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Achieve Greater Security Resiliency with Cisco-enabled Managed Security Solution Providers

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Abstract: Technology marches inexorably forward, becoming the foundation for business growth and expansion into new markets. However, new technologies, and the speed at which organizations desire to adopt them, together with a rapidly growing and advanced threat landscape can cause stress on security teams. While managed security services have proven to be an effective means in helping security teams scale, the platform that underlies the service matters. Cisco-enabled service providers are helping organizations close security gaps and defend against evolving threats, combining the power of the Cisco Security Cloud with existing Cisco infrastructure investments.

Overview

As technology continues to help fuel organizational growth and operational efficiency, it concurrently adds new risk of operational disruption from cyber attacks. Increased use of third-party resources—including cloud, SaaS applications, and third-party business services—together with supporting a distributed workforce add to this risk complexity. Managing and mitigating this risk is challenging for many, as IT and security leaders seek the expertise, budget, and security operations program knowledge needed to develop and operate successful security programs.

As the dependence on cloud-delivered applications extends across multiple cloud service providers, research by TechTarget's Enterprise Strategy Group indicates that network connectivity, connecting to legacy systems, and maintaining application performance are key concerns. The increasing use of APIs for cloud services creates further concerns with meeting security expectations, management, and network availability.¹

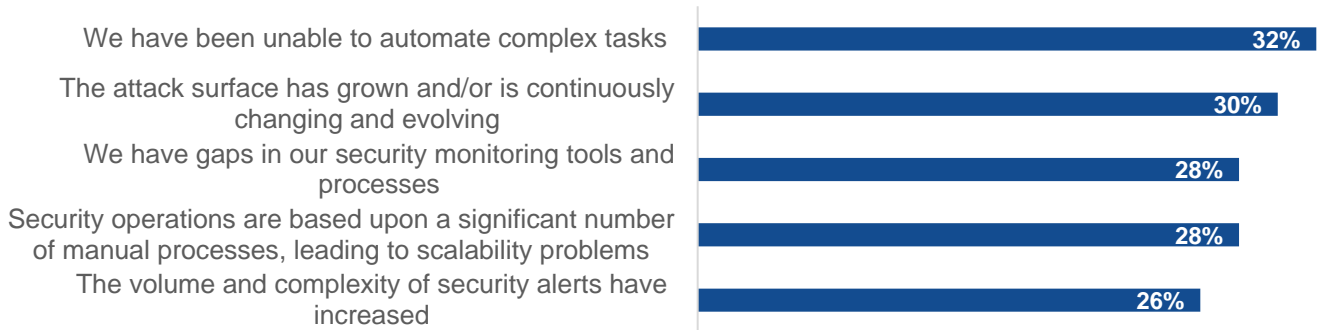
Despite ongoing investment in security programs, many report security operations to be more difficult than they were two years ago. Reasons reported include a growing, continuously changing attack surface, challenges in automating complex tasks, and gaps in security monitoring tools and processes (see Figure 1).²

¹ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [Distributed Cloud Series: The State of Infrastructure Modernization Across the Distributed Cloud](#), August 2023.

² Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [Cloud Detection and Response](#), October 2023.

Figure 1. Top 5 Reasons Security Operations Are More Difficult

You indicated that security operations are more difficult at your organization than they were two years ago. What are the primary reasons you believe this to be true? (Percent of respondents, N=122, multiple responses accepted)



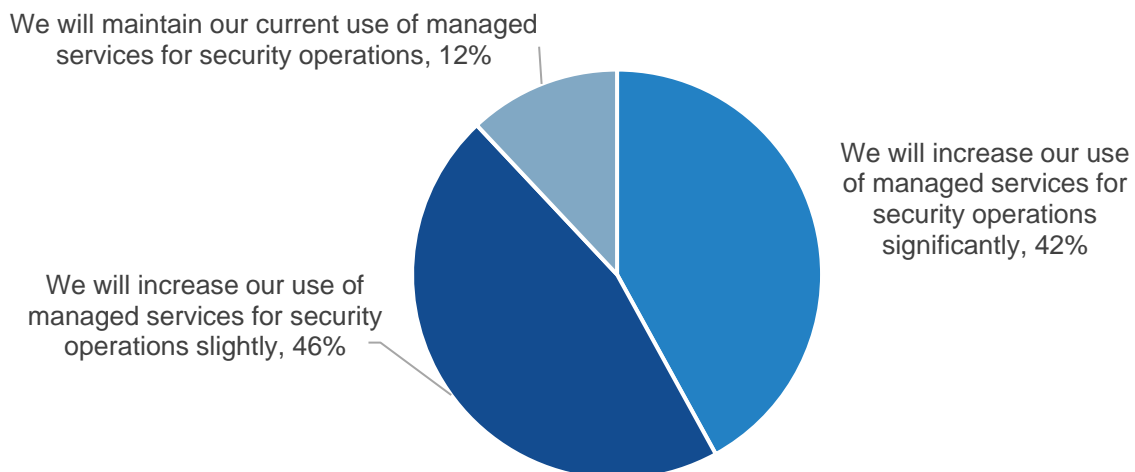
Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Managed Security Service Providers are Helping Bolster Security Programs

