nagomi

From Cyberspeake to Boardspeake

A CISOs Guide to Reporting on Cybersecurity

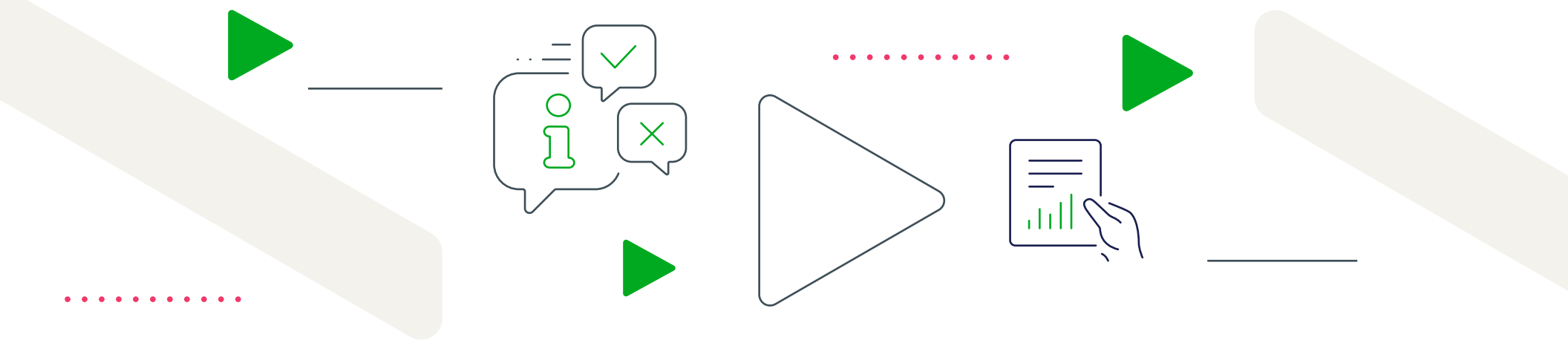
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a Nutshell

The board looks to the CISO to interpret security data in terms of outcomes: Can we see where we're at risk and are we safer, stronger and better prepared than we were before? But with too many gaps in coverage, skills, and reporting, the value of data to drive decisions gets lost in translation.

Nagomi Security streamlines the process to help CISOs build trust and create alignment. In this guide, you'll see how reliable reporting and clear communication help shift security from a technical cost center to an invaluable source of strategic insight.

- **Align around a single source of truth**
- **Translate and interpret tool data**
- **Take (or automate) the right actions faster**



Business Insights Bring CISOs Centerstage

Once security captures board-level mindshare, it becomes everyone's job, but the data funnels through the CISO — and research shows that's a good thing. A recent survey by IANS Research found half of all CISOs now meet with their executive boards at least four times a year[1], and that the facetime increases most CISOs' job satisfaction.

The challenge they face is: Most boards aren't looking for technology updates — they just want to understand how cybersecurity impacts the company's business objectives and makes the brand safer. Modern CISOs create a baseline understanding by answering two main questions:

- "Are we *doing the right things* to protect the business?"
- "Are we *doing things right* to operate effectively and efficiently?"

Use this guide to understand how to calculate and communicate the answers quickly to translate security data into team-wide directives and board-level decisions.

> "We see CISO satisfaction positively correlated with access and influence at the board level. CISOs with a strong rapport with their boards feel more valued and, generally, report they are 'heard,' even when there are disagreements on budgeting."
>
> —Steve Martano, IANS Research

