Enhancing API Security and Operational Efficiency

for a Leading eCommerce Platform

Company Profile

INDUSTRY: eCommerce
REVENUE: $800 Million Yearly
EMPLOYEES: 1000

Problem Statement

A large eCommerce organization faced significant challenges with bots creating faux accounts on their platform, overwhelming the system and leading to operational inefficiencies and security vulnerabilities. They needed a robust solution to mitigate bot activity and secure their APIs, all which were hosted on AWS.

Initial Solution and Challenges

The company initially opted for an inline bot management solution from another API security vendor. They went the route of a fully managed service offering where the chosen vendor was tasked with deploying and managing the rules to detect bots across applications. It was a rocky road with the initially chosen vendor, with many speed bumps popping up along the way.

Deployment Issues and Operational Failures

- **Prolonged Deployment:** It took six months to deploy the initially chosen product on just two applications.

- **Downtime Incident:** One week after deployment, the company's highest revenue-generating application experienced a critical failure. The application couldn't process orders for 14 hours between Friday and Saturday. The issue went unnoticed until a Saturday afternoon when a team member discovered the problem while preparing to launch a multi-million dollar promotion.

- **Configuration Error:** The following week, an unauthorized change by the initially chosen vendor reduced the allowable file upload size from 5 MB to 1 MB. The ability of users to upload images to this eCommerce Platform is a key driver for the business. Given that the average photo size that users were uploading to this platform is around 4 MB, this misconfiguration severely disrupted operations for them.

- **Customer Dissatisfaction:** These incidents led to significant operational disruptions and customer dissatisfaction. The company's CTO lost faith in the vendor's approach, deciding to cease all further investment in their API security solution.

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Time to Switch to Alternative Solutions

Due to the struggles being experienced, the organization pivoted to using CAPTCHA for addressing the bot problem and selected Ghost Security for their API Security needs on the promise of a smooth deployment and quick time to value.

Ghost Implementation and Results

- **Installation and Setup:** The installation of Ghost was completed in just 60 minutes, with the company starting to derive value within 30 minutes.

- **Operational Benefits:** Ghost provided comprehensive visibility into data in motion across all APIs, including sensitive information like credit card details. This capability greatly enhanced the security posture of the company's API infrastructure.

- **User Satisfaction:** The ease of installation and immediate value delivered by Ghost freed up the internal security team to focus on other critical tasks. The merger of Cloud-Native Application Protection Platform (CNAPP) and API security capabilities in Ghost was particularly appreciated by the company's IT leadership.

"Ghost provided the easiest installation possible and freed up our team to work on other items. The Ghost Platform provided immediate value once installed, and we loved the merger of CNAPP and API security capabilities."

- SVP of Information Security

Outcome

The shift to Ghost Security yielded significant benefits:

- **Bot Mitigation:** CAPTCHA effectively addressed the bot problem, reducing the creation of fake accounts without requiring significant technical overhead.

- **API Security:** Ghost provided a robust and user-friendly solution for securing APIs, restoring confidence among the company's leadership in their API security strategy.

- **Operational Efficiency:** The quick installation and immediate operational benefits of Ghost allowed the security team to reallocate resources to other priorities, enhancing overall productivity.

Conclusion

This Customer Success Story highlights the importance of selecting the right security solutions and the potential pitfalls of complex deployments. The eCommerce company's experience underscores the value of quick-to-deploy, effective security solutions like Ghost that provide immediate and tangible benefits, ensuring robust protection while maintaining operational efficiency.