Nagomi Helps Topsoe Funnel Energy into Strategic Business Outcomes

'Single source of truth' translates data into reduced risk, smarter workflows, and unified communications

Overview

Topsoe, a leading global provider of advanced technology and solutions for the energy transition, were previously primarily providing technical solutions and catalysts to chemical plants and fossil fuel refeneries and had virtually no name recognition outside the energy industry — until its mission changed. Once Topsoe opted to drive transformation of the sector to reduce carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions, its new vision began attracting worldwide attention, and the digital risk that comes with it.

"We're starting to engage with political stakeholders and other companies leading the transition of energy technology," says Topsoe CISO Lars Brunsgard. "As we're changing our image to align with this new role, we're placing ourselves in the line of the fire from a cybersecurity perspective."

As part of its cybersecurity improvement program, Topsoe decided to focus on the benefits of centralizing operations on the Nagomi platform. By consolidating and normalizing data about assets, risks, and controls in one accessible portal, Nagomi equips Topsoe to protect its brand, report to the board, and use security data to drive business outcomes.

At a Glance

Sector: Energy

Region: Global

Company: A 2,300-person Danish provider driving the worldwide transition to alternative energy sources

Challenge: Leveraging security data to improve the company's cyber risk posture, operational workflows, and company-wide communications

Solution: Using the Nagomi Proactive Defense Platform to normalize and transform cybersecurity data into clear insights, relevant reporting, and strategic business outcomes

Benefits:
- Platform up and running within weeks
- Faster time to act on patching and other vital SecOps functions
- Clear communication across and outside the security organization
- Better, faster board-level reporting
- Value communicated in outcomes vs. KPIs

Building a World-class Security Program from the Ground Up

Topsoe's goals in transitioning from a chemical manufacturing company to a high-profile company driving change include maintaining the strongest cybersecurity posture within the energy industry. To achieve this ambitious goal, the team needed to find an innovative approach that would serve as the foundation for a modern cybersecurity program. The search led to Nagomi's Proactive Defense Platform that could deliver unique benefits compared to other platforms.

Topsoe Sets the Bar High

By creating universal access to reliable data, the Nagomi platform offers distinct advantages for accelerating and streamlining security operations and elevating board-level reporting and clear communication across the enterprise. Along with the usual goals for cybersecurity investments — fewer false alarms and faster response to threats — Brunsgard designed the new program around the platform to meet next-level goals:

Automation across the value chain

As the security program matures, Topsoe plans to leverage automation to accelerate workflows and refocus specialized skills on priority tasks. "We have very clever security specialists who've spent a lot of time figuring out whether our numbers were right, and how certain graphs should look," the CISO says. "That's not the best use of their time, but we needed to get the data so we can stop arguing about where we were in the process. For example, we might know that we're not up to date with patching our Windows servers but have no idea how many we have left to do."

Along with automating repetitive, time-consuming tasks, Topsoe plans to leverage Nagomi to replace many manual reporting efforts within the first year.

Easy onboarding accelerates time to value

Cybersecurity always comes down to time, beginning with how long it takes to integrate and realize value from tools. "There was a bit of a dark moment there when we realized Nagomi did not support some parts of our security stack out of the box," Brunsgard recalls.

The CISO remained skeptical at first when the Nagomi team said they could integrate the tools Topsoe already had running within a month. "To be honest, I didn't think they would be able to do it but within three weeks it was all up and running," he says. "It was mind-boggling that such a complex setup — our entire security stack — had been integrated into the tool and we were able to report on everything that quickly. The onboarding process was absolutely amazing."

Reporting helps build board-level rapport

Prior to centralizing the management of security data in the Nagomi platform, Topsoe relied on traditional and highly manual reporting processes that often culminated in Powerpoint presentations. Reports consisted of basic metrics like tracking the team's progress against a particular project or list of tasks.

"It's always difficult to talk to the board about cybersecurity because at the end of the day, it's a big set of unknowns," Brunsgard says. "'What's the likelihood of us getting hacked?' It's 100 percent. 'When

is it going to happen?' We have no clue. 'How bad will it be?' Hopefully not too bad."

Now, the CISO's vision includes taking board-level reporting to a whole new level. "I want to find a new way of talking about cybersecurity, and I couldn't do that with uncertain numbers," Brunsgard says. "I'm going to use the Nagomi platform to figure out how I want to speak to the board, what makes sense and how I can show progress — and risks — in a way that's easy for them to consume, without going into technical details."

