

# IMPLEMENTING A MICRO-SEGMENTATION STRATEGY IN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR

Banks need to be concerned about security. According to Forbes, financial services firms fall victim to cybersecurity attacks 300 times more frequently than businesses in other industries. The typical American business is attacked four million times per year, but the typical American financial services firm is attacked a staggering one billion times per year. The rate of breaches in the financial industry has tripled in the past five years. The most costly attack types for financial firms are denial of services, phishing, and social engineering. Overall, banks lost \$16.8 billion to cybercriminals in 2017. The cost of cybercrime also includes regulatory fines, litigation, the need to respond to negative media coverage, and lost business due to reputational damage, among others.<sup>1</sup>

## SECURITY—A PRIMARY CONCERN

Rolta|Advizex has been engaged for many years with a regional bank whose most critical area of concern today is security, as it very well should be considering the statistics. This bank focuses on taking the complexity out of banking and offering a better value to their customers. They have a reputation of being straightforward and honest. Their customers trust the bank to keep their money safe and their data secure. This financial firm has maintained a 5-star rating from Bauer Financial for more than 25 years. When it comes to IT they are interested in working with a partner that is as straightforward and honest as they are.

This financial services firm has been working side by side with Rolta|Advizex for about 10 years to plan and meet their IT infrastructures needs. Rolta|Advizex has been a trusted partner and educator during this time, and currently, with security being top of mind, Advizex's team of technologists has been educating the bank's CIO and IT staff on VMware NSX®, vRealize® Network Insight™, and the overall value of a micro-segmentation strategy as part of the bank's technology roadmap. The bank's business goal is modernizing their data center in an effort to stay secure in today's threat landscape. NSX is a network virtualization tool and security platform for the Software-Defined Data Center (SDDC). With such an immense pressure on the banking industry, the perimeter firewall is no longer enough protection. Threats can get through the perimeter firewall via a trusted source, i.e., an end-user, and once inside the threats can move laterally, spreading quickly from server to server. NSX micro-segments the network enforcing least privilege throughout the data center to the VM level—stopping threats in their tracks. Additionally, NSX automates this process so that when VMs are spun up from the hypervisor these settings are embedded without any extra effort from the IT team. NSX manages your threat surface more effectively, allowing you to micro-segment down to the workload level applying a distributed firewall to each VM and securing all end-user environments.

## A PHASED APPROACH

The bank is taking a phased approach to getting to their business goal of implementing micro-segmentation. The first phase is education. Rolta|Advizex and VMware have worked together to educate the CIO and IT team on micro-segmentation and NSX. This is a whole new way of thinking and requires a complete redesign of their IT infrastructure. The business challenge here is that it is a whole new way of architecting a complete transformation of their current infrastructure. Rolta|Advizex has been working as both an advisor and educator to make sure that the bank is fully

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The bank is currently in the second phase on the road to deploying NSX and implementing their micro-segmentation strategy. This phase involves discovering and gathering information about the existing infrastructure to implement micro-segmentation correctly. The financial services firm is using vRealize Network Insight to gather trends and statistics from the current network environment to develop a plan for NSX and micro-segmentation. vRealize Network Insight takes the guess-work out of deploying micro-segmentation by providing actionable insights and recommendations. This tool enables visibility across the virtual and physical network using comprehensive NetFlow assessment to model security groups and firewall rules. Rolta|Advizex will help the bank's network administrators to develop a very accurate micro-segmentation model using this tool. vRealize Network Insight helps customers build an optimized, highly available, and secure network infrastructure across multi-cloud environments that will result in reducing IT complexity, improving scalability, and increasing agility all while strengthening its security posture along with a lower total-cost-of-ownership (TCO). Together vRealize Network Insight and NSX deliver converged visibility across the virtual and physical networks accelerating micro-segmentation planning and deployment.

The next step for the bank will be deploying NSX. Using micro-segmentation as the new model of how applications are deployed, secured, and modeled will allow the bank to be proactive rather than reactive. They will be able to focus on innovation, rather than infrastructure. Rolta|Advizex will be a partner every step of the way keeping the financial services firm abreast of changes in technology and pricing that may have an impact on their purchase. Rolta|Advizex understands the scope of deploying a micro-segmentation strategy and how each step is critical along the way. Working with Rolta|Advizex, the CIO and IT team are confident that all the forethought and planning will result in a solid micro-segmentation deployment that will protect the bank and its customers from inevitable cyberthreats.

<sup>1</sup>Source: Forbes (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bhaktimirchandani/2018/08/28/laughing-all-the-way-to-the-bank-cybercriminals-targeting-us-financial-institutions/#4ffcbfcb6e90>)

## ROLTA|ADVIZEX—VMWARE AND IT EXPERTISE

The team from Rolta|Advizex has been and will continue to work very closely with the local VMware team to help the bank complete this data center modernization project. Rolta Advizex is one of the select few companies worldwide that has three VMware Certified Design Expert (VCDX) professionals on staff. This VMware and overall IT expertise of the Rolta|Advizex team evokes the trust of our customers as we help them modernize, automate, and transform to ultimately achieve their business goals.

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