

exida Can Show you the Way



Not that long ago, the move towards “open systems” and the resulting incorporation of off-the-shelf technologies represented a huge step forward in control system design. System integration became easier, product development by manufacturers was accelerated, and training leveraged common tools and concepts. While the benefits have been tremendous, open technology has made control systems open to security vulnerabilities, putting production and human safety at risk.

Countering these threats requires organizations to develop a better understanding of their process control system security risks and how they are positioned to address them.

A Control System Security Assessment (CSSA)

- Evaluates current control system design, network architecture, security policies and practices
- Compares results to industry standards and best practices such as ANSI/ISA 99.02.01-2009, DHS CFATS RBPS-8, NERC CIP 002-009, API 1164, etc.
- Provides the organization with a good understanding of where they are, where they need to be and how to get there
- Provides documentation required by regulators, insurance companies and any other stakeholders

The Process

The process can be broken down into three phases.

In Phase 1, or the pre-assessment phase, existing information is collected from those responsible for the system. Items such as network diagrams, lists of cyber assets, existing policies and procedures are compiled in order to provide the assessment team with a basic understanding of the system before they arrive on site.



Phase 2 is performed onsite and is primarily focused on data-gathering. The assessment team will verify the network architecture and traffic flows. Then they will visit networked devices to collect basic information such as make, model but also to analyze the configuration of each device (access control measures, open ports, applications and services, status of patches, anti-virus tools, etc.). The assessment team will also interview key staff to better understand actual procedures that are being followed. Before leaving site the assessment team will meet with management to provide a briefing on key observations and initial recommendations.

Phase 3 is for the assessment team to fully analyze the data and formally document the results in an assessment report. Gaps between current practices and standards/best practices are documented and recommendations are identified and prioritized.

Benefits

- Provides management with solid understanding of current situation and gaps
- Helps identify and prioritize security investments
- Provides an excellent starting point towards developing a broader security program
- Quick and inexpensive – most systems can be assessed in less than a week

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Exida is a world leading engineering services & certification body focused on helping automation suppliers and users improve the safety, security and reliability of their industrial automation systems. Established by several of the world's top safety, security, and reliability experts, the company is owned by these partners and independent of any vendor ownership allowing us to provide an objective, third-party evaluation.

In early 2009, we merged with Byres Research to form exida Security Services. We understand there is often a gap between the security needs and priorities of the control systems department and the business information areas serviced by the company's IT department. Our knowledge of both fields allows us to help our clients bridge that gap.

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