These challenges, together with growing regulatory and compliance requirements and ongoing challenges in hiring and keeping qualified security talent are driving organizations to engage managed service providers (MSPs) to help improve their security program. Enterprise Strategy Group research indicates that a majority of respondents plan to increase their use of managed services over the next 12-24 months (see Figure 2).³

Figure 2. The Majority of Respondents Will Increase Their Use of Managed Services

Which of the following best describes your organization's likely approach to using managed services over the next 12-24 months?



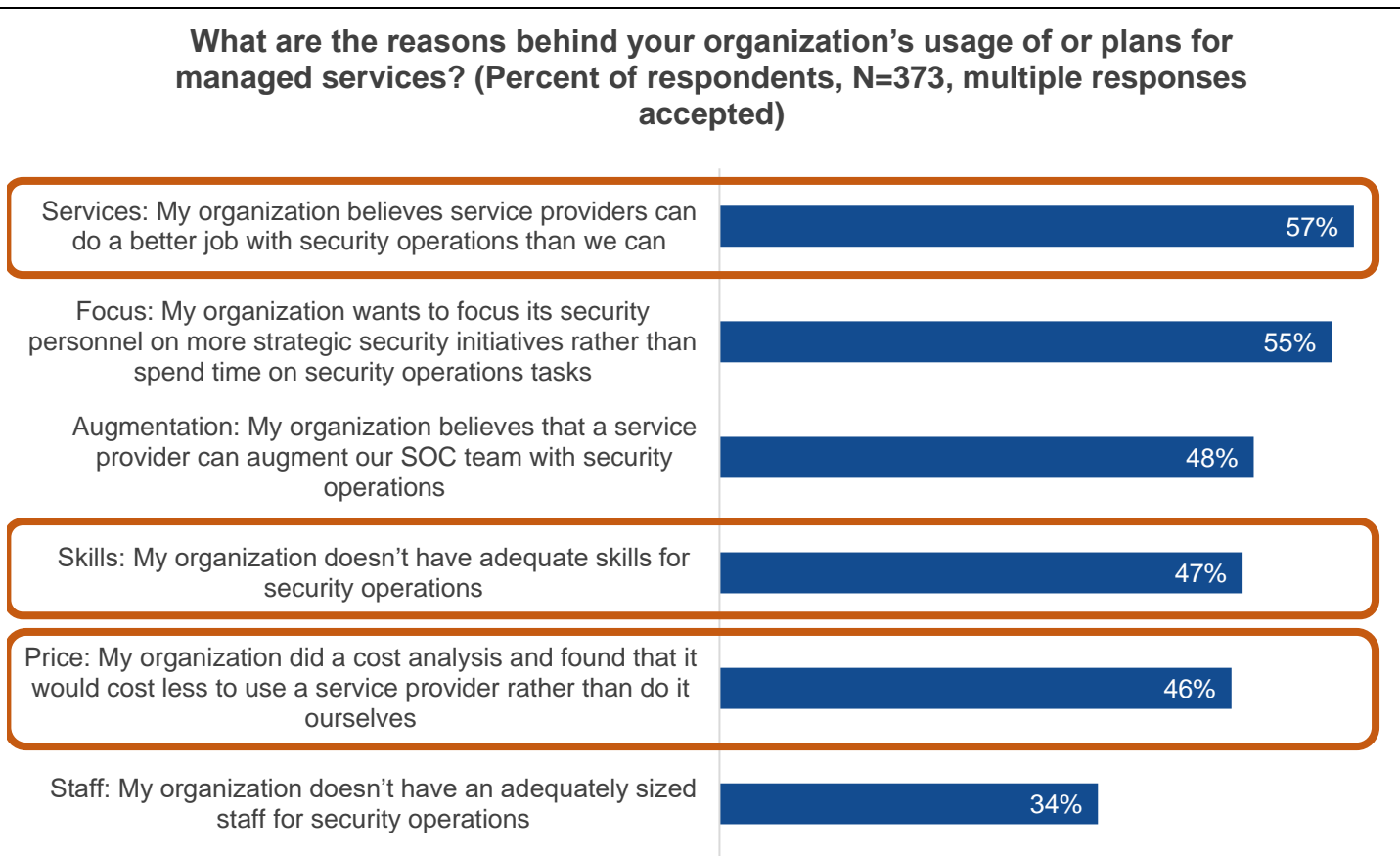
Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

³ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [SOC Modernization and the Role of XDR](#), October 2022.

