

CASE STUDY

Credit reporting agency protects over 400 million creditors



As a requirement for a new project with Visa, one of the oldest credit agencies in the U.S. needed to protect sensitive credit card numbers in order to be compliant in a Payment Card Industry (PCI) environment.

The data of this credit reporting agency, which gathers and maintains information on over 400 million credit holders worldwide, is highly regulated by state and federal regulations like the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACTA), and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, which requires financial institutions to safeguard sensitive data. It also must comply with the data security requirements of organizations with which it does business.

Objectives

- Secure the personally identifiable information (PII) of over 400 million consumers and roughly 180 billion credit card numbers.
- Satisfy requirements for the Visa project by moving as many elements of their environment "out of scope" from a PCI compliance perspective.
- Provide centralized oversight and administration of secure data across the entire enterprise.
- Build the framework for future analytics projects involving sensitive data.

Challenges

- The existing environment was too cost prohibitive to render PCI compliancy.
- A tokenization solution needed to be able to generate about 300 million tokens per minute; an internally developed tokenization infrastructure did not satisfy performance requirements.



Key Highlights

Industry

Credit Reporting

Challenge

Secure the PII of over 400 million consumers and enable new project initiatives involving sensitive credit card data by bringing environments out of PCI scope to satisfy security, compliance and performance requirements.

Solution

Deployed Protegrity *Privacy Protect* with vaultless tokenization for fine-grained protection of sensitive PCI and PII data.

Impact

Satisfied compliance and performance requirements while leveraging enterprise-ready security for existing and new projects.

Solution

The agency chose the Protegrity Privacy Protect solution with its patented vaultless tokenization technology because they determined that was the best way to protect sensitive credit card data and would allow the agency to take infrastructure out of the scope of PCI compliance.

Rather than encrypting data, tokenization replaces credit card numbers with random data of the same type and length. Because there is no mathematical relationship to the original numbers, tokenized data is considered replaced or removed, and therefore secure. Tokenized data is exempt from the scope of PCI compliance.

Initially, the credit agency attempted to build a tokenization infrastructure in-house, but it soon became clear that it would not satisfy performance requirements. The agency looked at products from several vendors, but only Protegrity could meet their requirements to securely generate about 300 million tokens per minute.

The Protegrity Privacy Protect solution, with its rapid tokenization, included an Application Protector and Enterprise Security Administrator for centralized oversight and administration of secure data across the entire enterprise.

Impact

Utilizing Protegrity's enterprise-ready vaultless tokenization solution, the credit agency was able to satisfy PCI compliance for the Visa project and dramatically reduced the complexity and performance impact of protecting sensitive data. It also enabled them to support future analytics projects involving sensitive data using Apache Hadoop, a framework for using a network of computers to store and process data.

It has become a huge success, and we have satisfied all the security, regulatory, and contractual requirements we have, said the agency's VP of Technology

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Business Value

- Maintaining privacy today across distributed data has become impossibly complicated.
- *Privacy Protect* is good for the agency's business because it enabled them to securely protect customer credit card data. According to the VP of Technology, the agency could not have expanded their business without Protegrity because the penalties are too strict for non-compliance to regulate.
- Protegrity's tokenization met the agency's performance goals and reduced their infrastructure from a PCI compliance perspective because tokenized data is exempt from PCI compliance.

Technical Value

- The unique architecture of Protegrity's vaultless tokenization technology provides all of the benefits of tokenization without the drawbacks and limitations of traditional tokenization; no ever-growing token lookup tables and no replication, which can negatively affect performance, and most importantly, no stored sensitive data.
- Tokenizing the data removed the sensitivity but preserved the data types and structure, which allowed the credit agency teams to create tables and views unhindered, based on the needs of the users.
- Protegrity's centralized policy, key management, auditing, and reporting enabled security officers at the agency to centrally monitor and manage all sensitive data.
- With built-in separation of duties, privileged users (e.g., system administrators) cannot view sensitive data in the clear but are still able to perform their job functions.



Why Protegrity?

For more than two decades, Protegrity, a global leader in data security, has protected the sensitive data of the largest brands in the world, including four of the world's 15 largest banks and three of the world's leading multinational companies.

Protegrity provides the only platform that lets enterprises decide which data should be classified as sensitive and allows them to control how they safeguard that data, enabling the bank to securely and compliantly leverage external cloud data analytics.

With Protegrity, this international bank has unrestricted enterprise access to all generally available data security technology, both now and in the future, including advisory services and 24 x 7 support.

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