CASE STUDY

Cognizant grows securely with integrated ServiceNow and Tanium

Industry
Professional services

Size
355,000 employees

Headquarters
New Jersey

Managed endpoints
300,000

Results

Faster CMDB

Thanks to Tanium's integration with ServiceNow, Cognizant has accelerated the update of its CMDB from days to just under three hours.

Real-time data

Tanium gives Cognizant complete, real-time visibility into all its endpoints, regardless of location. As a result, Cognizant is ready to respond to any cyber-incident quickly and effectively.

Total visibility

With Tanium, Cognizant now has visibility into all its endpoints – including those in its acquired companies and other 'dark corners.'

Better together, the Tanium solution delivers total visibility and fast loading of real-time data to the Configuration Management Database (CMDB).

You can't manage (or secure) endpoints that you can't see

That may sound cliché, but it's an important truth – one that's particularly relevant for organizations that grow through acquisitions. Acquired companies often have IT architectures, endpoint management tools, and security protocols that are incompatible with those of the parent company. Nonetheless, those assets need to be secured and managed as if they'd been around forever.

That was the case at Cognizant, a provider of professional services that include digital services, consulting, and application development. Since 2019, the company has spent more than $3 billion on acquisitions. In just the last 12 months, Cognizant made four acquisitions, including AustinCSI, a cloud and data advisory service provider, and Mobica, an IoT software engineering provider.

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Ryan Marquiss
Senior Director, IT Asset Management, Cognizant

While Cognizant's strategy aims to drive growth, it also involves some risk. "For one," explains Ryan Marquiss, the company's senior director of IT asset management, "when Cognizant purchases a company, it's often only compliant with their old standards. So, these companies must go on a journey."

This risk was exposed in 2020, when Cognizant found itself the target of a cyberattack. At the time, Cognizant estimated the attack's impact on a single financial quarter to be as high as $70 million. "Our ability to see the entire enterprise was limited by the tools we were using," recounts Marquiss. "We weren't able to shine a light into the dark corners." Cognizant needed to enhance their defenses to ensure no threats were allowed to cascade out of containment and into acquisitions.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the Cognizant team made an important decision: They would move to a new IT service platform and converged endpoint solution, one that could provide both better endpoint visibility worldwide and more robust cybersecurity.

