RSwitch uses Sectona PAM for secure transaction processing, in line with the RNDPS

Need

Financial organizations have complicated security infrastructure that requires coordination between multiple organizations, people, and processes. As financial services come into play, it becomes even more complex.

In order to simplify collaboration between entities, many companies rely on external service providers for managing various financial services. The use of privileged accounts to accomplish tasks in these scenarios is essential. Although these accounts are necessary, they can present a huge vulnerability in security if not set up or utilized correctly.

Solution

Sectona PAM offers a diverse feature set with fast deployment and lightweight architecture. With the threat landscape constantly evolving, organizations must have a flexible and easy-to-use solution that can adapt to changes in the environment.

Upon successful deployment of Sectona PAM, RSwitch can now efficiently manage and monitor privileged users inside the company as well as those who need privileged access from external entities.

Benefits

PAM is a must-have for companies carrying out transaction processing in order to stay as secure and compliant as possible. With the Sectona PAM, organizations acquire advanced access, session, and password manager that all work in tandem to ensure that they are protected from both internal and external threats while also easily meeting compliance regulations.

Background

RSwitch is the National E-payment switch of Rwanda and the driver of the smart cash brand enabling electronic payment settlements, interoperability, and other financial solutions in Rwanda.

The company was established in 2003 with a vision to run Rwanda's electronic payment system and has expanded to serve as a financial interoperable solution company over the years.

Amongst the many financial solutions offered by RSwitch, Transaction Processing is their forte. Its processing system coordinates the flow of various transactions between financial institutions, merchants, and customers, with a primary focus on interoperability.

The transaction processing covers cash withdrawal, balance inquiries transfers, and clearing, reducing the cost of payment services to financial institutions and, ultimately, customers.

The Rwanda National Digital Payment System (RNDPS) Vision

The Government of Rwanda's Vision 2050 aims to achieve the status of an upper-middle-income country by 2035 and a high-income country by 2050. At a high level, the vision emphasizes improved quality of life for all Rwandans with universal access to financial services. Achieving these goals requires a robust and inclusive financial sector, including a safe, reliable, and efficient payment system.

Developing an interoperable payment system requires the set-up of an interoperable scheme. Keeping that in mind, the government of Rwanda introduced the Rwanda National Digital Payment System (RNDPS) strategy that defines the overarching standards for interoperability. It includes (but is not limited to) the business rules, technical standards, revenue splits between participants, common branding, and regulations around disputes and customer protection.

RSwitch aims to align its goals with the RNDPS vision as a business.

Jump servers acting as potential barriers

Rswitch used to rely on jump servers as part of their security strategy. It's common for an organization to create a jump server for IT admins to connect to RDP and SSH as part of perimeter network security. Although jump servers are a secure option, they come with their challenges.

Firstly, a jump server is often time-consuming to configure initially as it requires additional infrastructure and testing. Jump servers merely limit access to the client running on another host, and while this may be secure, it is slow and cumbersome to use.

Moreover, jump servers can handle a limited number of concurrent sessions. This means an organization like Rswitch needed to deploy many servers dedicated to RDP and SSH traffic. This led to a resource-hungry installation that was difficult to manage at scale.

Not to mention the paradoxical situation wherein there is a delay in critical fixes or upgrades due to the complexity of upgrading all jump hosts.

Advanced Proxy Support

Sectona addresses the challenges of jump servers by developing advanced proxy support for SSH, RDP, and web proxies. With the proxy, one can open the server/software through PAM for native clients. This allows admins to create high-trust and secure sessions directly from their desktop without downloading agents or launching secondary software.

Sectona PAM ensures that sessions are tracked and monitored when enforcing permissions. This has made it easier for Rswitch to address and implement PAM requirements without disrupting existing IT workflows.

"

An Inspiring Collaboration

Content with the way the PAM implementation worked out for them, the CISO of Rswitch had this to say: "Sectona implements the best PAM practices, enabling us to build a solid foundation for robust privileged access governance and control across our IT infrastructure."

Speaking on how Sectona PAM helped the organization, he said, "Sectona PAM has provided our admins with efficient and secure access to the systems while meeting audit and management requirements for just-in-time secure access and controls."

sectona

Sectona with its light, integrated approach provides a single console for securing passwords & secrets in embedded vault, secure access with cross-platform access technology & manage privileges over endpoints.

For more information, visit www.sectona.com and follow @sectona1 on Twitter or @Sectona on linkedin