[1] State of the CISO, 2023–2024

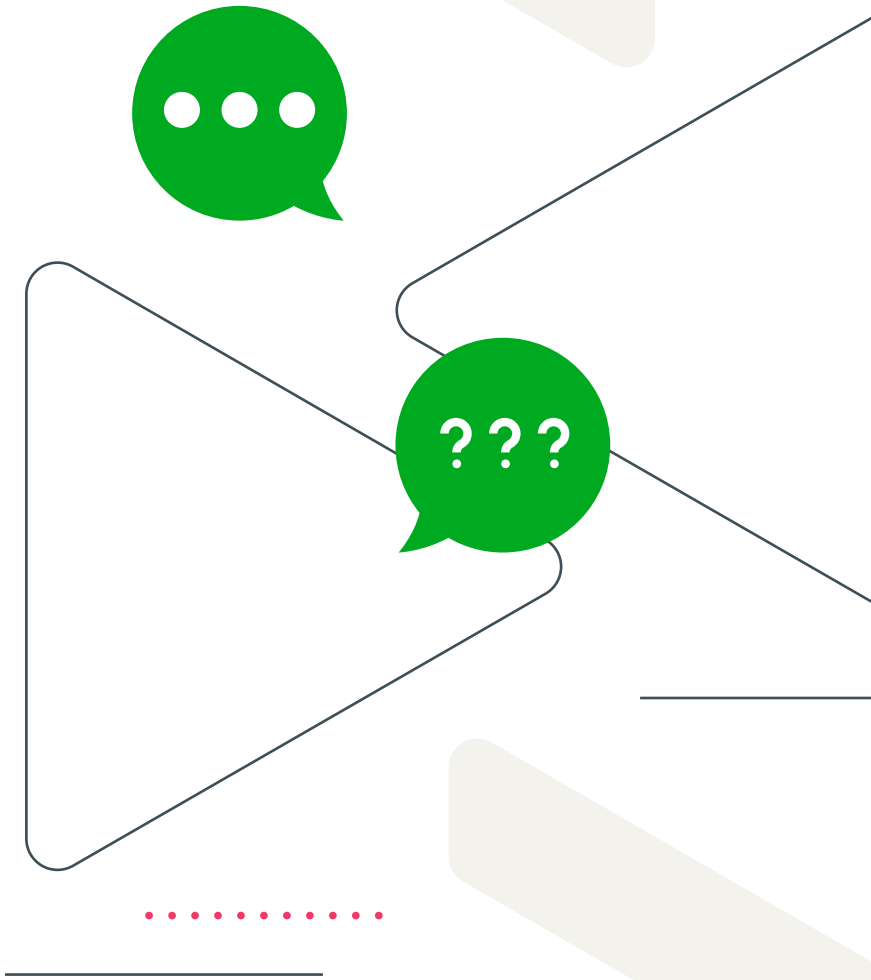
What Gets Lost in Translation?

CISOs face the challenge of converting complex, technical data in ways that resonate with non-technical stakeholders. But for many, assessing security effectiveness still relies heavily on manual, subjective methods to compile, normalize, and interpret data.

Nagomi Security streamlines the communication process with results-driven insights to help CISOs foster trust and create alignment. With reliable reporting and clear communication, cybersecurity shifts from being seen as a technical cost center to a strategic business enabler. Without a platform that translates data into accessible insights for both CEOs and SecOps teams, organizations miss vital opportunities to advance key business objectives at the board level.

Reducing risk

Teams are overwhelmed by an avalanche of alerts, vulnerabilities, and backlogs, making it difficult to prioritize the most critical threats. Misaligned priorities and gaps in communication hinder quick action, leaving organizations vulnerable. This not only complicates risk management, but also makes it harder to justify spending, attract top-tier talent, and assure customers, partners, and investors that their data and investments are safe.



Lowering cost

Extrapolating insights from security data leads to practical, quantifiable savings, such as reducing security operation costs, retaining skilled analysts, and securing lower cyber insurance premiums. Better data and more efficient processes also reduce companies' reliance on expensive point-in-time (PIT) tools. For example, annual penetration testing of BAS tools provide snapshots of risk in the moment, but this risk will likely change before you can implement any recommended remediations.

Reducing workload

A clear and unified view of security workflows shows where you can eliminate redundant tools and efforts—for example, patching a vulnerability in one system instead of ten. Automating recurring efforts, like domain maturity assessments, means analysts spend less time compiling and interpreting data for the stakeholders and more time acting on the results.

> "This tool could have helped me plan my budget for next year by showing different threats and risks by focus areas and what projects I should have prioritized."
>
> —CISO, Global Retailer

"What else could you be doing?" Savings as a Function of Time

Straightforward cost-savings calculations start with determining how many hours full-time employees (FTEs) spend performing specific functions and the time it takes to achieve a point-in-time view of results.

Add in the cost and time it takes to interpret data, prepare and consume reports to get the true cost of manual processes and disparate workflows.

Companies Pay a High 'Reporting Tax'

The more time everyone spends buried in Excel files, the less time they have available to focus on securing and growing your business. In this paper we'll show you how an instantaneous understanding of data translates into faster, more efficient security stacks that net security teams the credit they deserve. And, how Nagomi's Proactive Defense Platform prevents value from getting lost in translation.

Security Leaders Say It Best . . .

