Bishop Fox launches CAST platform and managed services offering

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Introduction

Hybrid is now the default IT strategy for most organizations according to 451 Research's Voice of the Enterprise (VotE) Cloud, Hosting, and Managed Services: Workloads and Key Projects 2019 survey. Over 43% of organizations currently deploy the majority of their workloads in off-premises IT environments. While on-premises IT environments will not completely disappear, the shift to off-premises is expected to continue, with over 66% of enterprises expecting a majority of their workloads to be in the cloud by the end of 2021.

As modern IT ecosystems transform, and organizations become more agile to support digital transformation initiatives, the enterprise attack surface area is growing exponentially. Security operation teams, tasked with detecting threats across this diverse and evolving infrastructure, are struggling to identify, let alone test, their expanding attack surface.

Bishop Fox believes its newly launched Continuous Attack-Surface Testing (CAST) platform and managed services offering enables security teams to tackle these challenges with risk-based triage, automated real-time discovery and testing.

The 451 Take

To protect something, you have to know it exists. In the new, expanding digital world, attack surface analysis is crucial to identify and mitigate threats, and reduce the organization's exposure. Maintaining oversight and visibility across the organization's digital footprint is becoming increasingly difficult for security teams as line-of-business and event-driven applications and services are procured or implemented outside of traditional IT processes. Mergers, acquisitions and cloud-based offerings are adding to these challenges.

Discovery is driving a range of services and products from security vendors; however, many are focused on point-in-time discovery through basic IP address and port scanning, often failing to fully discover and identify the unknown attack surface. Combining machine learning and a managed services approach with its years of expertise in penetration testing, discovery and red teaming, Bishop Fox's new CAST platform is taking a distinctive approach to these challenges. If the company

can successfully navigate the hurdles and complexities that come with delivering a platform and managed service, the move should prove to be advantageous for Bishop Fox as it scales its services for new customers and markets.

Context

Founded in 2005, global information security consulting firm Bishop Fox is focused on providing offensive security testing services to large enterprises. Headquartered in Tempe, Arizona, the company has offices in Atlanta, San Francisco, New York and Barcelona. The privately held firm provides a broad range of security consulting services, including penetration testing, application assessments, social engineering, red teaming and product security reviews. Primarily targeting enterprises in the Fortune 500, the company reports it has performed over 2,300 security engagements, and has grown to over 200 employees.

In February 2019, Bishop Fox closed a $25m series A funding round from ForgePoint Capital. The company says it is leveraging the funding to grow its research capabilities, and to develop new offensive security technologies.

According to Bishop Fox, enterprises are growing and developing at an increasingly rapid pace, becoming more agile, both technologically and operationally. Enterprise transformation is outpacing the capabilities of security programs that are unable to evolve at the speed of the business. As a result, security teams are losing track of their attack surface, unable to measure and quantify their risk and exposure, making security programs less effective and organizations more vulnerable.

Continuous Attack-Surface Testing

To help enterprises tackle this problem, Bishop Fox recently introduced CAST – a managed security service and platform aimed at maintaining real-time awareness of an organization's entire and evolving attack surface. The subscription-based service is intended to complement Bishop Fox's traditional consulting services with continuous discovery and offensive testing.

Bishop Fox says the platform provides security teams with continuous penetration testing and risk-based triage. Taking an attacker's view of the business, the platform discovers and tests for threats across on-premises, multi-cloud and hybrid environments, including network services and web applications. Combining human expertise with supervised machine-learning-based attack surface threat analysis, the platform maintains real-time awareness of the entire attack surface, enabling continuous discovery, testing and validation.

The proprietary CAST platform leverages over 50 sources and methods for attack surface discovery, giving security teams visibility and insights into previously unknown areas of their attack surface. These insights enable security teams to minimize or remove vulnerability windows, and reduce the organization's attack surface.

The platform provides access to attack surface data and findings, operationalized in a security context, that can be queried and downloaded. Although most customers will import the findings into a variety of security management systems, the platform does provide basic lifecycle management of findings and response activities. Bishop Fox also gives customers detailed insights into all the testing activities performed. The company says these insights have been valuable for enterprises, highlighting successes in addition to the opportunities to improve.

While security teams want to know if the organization is vulnerable to new emerging threats, it is also valuable to know that a third party has tested the enterprise attack surface, and verified the organization is not vulnerable to specific threats. Not only do these insights provide enterprises with

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greater visibility into the services Bishop Fox is delivering, but they also provide the data needed to prove the value and effectiveness of the services they are delivering to the enterprise.

The platform has been available to select customers through an early-adopter program since August. The company expects the CAST platform and managed services offering to enter general availability in January 2020.

Competition

While valuable, enterprises are realizing that annual or point-in-time testing of the organization's security posture is not enough to keep up with the speed of change in the business. Continuous testing, scanning, monitoring and discovery are becoming must-have capabilities to minimize vulnerabilities and close security gaps. This demand has led to a number of vendors in the security market offering products, features and services with attack surface discovery and testing capabilities.

Companies like NetSPI, CyCognito, Expanse, ImmniWeb, Intrigue, FireCompass, Assetnote and Randori provide services, products or platforms focused on attack-surface discovery and testing. Others like Illusive Networks, RiskIQ, Tenable, VeraCode, AlertLogic, Qualys, RiskSense and Rapid7 deliver attack surface discovery and testing capabilities as part of service or platform offerings focused on areas like deception services, SOC services, threat and vulnerability management, and cloud security services. While most traditional penetration and red teaming providers are still focused on a professional engagement approach to attack surface discovery and testing, the move to a managed services platform offering is on the horizon for most providers.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
With CAST, Bishop Fox is filling a common and increasingly important security gap for enterprises. The infusion of human expertise and machine learning should enable the company to scale while providing enterprises with real-time visibility across an expanding attack surface.	The shift from professional services delivery to managed security services can be challenging. The company has made investments in several areas, including adding key personnel with managed services expertise, and developing security tool integrations and API sets. However, the company may still have a learning curve to traverse as it releases the platform to GA.
Opportunities	**Threats**
Although the company is currently focused on the large enterprise space, the platform may be an opportunity for Bishop Fox to effectively move into the midmarket.	The release of Bishop Fox's CAST platform exposes the company to increased competition; however, its blend of professional services and managed services should be a differentiator for the company.

Source: 451 Research, LLC