TANIUM

Synopsys keeps endpoints securely updated with Tanium

The maker of electronic design automation tools needed a better way to manage its fleet of over 20,000 endpoints.
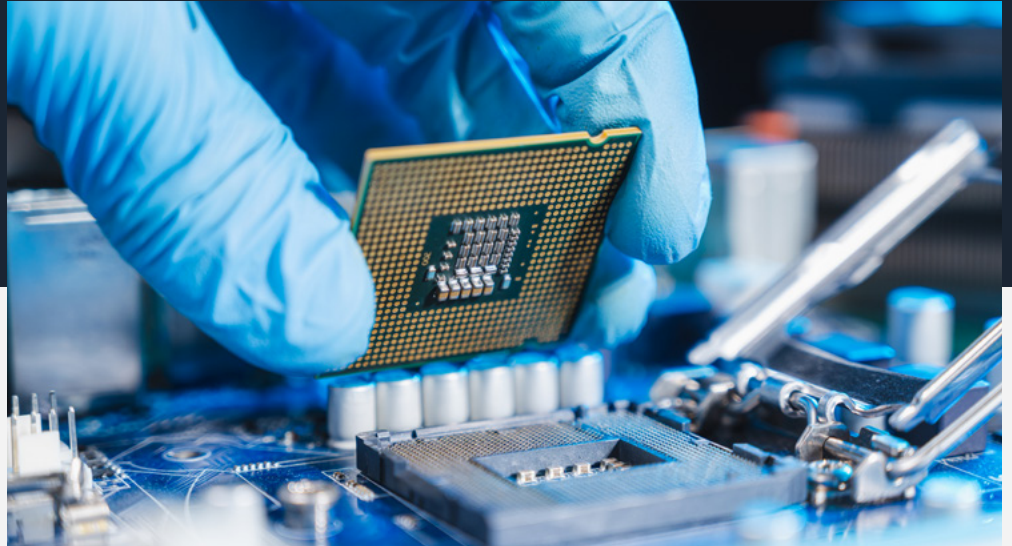
SYNOPSYS®

ORGANIZATION

Synopsys

LOCATION

Sunnyvale, California

Synopsys makes highly technical products that electrical engineers use to design the latest integrated circuits (ICs). It's a business that's highly competitive and lucrative. Like all technology companies, protecting itself against cybercrime is a top priority.

The main business of Synopsys is electronic design automation (EDA) software. These tools – which customers use to design and test ICs – increasingly feature the latest AI capabilities.

A second business of Synopsys is semiconductor intellectual property products. These are pre-designed circuits that customers can use as components in their larger chip designs.

"Cybersecurity threats or other security breaches could compromise sensitive information belonging to us or our customers and could harm our business and our reputation," the company writes in its most recent Form 10-K.

For Director of IT Andrew Wall, protecting endpoints against cyber breaches is a top concern, although Synopsys has a separate InfoSec team. "My group is measured by our ability to make sure operations happen smoothly," he says. "We're expected to partner with every aspect of the business and be differentiators."

Patching protection

Wall discovered Tanium about two years ago, when the Synopsys InfoSec team was running a proof-of-concept trial of Tanium. The group saw value in the PoC, and shortly after, it did a full Tanium implementation. Wall realized Tanium could help his group with endpoint patching, updates, and other operational tasks.

Within a few short months, Wall had cut over all endpoint patching to Tanium. And a couple months after that, Tanum began handling both software delivery and a self-service site that Synopsys employees use to install endpoint software.

It's a big, complicated job. Synopsys runs a fleet of 23,000 endpoints, of which about 21,000 are Windows PCs. They're now all managed by Tanium. Wall and his team are also responsible for managing non-Windows PCs (mostly Macs), telephony, videoconferencing, IT communications, and regional IT support for the Americas region.

"Our group is measured by our ability to make sure operations run smoothly," Wall says. "That might include saving time, reducing the number of trouble tickets, or retiring old servers. For all that, implementing Tanium has been a positive experience."

Windows opened

Tanium has already helped Wall with one big task: moving PCs to Windows 11, the latest version of the Microsoft operating system. While OS upgrades are never easy, this one has been even more difficult than most, mainly because the previous version, Windows 10, remains fully supported.

In fact, Microsoft has said it will support Windows 10 until October 2025, meaning some users will continue to stall on upgrading their OS while their current one remains supported. Nonetheless, fully half of Synopsys' PC users have already upgraded their systems to Windows 11, all by using the company's Tanium-powered self-service portal. "It's been very successful," Wall says.

What's more, over half the upgrades were done voluntarily by users, a move that Wall calls "uncommon." Usually, people have to be reminded several times, then given a final deadline, he explains.

Tanium is also helping Wall ensure that Synopsys users have the latest, most secure versions of commonly used applications. For example, to keep browsers up to date, Wall has set Tanium to check and, if necessary, update all browsers once a month. And if his team learns of a new vulnerability or exposure, Wall can use Tanium to deploy a new version or patch at any time.

The real-time nature of Tanium is another boon for Wall. "Tanium's real-time data is very helpful to us," he says. "With our prior tools, you'd ask a question and maybe get a complete answer in a week. And by 'complete,' I mean only 90% or so."

Synopsys has also used Tanium to achieve another goal: reduce the number of servers needed for a competing endpoint security-management tool. Indeed, Wall says that with Tanium, his team has been able to shrink that hardware fleet from about 65 servers worldwide before to fewer than 20 now.

"Tanium makes my managers' jobs easier," Wall says. "And that makes my job easier."

> **"We're always under pressure to do more with less. Tanium has helped my team do that"**
>
> **Andrew Wall**
> Director of IT, Synopsys

Results

Regular patching & updates

Tanium helps Synopsys ensure that commonly used endpoint applications, such as browsers and PDF readers, are regularly scanned and updated to their latest, most secure versions.

Employee self-service

Using a Tanium-powered self-service portal, half of all Windows users at Synopsys have upgraded their PCs to Windows 11, the latest version. That's especially impressive given that the previous OS version, Windows 10, is still fully supported

Retiring servers

One of Synopsys' goals with Tanium was reducing the number of servers needed for a competing endpoint security management tool. That has worked. Wall and his team have reduced that number from 65 servers previously needed to run the tool worldwide to fewer than 20 now.

Real-time answers

Tanium provides Wall and his team with complete, real-time information about their many thousands of endpoints. Previous tools could take up to a week to answer questions, and even after all that time, their answers were often incomplete.

"Tanium's real-time data is very helpful to us."

Andrew Wall
Director of IT, Synopsys

The Power of Certainty.™

Visit us at www.tanium.com and follow us on LinkedIn and X.