"Nagomi will bring down my time spent to make configuration changes to my security stack from **2-3 months to 2-3 days."**

"We spend 5-8 hours a week, or **350 hours per year**, meeting with vendors to understand new features and values. Nagomi automates this process, freeing up our security engineers and aligning with our existing tool roadmap."

"When we look at how much of my time as the CISO and your time as the CRO is spent answering the question, "What is our control effectiveness'? **the cost of that time is crazy."**

PART I

The Communication Breakdown: Stakeholders Speak Different Languages

Universal access to a single set of security data won't automatically equip everyone to leverage its full potential. Security practitioners need clarification on what to do first, while CIOs and board-level executives just want to know how well things worked. In both cases, it falls to CISOs and other security leaders to translate complex data into crystal-clear recommendations.

Practitioners: What Should We Do First?

SOC analysts, SecOps, incident responders (IR), and CTI teams all use telemetry from multiple security tools (often 15+) to understand and mitigate risk, and to respond to C-level requests about a particular threat appearing in the news. Since the alerts have practitioners outnumbered, the process starts with choosing where to focus first.

This decision requires consistent threat intelligence, full visibility, and correlation of data about threats, assets, policies, and controls. Aggregating data manually could take multiple security analysts days or weeks to understand risk from a single known threat. Other work gets delayed and, in the meantime, the threat landscape continues to change.

Prioritization also requires analysts to 'slice and dice,' and drill down to evaluate risk from business leaders' and adversaries' perspectives:

- What is the company's risk level against a particular threat?
- Which specific assets are being targeted by a particular threat group or technique?
- Which of our assets and business groups face the greatest risk and why?
- What controls do we have in place—and available—to deflect this threat?
- What, if any, steps should we take next?

To help prioritize threats and report progress to CISOs, teams need a unified picture (without going tool-by-tool) that shows:

- Which tools have visibility to which assets
- What controls and policies currently protect each asset
- What steps need to be taken to mitigate risk
- What steps need to be taken to accept certain risk
- Whether the steps taken helped mitigate risk

CISOs: What Do We Need to Do Next?

Where practitioners need details, CISOs and other security leaders need context to understand and communicate what matters. CISOs face the greatest communication challenge in that they sit between practitioners and board-level executives translating the same data into two very different perspectives. Striking ideal balance means communicating:

To practitioners: "Where to focus":

- Changing priorities
- How to allocate or redirect resources

To the board: "How well, and why, it's working"

- Risk posture against a particular threat
- Overall security posture and trends
- Where gaps still exist and additional investments might be required to mitigate risk

> "The visibility and posture of our whole estate is a huge challenge for us. We are still simply taking feeds from different tools and using Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoints and prioritizing by a 'gut feel.' It's extremely inaccurate."
>
> —CISO, Fortune 500 Consumer Goods Company

> "If you can help me show 'here's how we rate ourselves,' I can confidently present that to the board. The goal is to provide context that proves the security team's credibility, whether it's highlighting weaknesses or showing the overall security status."
>
> —CISO, Fortune 500 U.S. Bank

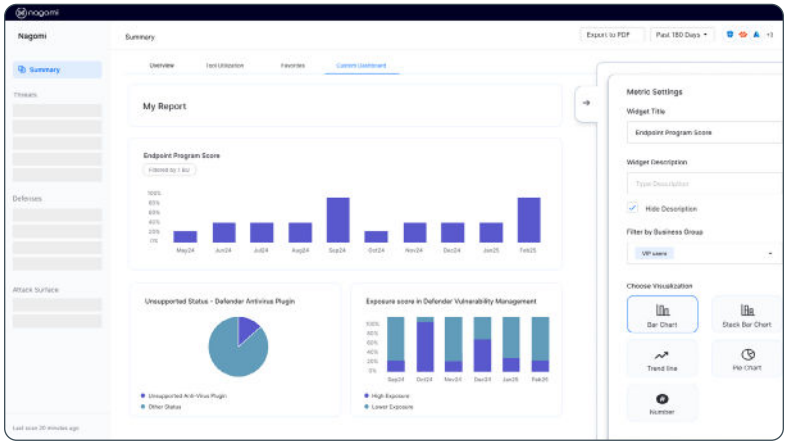
Here again, a platform that makes security data readily consumable saves CISOs from having to go spreadsheet-by-spreadsheet, or dashboard-by-dashboard to interpret data. It provides:

