



CASE STUDY

How Connect&Go Grew by 40% While Implementing a Strong Cybersecurity Strategy

Summary

Connect&Go developed and implemented an intense company-wide cybersecurity strategy that scaled with them as their employee headcount grew by 40% in one year.

Connect&Go's solutions involve personal and payment data from hundreds of thousands of guests at high-profile events, which makes cybersecurity a high priority in their partnerships with global brands.

About Connect&Go

A leader in radio-frequency identification for large events, Connect&Go provides revenue-generating solutions for the leisure, sports and entertainment industries. The 50-person startup's RFID technology can be customized for wristbands, cards, or even stickers. Their technology can provide guests with access control at events, cashless payments, and experiential innovations in a frictionless experience they will want to re-live again and again.



LOUIS SIRICO

Connect&Go's Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer

The Situation

In 2017, Connect&Go was poised for rapid growth. Their RFID solutions were highly successful at festivals and large-scale events, drawing the attention of global brands and events. They designed and implemented frictionless RFID experiences for event access, cashless payments, brand engagement, food and drink tickets, social media posting, and interactive points-based games. Connect&Go's solutions were used at international events including the Super Bowl, the Canadian Olympic team in Seoul, the Rogers Cup in Canada, and a month-long festival in Quebec City, QC. with over 100,000 attendees.

“We’ve been growing by leaps and bounds because we’ve had successful implementations for high-profile clients,” says Louis Sirico, Connect&Go’s Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer.



Like many directors at a startup, Louis's job involves wearing several hats. With rising interest from large potential clients, including brands like Target and events like the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, Louis knew it was time for Connect&Go to step up their game on security.

For Louis and the Connect&Go executives, data security and privacy procedures are top priorities. These issues could either hold back the growth of their business or gain them a competitive edge with proper attention.

Fears of cyber attacks and data breaches were driving many companies to raise security standards and scrutinize existing vendors. Connect&Go saw companies that failed the security audits would lose clients and future sales. However, companies that could demonstrate an exceptional security posture would leap ahead.

“ It was critical for us to know that we are secure, our clients' data is secure, and that everyone here is aware and follows a set of security policies to make sure everything is protected.

LOUIS SIRICO

Connect&Go's Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer

The Challenge

“Early on, we had some security policies in place, but it was not comprehensive. Many common-sense types of things,” Louis says. “But these policies weren’t tracked in any one place, and the documents were in different places.”

Louis says when Connect&Go started out, their new hires were not always trained right away. They received inconsistent instructions about the documents they needed to read through. If the employees did read and understand the policies, there was no mechanism for the company to record that. Ultimately, there was no easy way for Louis to accurately assess how many employees knew or followed the security policies they did have in place.

The Options

Louis considered they could collect and expand their policies, using documents and spreadsheets to track employee awareness. Or his developers could build an in-house system. Or they could hire a full-time employee or consultant to manage the cybersecurity program. But each of these options could be ineffective, cumbersome, or expensive for a startup.

Yet doing nothing would be worse. Cyber attacks are becoming more sophisticated over time, meaning the risks of a security breach are higher every year. Their policies and procedures needed to get more sophisticated too.

On top of the growing threats of cyber attacks and data breaches, more and more of their existing clients were auditing their vendors, including Connect&Go. Large prospective clients started requesting extensive security audits during the sales process.

Then Louis heard about Securicy.

The Solution

After just one phone call with Securicy's Founder and CEO Darren Gallop, Louis knew he had found the solution they needed.

"I said, that sounds like exactly what we need. I really didn't have any reservations at all," Louis says.

Securicy's streamlined process allowed Louis to quickly build a new set of customized and compliant Cyber Security Policies. The resulting document is 47 pages long, addressing everything from technical policies for developers, to email use and reporting phishing attempts.

Securicy's Virtual Consultant and Policy Builder ensured that Connect&Go met requirements for clients across the globe. For Connect&Go, that meant meeting a variety of regulations for clients in Canada, the state of California, and European countries where there are strict data security and privacy laws.



While rolling out the new policies and training employees on security procedures, Louis says the team at Securicy was professional, responsible, and responsive. Guided by the Securicy dashboard and reports, Louis and his team were able to identify risks to their business and address them systematically.

Increasing Connect&Go's security posture protects the business from malicious hackers and cyber attacks, events that can be costly to fix, cause major reputation damage and public relations problems, lead to lawsuits, and steep regulatory fines. Proving security compliance is also required for obtaining cyber insurance, a recent requirement from some of their clients.

“It's good business practice, but many of our clients are also doing security audits on us,” Louis says. “Having the policies and procedures in place allows us to state with confidence to these companies that we have security procedures for each area of competency. We can demonstrate diligence.”

One customer required Connect&Go to explain and attest to 514 in-depth questions about their data security practices, technical infrastructure, privacy policies, and employee training. For the first time, Connect&Go could easily run reports to help demonstrate the comprehensiveness of their cybersecurity practices to clients.





With Securicy, your information is very organized. When you are dealing with a lot of details, if they are not organized well you're going to have problems. Things are laid out in a simple way, the interface is simple and easy to use.

LOUIS SIRICO

The Results

Within one year, Connect&Go rapidly grew the company, launched bigger projects, and landed more high-profile clients, all while adding more than 20 new employees. During that time, they used Securicy to streamline the process of establishing robust procedures and build a company culture with a high awareness of their security responsibilities. From the executives to the developers, to sales and marketing teams.

The focus on security opened the door to new partnerships for Connect&Go. While other businesses were fleeing European countries ahead of the GDPR enforcement date in May 2018, Connect&Go was opening their first European office in Paris.

“We would not have even been in the running with some clients if we had not been able to say we have these security policies and procedures in place,” Louis says.

But for Louis, his measure of success is not just having the policies. Success is knowing employees throughout Connect&Go understand the purpose of the security procedures and follow them.

“Are people following the policies and procedures? If they are following them, that means they are aware and incorporating them into daily behaviors,” Louis says. “It’s the “doing” part that is super critical. If they are doing them, then our probability of becoming a target or having a data breach is much lower.”

The security strategy Connect&Go has now is not just a static document full of policies: they have a complete system for keeping their security procedures and employees updated. Now that they’ve established a mature cybersecurity strategy, they have methods for training every new employee, updating procedures as needed, modifying them to meet new client requirements, and responding to new regulations.

As a growing 50-person company, they need a security and compliance system that will scale up with them.

“When we grow to a 500 person company, Securitycy will still work for us,” Louis says.

By The Numbers

47
pages of comprehensive security policies and procedures

20+
new hires trained on security procedures

41
existing employees recorded as understanding and trained on policies



Additional Testimonial Quotes

“

The risk of doing nothing puts the company at high risk of potential security breaches. If you do nothing, you are much more likely to be breached.”

LOUIS SIRICO

Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer at Connect&Go

“

If we did nothing, we would not be able to get many of the clients that we have. They require these policies and procedures.”

LOUIS SIRICO

Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer at Connect&Go

“

We would have lost business. We have a client we have been working with for five years. It was only this last year that the client said they had to audit us. It's not just about getting new business, it's maintaining and keeping it.”

LOUIS SIRICO

Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer at Connect&Go

“

The learning curve was more on the security policies on how they apply to their day to day jobs. Security is not a difficult system to use.”

LOUIS SIRICO

Director of Information Technology, Information System Security Officer, and Data Protection Officer at Connect&Go

About Securicy

Securicy is a Canadian Information Security Company headquartered in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada. The company delivers information security and privacy compliance solutions. Securicy's Compliance Officer in the Cloud guides customers through creating, implementing and managing a compliant information security program.

