

## Rapid7 Nexpose® and Metasploit® “Make Life Easier” at Wiltshire Council



Steve Grieshaber is the acting head of service, IT infrastructure, at Wiltshire Council, a new unitary council established in 2009.

As one of more than 5,000 employees Steve's role includes the management of Wiltshire residents' personal information. He says, "In my role I have a duty to protect this information as well as providing support, maintenance, and strategic advice to more than 350 diverse services. It is vital therefore that the IT service provided is both efficient and effective."

Using Rapid7 Nexpose and Metasploit helps him deliver what's needed.

"We use Nexpose and Metasploit to scan our entire environment, which is mostly virtual" says Steve. "These products give us deeper insight into any risks. Previously, we did regular security patching, but without the right tools it's unlikely that you will identify 100 per cent of the risks. A security assessment was carried out by an external third-party, as part of a government accreditation process.

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**“The level of detail and reporting you can get from Nexpose is way ahead of anything else out there”**

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Their assessment resulted in months of making patches and working to mitigate risk that was not only labour intensive but it demonstrated the need to be actively lowering the overall level of risk both intelligently and systematically."

During this time, Steve was enrolled in a certified ethical hacking course. One of the penetration testing tools that featured heavily in the course was Metasploit. "I got familiar with it, how to use it to test defenses more efficiently and I realised the benefit it could add." Annual penetration tests are part of the compliance mandates which the council must follow. Being able to run pen tests all year round was one of the benefits of the product.

The end goal was to effectively remediate risk in the environment. Steve and his team also looked at vulnerability management solutions. Nexpose was one the products that they evaluated. "I liked the interface a lot. The way Nexpose displays information is excellent. Looking at the results, I did some quantitative testing by running scans with the tools we were evaluating. The level of detail and reporting you can get from

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“The level of detail and reporting from Nexpose is way ahead of other products. I instantly saw how it would make life easier – and it has succeeded.”

—**Steve Grieshaber**, Acting head of service, IT infrastructure, Wiltshire Council

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Nexpose is way ahead of anything else out there. I instantly saw how it would make my life so much easier – and it has” states Steve.

Wiltshire, like many organisations, is in a position where security is scrutinized at the highest level.

“Cyber security is a number one priority,” Steve confirms. As such, he needed reports that would suit different audiences including him, colleagues, and senior management. “Nexpose has a report that shows the top 10 vulnerabilities which, if solved, will resolve 70 per cent of issues.”

When Nexpose and Metasploit were fully deployed, Steve and his team immediately began leveraging the reporting functionality. Previously it took around three to four months to

review the findings of a multi-page report. With Nexpose, the process takes days.

Integrating Nexpose and Metasploit offers added advantages for Wiltshire. Through the integration, you can start a Nexpose scan from Metasploit. Once the scan has completed, Metasploit automatically shows the results so the user can activate a penetration test. Steve acknowledges the time this has saved: “It helps me to quickly determine whether vulnerability is a false positive. The dashboard is great – I don’t have to go searching for anything, because it’s intuitive. I can also run specific scans very quickly. Heartbleed is a good example of this – I went onto Rapid7’s website and found directions to create a specific scan for the vulnerability in Nexpose.

Once I had the results, I was able to mitigate straight away. It took around 30 minutes from start to finish. That was pretty powerful evidence presented to the senior management team.”

“We’ll start using Metasploit to run phishing campaigns that will ideally raise awareness and reduce user risk. I’m looking forward to leveraging the USB capabilities – testing end-user security by creating malicious files on flash drives and testing these.” With an eye towards the future, Steve plans to continue the momentum of this security program. “I’m making sure that we adopt an assertive approach to security matters so that the residents of Wiltshire that we service are protected and their information is used appropriately and protected.”