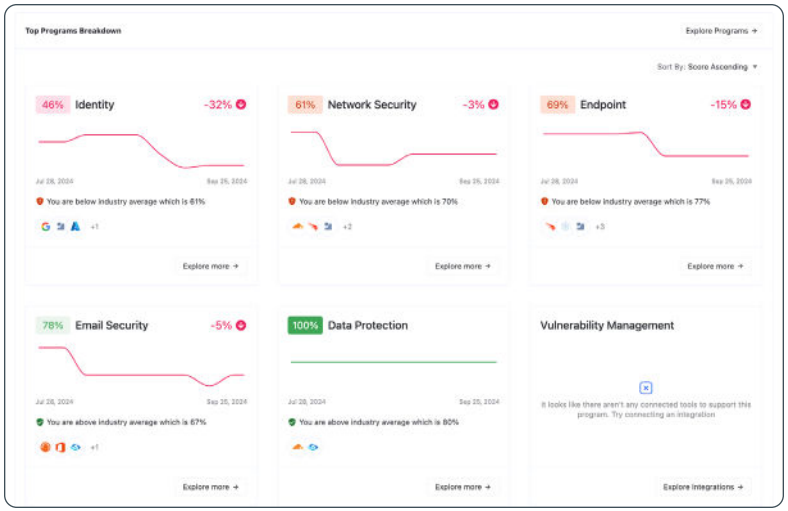
A consolidated, normalized view of your attack surface that shows how well your company is—or could be—mitigating risk from a particular threat with the tools you already own. The dashboard combines data about threats and vulnerabilities targeting your industry (or a particular asset), with data about security controls, available protections, and applicable policies. This alone saves weeks.

Drill-down context and control that maps threats to assets and business groups, interpreting risk in context. For example, if you have accounts not yet protected by multifactor authentication (MFA), you need to know whether they're privileged or admin accounts.

Risk interpretation to ensure relevance and credibility, then translating numbers into next steps. The data should help CISOs present and translate known risks and why business or IT leaders may have chosen to accept the risk.

Fast, easy ticket and report creation to direct the staff and deliver board-level reports in hours instead of weeks.





Board / Business Leaders: "Are We (More) Secure?"

Senior executives and board members need assurance that their investments are safe, sound, and generating the expected returns. This group does not typically have direct access to security platforms, however they are briefed quarterly on the state of the company's security. Timely reports tailored to their level of technical knowledge (or lack thereof) should explain your company's security posture in layman's terms in order to instill confidence, secure funding and customer loyalty, and satisfy due diligence during mergers and acquisitions.

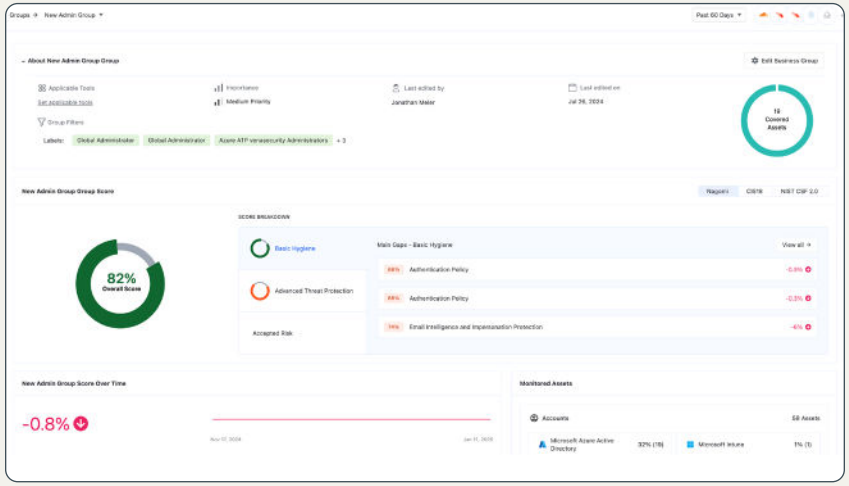
"Are We Moving the Needle?": Security's Common Denominator

