



Sterling Oakmont Financial Services — Secure Network & GRC Assessment
A 10-Week Engagement Delivering Secure Architecture and Governance Alignment

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Executive Summary

Sterling Oakmont Financial Services, LLC engaged in a 10-week project to modernize its network infrastructure and enhance its security posture. The initiative focused on aligning technical controls with governance requirements under frameworks such as NIST CSF, PCI DSS, and GLBA.

Deliverables included VLAN segmentation, Cisco NGFW configuration, EDR deployment, MFA enforcement, and a comprehensive Governance Policy Toolkit.

The project achieved measurable improvements in data protection, compliance readiness, and operational resilience, all completed on schedule and under budget.

Problem & Solution

Problem:

The company's flat network and limited security documentation exposed client financial data to unnecessary risk. Lack of segmentation, insufficient endpoint monitoring, and missing policy coverage hindered regulatory compliance.

Solution:

A segmented VLAN architecture was implemented, introducing isolated network zones for Finance, Workstations, and Guest access. Cisco Firepower NGFW was deployed for advanced perimeter control, and company-wide EDR/MFA solutions were integrated.

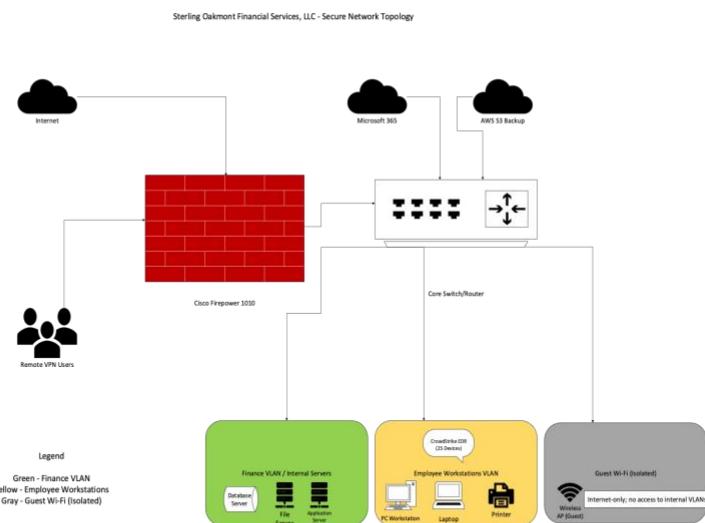
Microsoft 365 and AWS S3 backups established business continuity, while formalized governance documentation — AUP, Password, and Incident Response Plan — strengthened organizational accountability.

Architecture Overview

The redesigned infrastructure incorporated secure segmentation, centralized monitoring, and automated cloud redundancy.

Key Features:

- VLAN segmentation for Finance, Workstations, and Guest Wi-Fi
- Cisco Firepower NGFW perimeter protection
- Microsoft 365 and AWS S3 integration for redundancy
- Full EDR coverage on all endpoints



“Figure 1. Sterling Oakmont Secure Network Topology — Segmented VLAN Design”

Results & Impact

Metric	Before	After
<i>VLAN Segmentation</i>	None	Implemented 3 Zones
<i>Firewall Coverage</i>	Basic	Cisco NGFW with advanced rule sets
<i>Endpoint Protection</i>	Partial	Full EDR Rollout
<i>Compliance Alignment</i>	Ad-hoc	Mapped to NIST CSF & GLBA
<i>Incident Reporting</i>	Manual	Automated via policy & training

The project reduced lateral movement risks, enhanced visibility, and improved audit performance.

Final delivery met the 10-week, 120-hour timeline within the \$11,683 budget, producing a scalable foundation for continued security maturity.

Lessons Learned

Successes:

Policy and technical initiatives aligned effectively, strengthening the company's GRC posture. Milestone tracking and defined scope enabled timely completion.

Challenges:

Exporting Visio diagrams on macOS required creative workarounds. Extended review cycles improved accuracy but increased administrative effort — a worthwhile trade-off for long-term clarity.

Linked Deliverables

- Information Security Policy Toolkit (AUP, Password, IRP)
- Network Topology Diagram (Visio Export)
- Company Newsletter Announcement

All deliverables are accessible within the Secure Network & GRC Assessment repository.