

Wizards of the Coast Delivers Frictionless Security for Agile Game Development with ExtraHop

Agentless visibility and threat detection across AWS workloads

Accelerated development timelines without compromising security

Cost-savings allowed for more investment in product features

Executive Summary

Founded in 1990, Wizards of the Coast is an international leader in the adventure game industry with more than 600 employees across 18 offices worldwide. They've entertained tens of millions of fans with popular titles such as "Dungeons & Dragons" and "Magic: The Gathering." When Wizards of the Coast moved to an online gaming platform, they turned to ExtraHop Reveal(x) Cloud to remove friction caused by security concerns in their development and deployment processes.

THE BEGINNING

Headquartered in the Seattle area, Wizards of the Coast boasts more than 600 employees across 18 offices worldwide. As the makers of "Dungeons & Dragons" and "Magic: The Gathering," they've entertained tens of millions of people at kitchen tables, in basements and dorm rooms, and at tournaments around the globe.

In the early 2000s, Wizards of the Coast ("Wizards") went digital, making their legendary stories, striking art, and innovative gameplay available online. Wizards online gaming platform is built on Amazon Web Services (AWS), which provides the scale, agility, and availability they need to meet worldwide demand.



Developers aren't anti-security; what they are is anti-friction. With Reveal(x), we're removing that friction traditionally associated with security and becoming part of their development cycle. That's a win-win across the board.

DAN MCDANIEL
CHIEF ARCHITECT & INFORMATION SECURITY
OFFICER, WIZARDS OF
THE COAST



THE TRANSFORMATION

Wizards of the Coast operates in a highly competitive space where speed is key, and they need the ability to deploy features and updates several times a day – without sacrificing security. Before Reveal(x) Cloud, Wizards needed agents to gain visibility into traffic traversing their Amazon Virtual Private Clouds (VPCs). Deploying agents was complex, costly, and created bottlenecks that slowed down the development and delivery cycles.

“The developers want to put out quality games that are fun, that are exciting, and they don't want the friction because it's a distraction,” said Dan McDaniel, Chief Architect and Information Security Officer at Wizards of the Coast. “It slows them down, but most of all, it makes them justify what they're doing, which puts pretty much anybody on their heels.”

Wizards of the Coast needed a cloud-native solution that provided agentless, packet-level granularity that security analysts and developers could use to understand risk and break through bottlenecks, as well as detect, investigate, and respond to threats quickly before they compromised systems or data. For that, they turned to ExtraHop Reveal(x) Cloud.

THE OUTCOMES

When Wizards of the Coast added SaaS-based network detection and response (NDR) from Reveal(x) Cloud to their security suite, McDaniel said it was a game changer. Reveal(x) Cloud leverages Amazon VPC Traffic Mirroring to collect and analyze copies of network traffic packets from AWS. Instead of only seeing that server A was talking to server B, McDaniel's security team was able to quickly drill down into what those servers were saying to each other – and get critical information about everything from misconfigured services to potentially malicious activity.



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McDaniel said that level of granular context—even in environments where Kubernetes clusters spin up hundreds of thousands of instances at a time—empowered his security team to support studio developers without looking over their shoulders. With Reveal(x) Cloud, everyone is working from the same datasets across development, security, and IT operations, making the development process more efficient, as well as reducing tool sprawl.

“What ExtraHop allows me to do is to provide security without validating the architecture of their games before they go live,” McDaniel said. “It gives (developers) the freedom to create and go, but I still have visibility and transparency into my risk.”

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