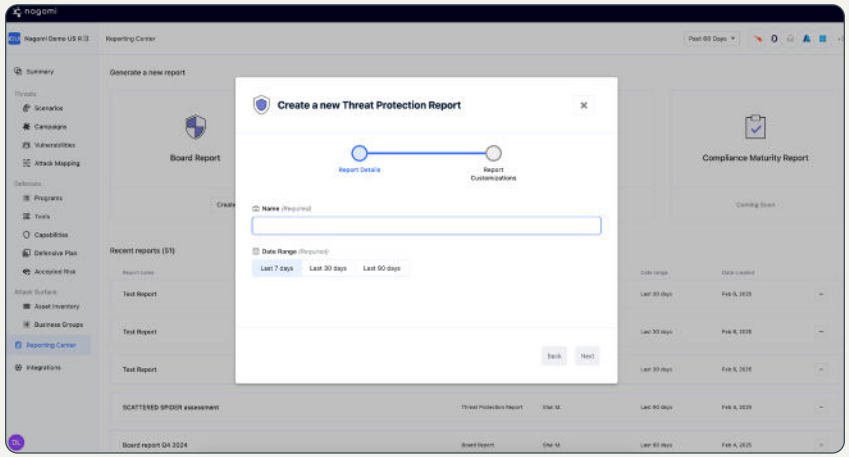
At the end of the day, effectiveness is the metric that matters, and the one CISOs struggle most to measure and defend:

- How can we maximize the value of our existing tools and resources?
- Where should we focus resources and budget for the greatest impact?
- How can we simplify reporting and governance?

Now, let's take a look at how that works in practice.

Nagomi Custom Board Reporting





PART II

Building a Universal Translator

It happens every day: a major cybersecurity threat hits the news, and this time it targets your industry. Your CEO immediately pings the CISO: "Are we protected from this . . . Scattered Spider?"

To pull together an answer, the CISO reaches out to the Threat Intelligence team for details about the attack, and then to the SecOps team about how the company's current security measures stack up against the attacker's techniques. Pulling this information together takes lots of work — work that gets done manually and delays or preempts other work from getting done.

The CISO then attempts to map data about the company's assets, exposure, and defensive controls against the threat actor and attack techniques by working in spreadsheets and PowerPoints. This also takes time — and often fails to render a complete picture. By the time the CISO creates a 'so-so' answer, the CEO is asking about the next threat.

That's the "Before": the day-to-day reality that costs companies millions of dollars and cycles per year.

"Thanks for the quick turnaround"

Nagomi's Reporting Center and "Threats in the News" feature make it easy to track cybersecurity news and craft compelling narratives for executives quickly while also equipping practitioners with contextual insights to take the right action.

- Unique threat profiles
- Real-time context
- Actionable intelligence
- Automated mapping
- Prioritized response

The "After": Unified Access to Data

WIth the Nagomi platform, CISOs log in and see all the disparate pieces of the puzzle assembled perfectly in one place. Any user can view a campaign page for Scattered Spider and get an overview or detailed analysis of your organization's resilience against it — all without bothering or derailing individual teams.

A complete view includes:

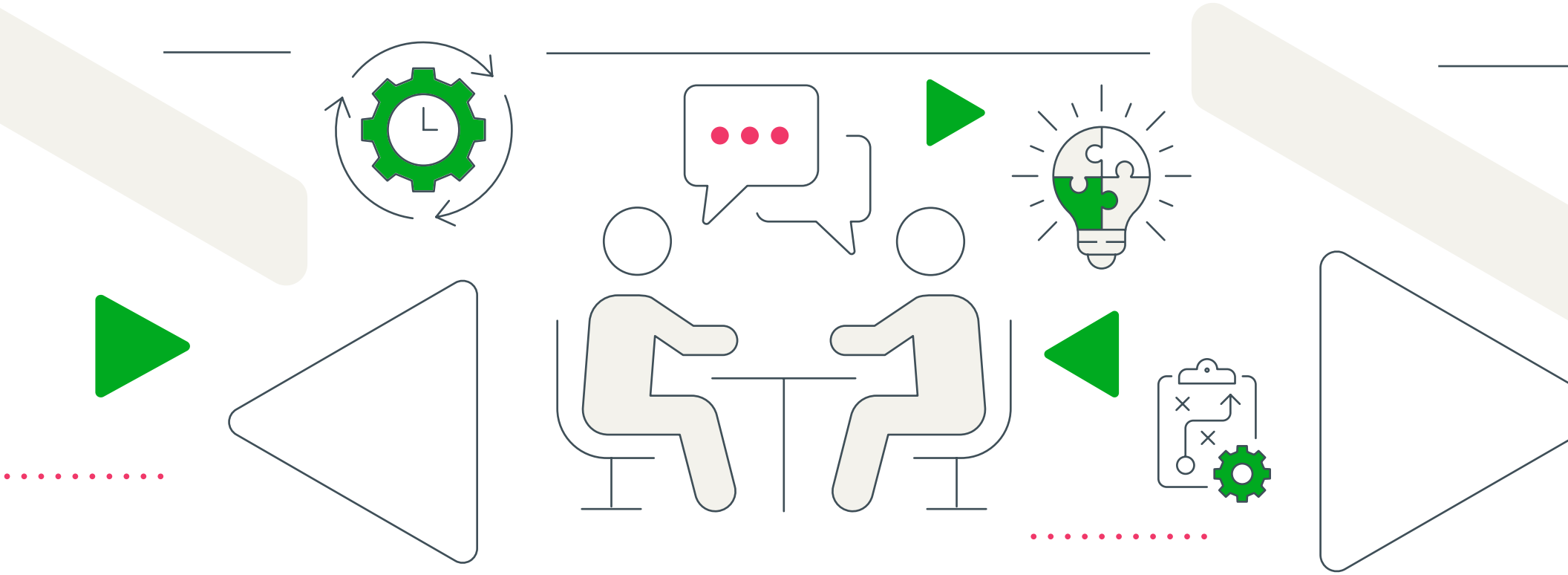
- A clear description of the attack
- Corresponding news articles for additional context
- Technical details
- A MITRE ATT&CK map showing techniques used in the attack
- Prioritized recommendations for mitigation based on your unique threat profile