A Single Central Source of Truth

After the team finished integrating the existing tools, the Nagomi Proactive Defense Platform met Topsoe's primary objectives for efficiency and clear communication. The platform creates a single, centralized source of reliable insights and context, and helps in creating reports for various stakeholders in terms that mean the most to them.

Detailed data accelerates time to act

In centralizing operations and security decisions around one reliable set of data, Nagomi helps Topsoe experts realize the full potential of their security tools to accelerate response. The CISO leads the process from the top-down by using Nagomi to engage with his leadership team.

"The Nagomi tool gives us a central control mechanism that helps our specialists communicate with the operation teams around very specific things — like risk to a particular machine or part of the network." Brunsgard says. "Both groups can quickly see what we have or haven't done and then tell the right people to go fix it. We get a much faster turnaround time."

Assessment creates company-wide alignment

As the leader of Topsoe's security and IT organizations, Brunsgard's vision for the Nagomi platform includes promoting closer collaboration. "Once we're all aligned, our IT operations people can start using the tool to check their own services rather than leave it up to the security guys to tell them what to do," the CISO says. "That's the sort of transparency we plan to build across the entire organization. When it's open for everyone to see and understand what we're doing and where we still have gaps, we can fix things much faster."

Reporting evolves beyond KPIs

The Nagomi platform positions the Topsoe team to meet another of Brunsgard's "foundational goals": reporting that translates data into outcomes versus numbers and key performance indicators.

"Most companies speak about KPIs," Brunsgard says. "We'd prefer to talk about outcomes and help stakeholders make sense of those outcomes to move the company and the industry forward."

With Nagomi enabling deeper insights, he plans to translate technical explanations of risk into outcomes and priorities. "We need to be able to say, 'we're getting rid of this particular vulnerability now because we can see in the Nagomi platform that hackers are using it in the world right now to target companies like us," Brunsgard explains. "We were never able to do that before."

Clarity levels silos between NetOps and SecOps
Working with the same set of data keeps different teams on the same page. "Typically, the security team asks for data from operational people and then verifies their numbers but there's always some sort of disagreement," Brunsgard says. "'Did we get the right data? Did somebody hide something? The bigger the organization, the greater the risk that the two organizations will grow farther apart and won't necessarily work towards a common goal."

The CISO says much of the arguing disappears with the Nagomi approach. "Now you can trace a number all the way down to the asset, or back up to the vulnerability," the CISO concludes. "We start with the tool — that's the truth — and look at the world from there."

What's Next?

Instead of evaluating and reporting its progress on a monthly basis, automation equips the security to team monitor, optimize, and report continuously. As Topsoe leads the energy industry into a transformative new era, the company can scale rapidly — and safely — secure in their role as both an innovator and early adopter of empowering new technologies.
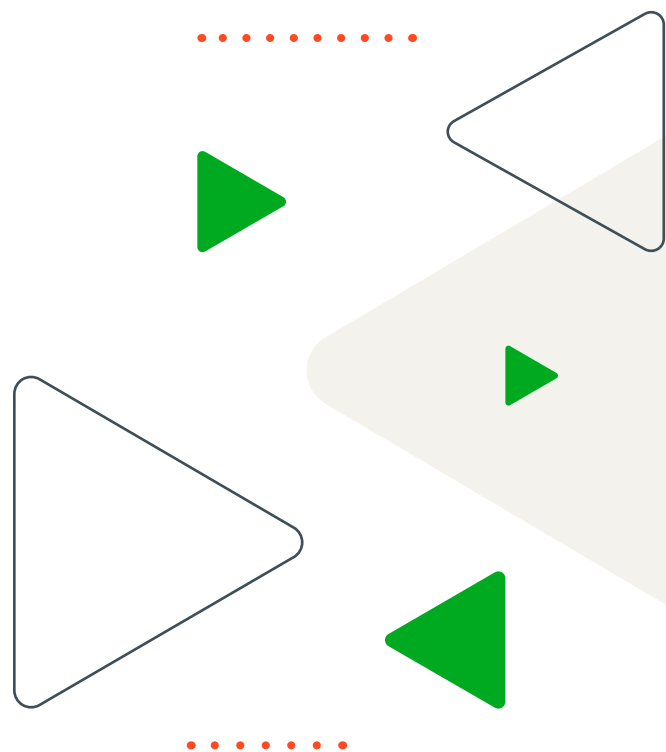
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