

Importance of Black Box Penetration Testing in Application Security

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Organizations invest in many security-related exercises to ensure that its technical infrastructure is secure and protected. One such exercise is black box testing wherein the testers investigate a system just like an attacker would do with minimal or no knowledge about the internal architecture or configuration of the system. The testers use many tools for detecting possible attack surfaces to build an idea about the system. In this way, information is gathered about the system to carefully plan and launch an attack.

When is Black Box testing used?

Black box [penetration testing](#) has become an integral part of routine security testing activities. The primary reason is that the security analysts do not have information about the assets covered under the scope, and they conduct testing activities, just like an attacker would carry out his attack. The testers attempt to find the vulnerabilities when the application is running in the production environment.

When an application is being tested, the testers must be free from any kind of bias. In the white box penetration testing, the testers are familiar with the source code and internal architecture of an asset being tested. This may lead to them missing a vulnerability here or there, as they are too familiar with the source code and they do not have a neutral point of view. In a black box test, the testers only have access to an outsider's view, and they try to replicate the steps that might be taken by an attacker by using the same set of tools and techniques that an attacker would do.

Primarily, black box testing identifies a wide range of vulnerabilities such as input or output validation issues, server misconfiguration, and other issues which may be encountered in the runtime. However, managing a black box testing team can be both time-consuming and resource intensive. This may lead to slowing down the development process in CI/CD

environments. Hence, it is often recommended to partner with a vendor providing [black box penetration testing services](#). Black box testing is also called as [dynamic application security testing \(DAST\)](#).

Benefits of Black Box Testing

Black box testing is critical to application security as it offers certain critical advantages over other testing methods. However, the best results are only possible when an organization employs multiple testing activities in sync, instead of solely depending on one type of testing methodology. Various benefits of black box testing include –

- The testers try a variety of techniques when they try to break into an application.
- They simulate an actual attack to look out for unexpected results.
- Common vulnerabilities such as XSS, SQL injection, CSRF, etc. are extensively checked.
- Black box testing also checks server misconfiguration issues.
- Use detailed remediation information to fix flaws quickly.

Black Box Testing and the development team concerns

As we have seen while working with our clients, their development teams often have two prominent concerns – hindrance in the development process affecting the time to market (TTM) of their applications, and the requirement to master a new tool. The first concern can be addressed by automating many parts of the testing process so that the scheduled delivery and deployment of the application is not delayed. To address the second concern, there are two possible ways – either availing the black box [security testing](#) service of a third-party service provider or choosing a tool which is easy to master and use in the enterprise environment. Our

cloud security testing platform effectively addresses these concerns so that a secure application is deployed on time.

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