According to Enterprise Strategy Group research, there are several reasons fueling the use of managed services, including (see Figure 3):⁴

- 57% of respondents believe that service providers will do a better job than the respondents can.
- 47% say they don't have the required skills for security operations.
- 46% say they will be able to save money by using service providers.

Figure 3. Motivation to Use Managed Services



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Enterprise Strategy Group research shows that those using MSPs are generally satisfied, with 92% of respondents indicating that they are mostly or completely satisfied.⁵ At worst, they've only experienced minor issues. These results indicate that many see MSPs as highly valuable, and reliable, partners helping to reduce risk and increase operational efficiency, with 77% of respondents indicating that they view their MSPs as strategic partners that have improved their overall security program.⁶

⁴ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [Managed Detection and Response Trends](#), May 2023.

⁵ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Research Report, [SOC Modernization and the Role of XDR](#), October 2022.

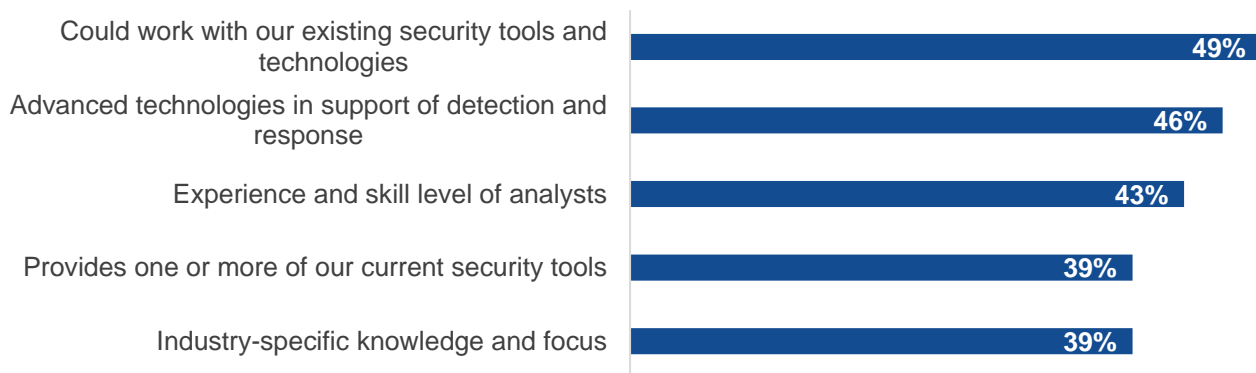
⁶ Ibid.

The Choice of Managed Service Provider Matters

Security strategies are critical to enabling growth. As security leaders turn to MSPs for help, choosing a provider that aligns to the financial, operational, and risk objectives can be a challenging task for many. Top considerations for choosing a service provider include the ability to work with existing security tools and technologies and to bring advanced technologies supporting detection and response (see Figure 4).⁷

Figure 4. Top Considerations for Service Provider Selection

Which of the following considerations are important to your organization when selecting an MDR provider? (Percent of respondents, N=373, multiple responses accepted)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, a division of TechTarget, Inc.

Compatibility with Existing Tools Is Essential

Modern organizations often employ a heterogeneous selection of tools and technologies to protect their assets. Constantly changing tools or employing tools and services that don't integrate well with existing infrastructure increases cost and risk across the enterprise.

The ability for managed service providers to both work seamlessly with existing tools and technologies is therefore a primary concern. MSPs who can integrate and leverage existing technologies investments while helping consolidate tools to reduce complexity are desired.