In the next section, we'll cover the seven essential questions every CISO should ask and how a universal security translator can answer them in clear, jargon-free terms and speak to key stakeholders in metrics that matter.

PART III

The CISO's 7-Point Checklist

Even though platforms and portals can automate the heavy lifting of report generation, it's still up to people to present, explain, and defend the findings. Incomplete or inconclusive data only delays critical decisions, making it harder to drive action, justify investments, and plan ahead. Modern security teams continue to drown in tools, overwhelmed by data and stuck in reactive cycles.



1 Create a reliable single source of truth

"Is everyone looking at the same data?"

To know exactly where you stand at any given time. CISOs must view all telemetry quickly, with data fully normalized and streamlined all in one place. The single source of truth must contain context, the ability to quickly drill down to gain and automatically corroborate data about defenses, threats, and possible actions to take.

2 Focus your efforts on what matters

"Why should, or shouldn't we do that?"

There's no time to waste in cybersecurity, ever. To keep the team focused on things that matter, documenting the actions taken by the team. When needed, leverage a single source of truth to explain why some seemingly obvious steps might *not* have been taken, and why.

3 Eliminate fire drills

"Are we drowning in false positives? Chasing alarms or mounting a well-organized response?"

Efficiency is everything. Can we take proactive action or fine-tune response workflows to avoid chaos that leaves the company open to even more risk. Ensure the right people get the right information quickly to reduce stress and improve results.

4 Respond and resolve threats faster

"Do we have the context and drill-down detail we need to prioritize?"

Unify and normalize data to eliminate false positives and find the real threats. Make sure the telemetry and threat intelligence provided to analysts are up-to-date and still relevant by the time they take action.

5 Validate investments at every stage

"How many more cycles, and dollars would it take to prevent, investigate, or mitigate the risk?"

Consolidating views from every tool creates a single source of truth that makes it possible to see where existing tools generate reliable data—and—where you still have gaps in visibility, monitoring, and response exist. Reliable data helps CISOs calculate and weigh the cost of addressing a specific threat versus the likelihood of unaddressed gaps causing problems.

6 Balance expertise and automation

"Do we have skilled experts validating decisions?

Understand the pros, cons, and limits of AI, machine learning, and system automation, *along with* the human side of security to balance automation with expertise and make the right decisions.

7 Clearly communicate progress

"Can we show how we're effectively moving the needle on specific threats and our overall security posture?"

Emphasize measurable outcomes and clear communication of progress. Make sure every stakeholder sees the impact and advantage that *matter most to them.*

★ BONUS: Futureproof operations

"Is our security program scalable? Can it adapt as our company grows?"

Build for the long term by creating a flexible and scalable security framework. Leverage automation to attract and keep top talent by making their jobs that much easier. Make sure it's clear to everyone how security plans to grow and scale with the business.