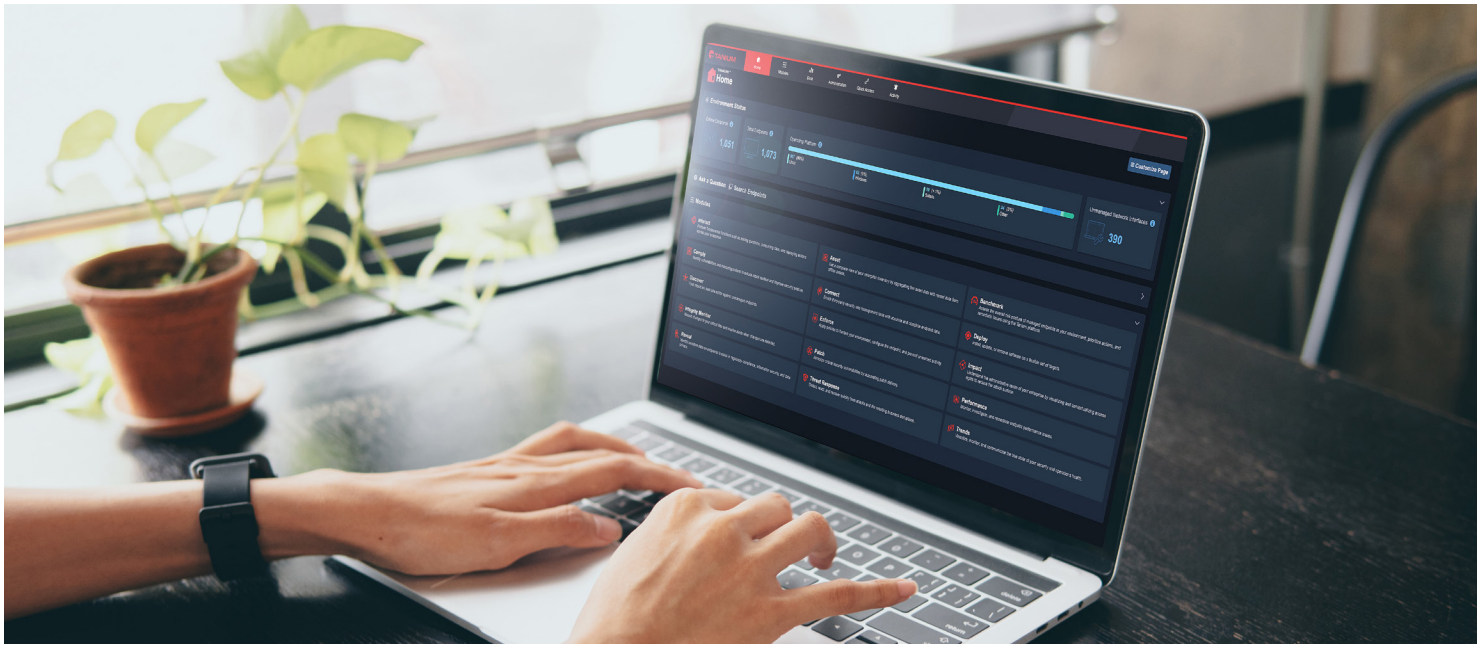
A three-phase solution

With help from Tanium, Cognizant launched a three-phase solution. Phase one involved acquiring a new ServiceNow platform and then populating its Configuration Management Database (CMDB) with complete, real-time, operationally focused asset data. To do this, Marquiss and his colleagues leveraged Tanium's advanced discovery function to gain full visibility of all endpoint devices and a similar discovery function of ServiceNow for anything that couldn't take a Tanium agent, such as networking equipment and security devices.

In phase two, the Cognizant team determined that ServiceNow was fully deployed and able to replace the company's legacy IT service management platform. That involved inspecting data for configuration, asset, and service management.

Phase three, now underway, involves the addition of ServiceNow's Software Asset Management Professional SaaS solution (SAM Pro), which will empower Cognizant to take what was essentially an on-premises function and extend it to the cloud. Marquiss is also looking for automation opportunities. "We're cutting costs wherever we can," he says. "And we're looking at automation to help remove some of those costs."

Indeed, cost-cutting is another area where Cognizant is getting help from Tanium. They use Tanium to inventory the number of licenses for other software then compare that with the number of copies actually used. If the two numbers are out of sync, that highlights a potential cost-cutting opportunity when the licenses come up for renewal. "We don't need to pay for 2,000 licenses if we have only 1,000 users," Marquiss explains. "But prior to using Tanium, we didn't have that level of visibility across all our entities."



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Russell Mock
Senior Engineering Manager,
Endpoint Security, Cognizant

From weeks to hours

Tanium provided several benefits, including greater speed, which translated into giving the company more complete real-time data. Prior to using Tanium, Cognizant could send changes to the ServiceNow CMDB, but the process could take as long as four days. Now, with Tanium, Cognizant can pull all endpoint data in about three hours.

"Originally, with billions of records, we would do this only once every two to three weeks," explains Russell Mock, Cognizant's senior engineering manager for endpoint security. "Now we have data coming in every single day. The ability to populate the CMDB in a matter of hours has been a godsend."

That faster capability serves an even more important purpose, namely the ability for Cognizant to respond quickly to any potential security incidents. "If you look at things like generative AI, people are already gaming it to create malware," Marquiss says. "So, you have to move just as fast. Days is not good enough. It has to be quicker."

Tanium can help your organization with ServiceNow integration.

Learn how