, *How to Make Application Security a Competitive Advantage*



Business and IT leaders frequently view security as a cost of doing business. As a result, organizations often adopt a reactive approach that focuses on blocking potential intrusions and preventing breaches. However, there's a growing awareness that cybersecurity — and particularly application security (AppSec) — can produce clear business gains and help an organization achieve a competitive advantage.

We recently surveyed IT professionals and executives who are involved in the purchase of software at their organizations about the role security plays in their purchase decisions. Here are five key takeaways from the joint Veracode/IDG Research survey report, *How to Make Application Security a Competitive Advantage*:



1

Application security improves your standing in your customers' eyes.

The sobering threat of data breaches has more and more organizations leery about the applications they bring into their businesses. But this offers a competitive edge to vendors that can prove their apps won't leave their clients open to attack: A colossal 94 percent of survey respondents reported they have greater confidence in a vendor with application security that's been validated by an established independent security expert. In fact, 66 percent said they're much more likely to work with that vendor. Nearly every respondent (99 percent) recognizes the advantages in working with a certified secure vendor, which helps customers feel more comfortable about data security, especially sensitive IP data.



2

There's a growing awareness regarding the consequences of a lack of application security.

90 percent of respondents reported that their organizations have experienced negative consequences as a result of security vulnerabilities or breaches. Companies have been particularly burned when deploying third-party apps — nearly all respondents reported finding varying levels of vulnerabilities in third-party software. With good reason, organizations are becoming more cautious about the applications they incorporate into their IT environment — and their business.



3

Your customers are specifically looking at key aspects of your security practices ...

When asked what an independent security validation program should look like, more than 70 percent of respondents said the following items rated *highly important or critical*:

- Certification that the software/application code is free of security-related defects
- Verification that the providers have a certified and trained security champion in-house
- An imposed/guaranteed time restriction for remediation of future security issues/flaws
- Verification that the providers have integrated continuous scanning to detect vulnerabilities throughout the development process



4

... And they want it to be easier to find these things.

Nearly all organizations (99 percent) run into roadblocks when evaluating the security status of externally developed applications and software. These hurdles include an inability to obtain the code necessary to conduct independent testing, verifying the security of open source code, and poor insight into the security and testing practices of software vendors. Survey respondents also noted that security information they get from vendors is either too time-consuming to read through or too difficult to understand, issues that can delay, or even stop, sales cycles.



5

Proof of a solid application security program gives you a competitive edge and speeds your sales cycles.

If you can't answer questions about your security practices or can't address your customers' audit requirements, you're likely to experience lost or delayed sales opportunities. In some cases, prospects will turn elsewhere. However, vendors that can address these security concerns quickly and effectively stand out among suppliers and leverage security as a competitive advantage.

The report found that 96 percent of respondents are more likely to consider doing business with a vendor or partner whose software has been independently verified as "secure." The takeaway? Independent security validation proves a company's commitment to producing high-quality code and addressing the needs of customers. It's not surprising that companies are more likely to do business with a vendor or partner they feel they can trust.

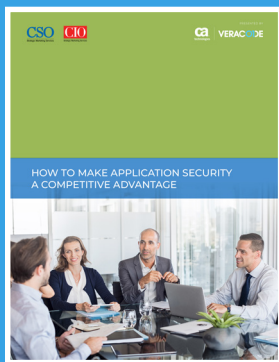
“Creating secure code at DevOps speed means security needs to be baked in as it's being created, which also means developers are now on the front lines of creating secure code. Security has become part of their job, even as the pressure to move faster has increased. **To succeed in this new environment, developers need security tools that are automated and integrated into their existing tools and processes.**”

MARIA LOUGHLIN
VP Software Engineering,
Veracode



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

The goal for any organization should be to move away from cost avoidance and adopt a more holistic security approach that centers on performance and quality. With an independent verification program and robust tools and solutions that measure and validate results, it's possible for an enterprise to improve the quality of code, build stronger business relationships and speed sales cycles. Savvy organizations understand that sound security practices can serve as a competitive advantage.



For a more detailed look at how to ratchet up your application security program and boost ROI,

← [DOWNLOAD THE REPORT](#)

How to Make Application Security a Competitive Advantage.

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