***System hardening***

The process of configuring an IT asset to lessen its exposure to security flaws is known as system hardening. An attack surface is a term that refers to the totality of potential security holes and access points that an attacker could use to compromise a system. System hardening aims to minimize this attack surface so that malicious actors find it more challenging to compromise the asset.

***Recent examples of where things can go wrong without suitable system hardening***:

Android by Google – May 2021: Android, the most popular mobile operating system worldwide, has efficient security frameworks built in. However, over 100 million platform users' personal information was made public due to some configuration errors in cloud services. This compromise's root cause was a combination of 23 apps and unprotected databases.

Source: [https://www.itpro.com/security/data-breaches/359637/misconfigured-cloud-services-exposed-100-million-android-users-data#](https://www.itpro.com/security/data-breaches/359637/misconfigured-cloud-services-exposed-100-million-android-users-data):

***User Case Scenario:***

There have been recent major cybersecurity attacks in Australia with organizations such as Optus and Medibank having severe data breaches with millions of customers being impacted.

Having heard this news, the board of directors of Acme Charities are worried that their organization could also be exposed. During a recent board meeting, the COO was asked if the organization followed certain standards and frameworks to ensure the IT systems security profile is in good standing. After various shoulder shrugs, the COO was asked to take care of this and report back to the board with progress in the next quarterly board meeting.

The COO started to do research and discovered that in Australia, the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) leads the Australian Government’s efforts to improve cyber security. ACSC has developed the Essential 8 maturity model and there is no silver bullet solution for systems hardening, these set of standards when they are implemented correctly can address 90% plus of cybersecurity weaknesses.

The organization with limited internal resources understand this area and knows that they need to reach out to external professional services to assist them with implementing systems hardening based on the Essential 8 maturity model. Given that they are a not-for-profit charity organization they also have limited funds to allocate towards this service.

***Where fortify can help***

Fortify is a not-for-profit organization with cybersecurity expertise, resourced by volunteer professionals. We provided Cybersecurity advisory services at minimal, or at no cost, to assist organizations such as yours that have limited resources.

* Fortify will provide a self-assessment guideline and questionnaire so the organisation can assess its requirements in this area.
* Based on organisation needs, Fortify will then assign the appropriate professional to assist with requirements.
* Fortify’s professionals will perform system audits based on the Essential 8 set of standards, and provide a report on maturity gaps and a roadmap for improvements, along with an estimated cost range for each initiative.
* Fortify together with the organisation’s executive, will present to the board the Essential 8 gap analysis and the roadmap for improvement with estimated costs to secure funding.
* Fortify will create a regular reporting format to demonstrate to the board how improvement initiatives are monitored.
* Depending on the technical solutions required, Fortify may also be able to assist in the project implementation or if new solutions are required, will assist in new designs and scoping a go-to-market procurement activity to acquire a solutions partner.

***How to engage fortify services:***

There are a few simple steps to follow in engaging our services

* Go to the website: fortify.com.au
* Register your organization
* Read the guidelines and start to complete the self-assessment questionnaire. Please allow 50 minutes to complete the questionnaire as some areas may be complicated and require some careful thought.
* If you required assistance to complete the questionnaire, please submit a request via the “require assistance” button or go to fortify.com.au/assistance.