# CSS310 – Spring 2021 – Lesson 2 – Identify and Inventory the Environment

**Overview of the Environment**

About the Company

Acme Company is a national privately-held advertising development and distribution company, headquartered in Austin, Texas. It has 16 regional sales offices scattered across the continental United States, with about 1700 employees nationwide. The headquarters office is where centralized business operations exist, such as executive leadership, human resources, accounting, marketing, core IT, and legal. The regional sales offices house outside/inside sales functions, regional leadership, and some support IT staff.

Acme has just over 300 customers, each varying with the regularity for engagements. Of the 300, about 100 customers are continually active and account for over 80% of gross revenue to the company. Acme engages customers with medium-term contracts, typically about three-years in length. Acme has been able to manage contracts to keep an even distribution of contract expirations/renewals (about a third) each year. The relationship between Acme and the customer is confidential; Acme does not publicly announce who its customers are. This is an important aspect to Acme’s customers.

About Security

Acme has an active CISO role, which oversees two security analysts and three security engineers. The annual security budget is about 0.5% of revenues and has not seen significant growth in investment for the past five years.

The CISO is engaged at the executive level with business strategy planning and governance. Annually, the CISO provides an enterprise risk assessment to the board of directors. The risk assessment is timed to occur at the time when the board is considering the CISO’s budget requests. The board appears to take customer privacy seriously but has not taken proactive action to address some of the more advanced cybersecurity risks that the CISO has communicated.

Third party risk assessments have noted that foundational controls and capabilities do exist within Acme, but advanced controls and more mature capabilities seem to be absent.

Systems, Applications, and Data

Acme utilizes systems and applications and data necessary for core internal company operations, for customer information management, and for the production and delivery of advertising content for its clients. The below represents the major components of these systems, applications, and data.

Customer and prospect information such as business names, contact information, meeting notes, internal notes for opportunities, summary contract information, sales projections and contracts. This information is maintained in Constant Contact and in Acme’s in-house developed contract management system.

Employee information, which includes contact information, employee reviews and actions, healthcare insurance information, pay rates and bonus eligibility. Acme utilizes Ceridian’s DayForce as a SAAS for this data, except any health information. That information is maintain by the third-party health insurance provider.

Accounting information, such as AP, AR, General Ledger and Payroll. Accounting utilizes Great Plains for all these functions, except Payroll. Payroll is handled out of DayForce, with integration into Great Plains for GL purposes. The Great Plains system stores customer and supplier information related to AP and AR functions, such as cardholder data, and bank data for ACH payments.

Executive and board-level communications are created, but distributed widely across the business units in unstructured data, such as in file shares, emails, and the like. Formal documents to be reviewed by the board and its committees are gathered, stored, and accessed via BoardVantage – a SaaS solution specifically made for that purpose. Board members are provisioned accounts in BoardVantage. Documents have strategic plans, may include information on customers, and proprietary information on initiatives and opportunities.

Marketing data which includes customer and prospect information and contact information which is stored in unstructured formats, and structured format, separate from the customer information system. The customer information is maintained with several third parties for mass and customized mailing and emailing services.

The content delivery team utilizes a broad range of graphic and video applications to design, develop and deliver advertising content. The applications are both on-premises and in the cloud. Storage of content, regardless of the stage of development, is on the local storage area network. The content is considered confidential/proprietary for each customer.

Third-party contracts are not centrally managed and are distributed across the departments and individuals who are responsible for the relationship with the third-party. Third-parties include SaaS providers already mentioned, logistic and support vendors, housekeeping, property maintenance, health insurance providers, IT support services, and others.

For web and file transfer services, Acme utilizes cloud/SaaS-based services. The website is interactive only for the purposes of providing customers and prospects with information about the company’s services. It does not front any applications. The file transfer services provides for secure transfer or large files between Acme and third-parties.  
  
Third Parties and Third Party Services

Acme utilizes third party services in many of its operations. As noted earlier, Acme utilizes Fincare for mailing and emailing marketing services, which requires the company to provide a continual update of client and prospect information to Fincare.

Acme utilizes Fiserv for credit card processing of accounts receivable transactions. There are minimal point-of-sale capabilities, but the small amount of POS transactions are completed through Square.

Third parties are utilized in SaaS configurations for certain security services. For instance, Acme utilizes cloud-based Mimecast services for email protection and could-based F5 Silverline services for web application firewall services. Most other significant security services are delivered through on-premises, Acme-supported systems.

Many of the advertising production systems are on premises too, but some specialized SaaS-based tools are used for unique media functions. This includes Adobe-based software, PowerDirector Pro, and Movavi.

For specialized marketing functions, Acme will provide its customer and prospect data to third-parties for data analysis. These third-parties use data analytics to provide insight into improved marketing opportunities for the company.