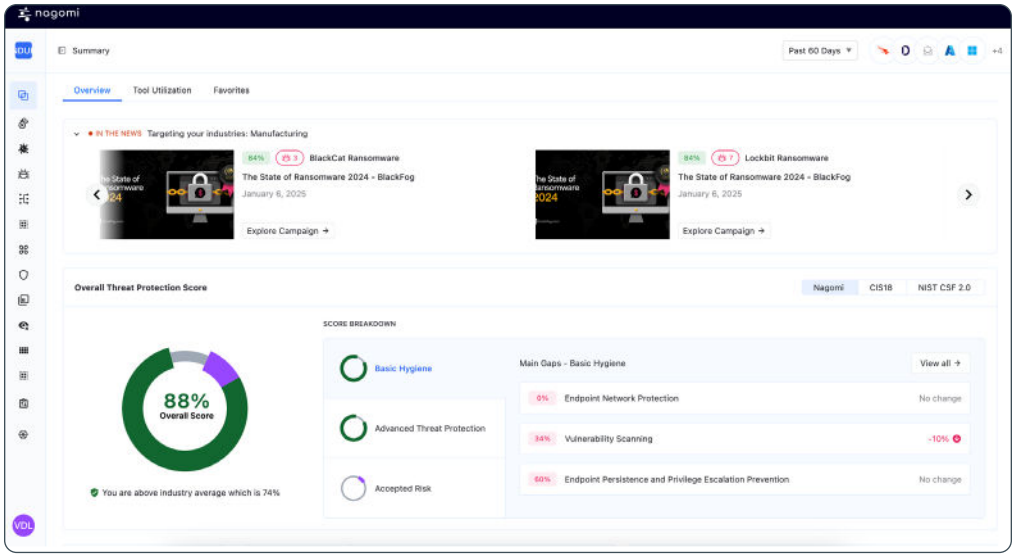
The Right Solution . . .

Data-driven communication coalesces the vantage points of multiple tools and categories to correlate assets, defenses and business context—all in one place. Drill-down analyses and roll-up reporting equip defenders to evaluate how well assets are configured against a particular threat and communicate what happens next.

Unify. Operationalize. Enable.
Effective reporting starts with easy access to a single set of unified security data that allows professionals to collaborate and prioritize effectively, and provide leadership with data-driven updates. These collaborations ensures organizations can track and measure complex outcomes with greater confidence.

The result is threefold:

1. **Alignment.** An assessment of your current coverage, effectiveness, and alignment to policies.
2. **Action.** A prioritized, data-driven plan to remediate the gaps and exposures in your defenses.
3. **Automation.** Your own customizable dashboards and reports to unify your organization around common security benchmarks and goals.



PART IV

Translate Your Own Data into Decisions – with Tools You Already Own

Reliable, automated reporting must replace manual efforts that drain resources and compromise your team's ability to act and stay agile. A clear understanding equips organizations to unify data across their controls, operationalize threat intelligence, and turn reporting into a strategic asset.

Nagomi Turns Reporting into Board-level Rapport

Nagomi redefines how CISOs approach security program effectiveness with a command center that simplifies data. The Nagomi Proactive Defense Platform pioneers a new era of effective, relatively effortless translation of security data to maximize controls, minimize exposure, and empower teams.

The only proactive defense platform to bridge the gap between tactical execution and strategic planning, Nagomi allows everyone to work with the same unified dataset so they can collaborate, prioritize, and communicate effectively. With Nagomi, create a unified threat-centric view of your security posture to measure and enhance the efficacy of your security program.

Experts Interpret the Value of Nagomi

Analysts say:
Nagomi leverages the value of, and takes the work out of reporting.

Security leaders say:
"When I first saw the platform, I knew it was perfect for me as the CISO. While it's great for my endpoint engineers, the real value is having all the information I need in one place. That holistic view is essential for security professionals."

—CISO, Insurance Company

Practitioners say:
"I have no way to prove what I say I do and with your tool I can."

— SOC Analyst, Global Bank

See What Your Data Has to Say

Interested in learning more? Request a demo today to see how Nagomi's Proactive Defense Platform translates your security data into action, alignment, and acknowledgement of its value from the top down.

LEARN MORE

ABOUT NAGOMI SECURITY

Nagomi automates the process of proving your security is actually working. Our platform unifies data across your assets, defenses, and threats to clearly illustrate your security program is both efficient and effective to key stakeholders. By maximizing existing investments, reducing threat exposure, and improving alignment, Nagomi is the only Proactive Defense Platform to turn cybersecurity from a technical cost center into a strategic business enabler.