Cisco Integrated Security Solutions Strengthen Resilience

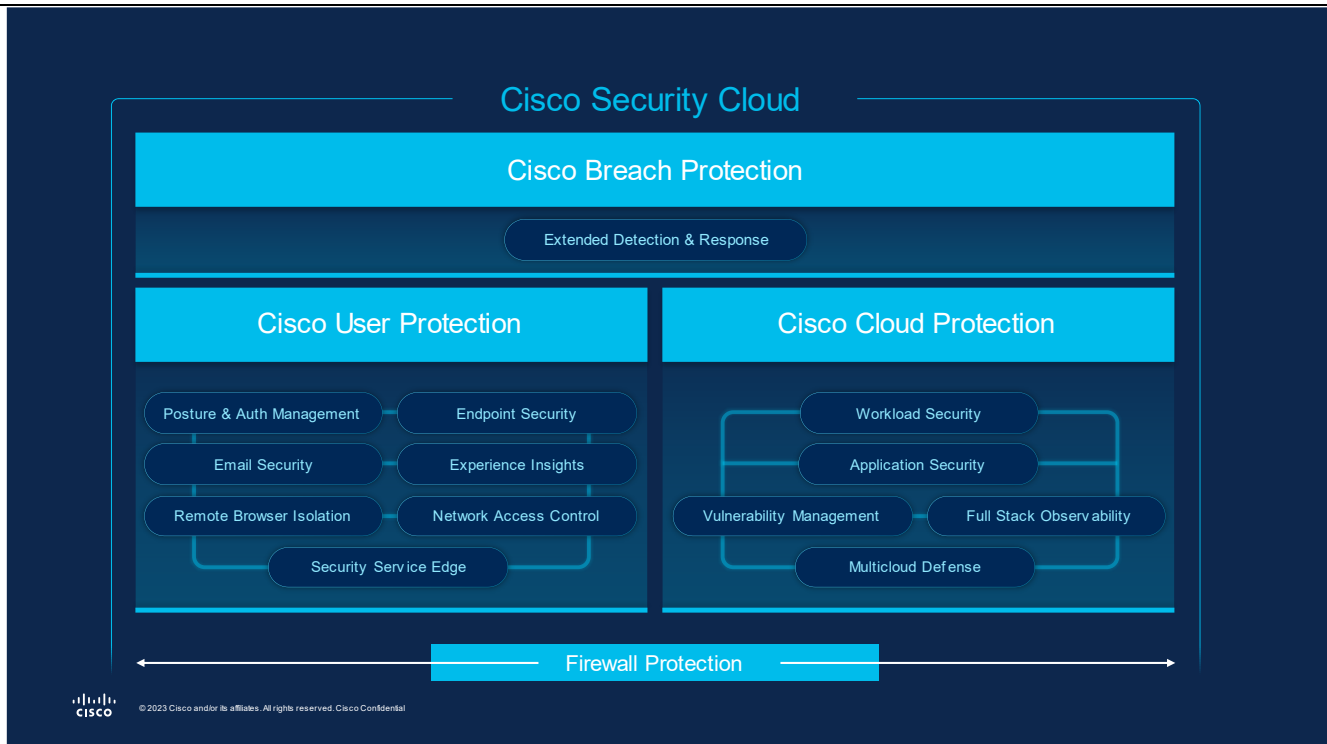
Managed services leveraging Cisco's integrated security solutions provide in-depth visibility across network, users, applications, and clouds to minimize risk, close security gaps, and defend against evolving threats. The Cisco Security Cloud features an integrated, cloud-enabled portfolio of security solutions that enable service providers to rapidly deploy, configure, and scale security capabilities while integrating and leveraging existing solutions to achieve superior results. Cisco recently simplified the platform offering four integrated modules:

- **Breach protection.** Operational protection with extended detection and response (XDR) and ransomware recovery.
- **User protection.** Providing identity, endpoint, and email security.

⁷ Source: Enterprise Strategy Group Complete Survey Results, [Managed Detection and Response Trends](#), May 2023.

- **Cloud protection.** Protecting workloads and applications in the cloud.
- **Firewall protection.** Partnering with Cisco networking experience to provide a secure wall around an environment.

Figure 5. Cisco Security Cloud



Source: Cisco Systems.

Cisco’s long history in networking and security provides a strong foundation for managed security service providers, leveraging in-depth networking expertise to provide deep visibility into threats and attack paths, adding resilience and scale while reducing complexity.

Leveraging Cisco’s combined, end-to-end networking and security solutions, together with Cisco’s Talos threat intelligence services, Cisco-enabled MSPs are helping organizations of all sizes:

- Protect their infrastructure and users from all attack vectors.
- Deliver secure and efficient user experiences from anywhere.
- Provide enhanced visibility and control to IT and security teams.

The Cisco Security Cloud is architected from the ground up to operate collaboratively with other security and infrastructure tools, while offering an extensibility model, enabling integration within multivendor, multi-cloud distributed networking environments.

Conclusion

The IT industry churns out new technologies at a blistering pace, opening new opportunities for business growth and operational efficiency. The use of cloud computing has accelerated this trend. However, security teams at many organizations find it challenging to balance the desire to take advantage of new technologies while simultaneously providing a secure operating environment for employees, customers, suppliers, and partners.

Many organizations have turned to MSPs for help in managing and securing the growing IT footprint. However, the choice of provider is critical. The right managed service provider, backed by the right systems and solutions, can help organizations reduce risk and operational cost for security teams while providing continuous compliance and rapid response to threats.

Leveraging Cisco's in-depth networking solutions together with the Cisco Security Cloud, Cisco-enabled MSPs are helping organizations implement and manage robust security and networking solutions capable of protecting their infrastructure and users from attack, while delivering secure user experiences from anywhere. If you're considering or using managed security services, Enterprise Strategy Group recommends you consider an MSP powered by Cisco.

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