



Hurwitz BalancedView

The Hurwitz Trend Watch

Reprint

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## Web Application Security Takes Center Stage

This week, Perfecto Technologies announced both a new product, AppScan, and a new name for the company, Sanctum, Inc. Sanctum has historically focused on providing solutions that protect web sites from hacking — different from IDS solutions, which monitor and respond to hacking attempts. Sanctum's flagship product, AppShield, provides a dynamic shielding capability that uses security policy generated "on the fly" by the AppShield proxy to prevent inappropriate use of a web site and access to corporate resources, even if bugs and vulnerabilities are in a web site's software. AppScan complements AppShield by scanning applications for potential vulnerabilities, enabling problems to be fixed before the application goes live. Sanctum also is marketing AppScan to consultants and auditors who want to provide an application-level security audit as a component of their services.

With both AppScan and AppShield, Sanctum is charting new waters in the Internet security marketplace. Although these products do not eliminate the need for existing security measures, such as intrusion detection systems and access management solutions, they add another valuable layer of security to the enterprise web presence — security that is much needed, as recent news and statistics show. Web hacking cases handled by the FBI more than doubled last year, and many companies note that they do not report all successful hacks. By dealing with this type of security breach internally and with private consultants, many companies keep their names out of the spotlight — and off official statistics lists.

Security Strategies

## The Hurwitz Take

Hurwitz Group believes that companies are just beginning to realize how vulnerable they are to hacking by only moderately sophisticated attackers. Application security is one of the least understood areas of Internet security, and an area in which most companies are currently vulnerable. With so much information — often much more than a company intends — connected to the Internet through a company's web transaction applications, the stakes are increasing in terms of financial risk and legal liability. And for companies with real e-Business strategies, simple web site vandalism and down time, not to mention stolen client or corporate information, can translate into real impacts on brand and customer loyalty.

By focusing specifically on the threats that web applications pose, Sanctum is addressing a key problem in e-Business. Companies cannot afford to wait to implement new web-based functionality, nor can they afford to expose corporate assets to unnecessary risk. Sanctum's products provide a complementary approach: AppScan helps prevent the introduction of vulnerabilities, and AppShield provides policy that protects application — in-house developed or third party — during use. A key issue for Sanctum will be keeping AppScan in the hands of legitimate users and out of the hands of those with less savory reasons for wanting to know a site's vulnerabilities. Sanctum is using proprietary technology that it claims prevents misuse, but it won't discuss the methodology. The executives seem to understand the gravity of the potential threat that the product could create.

The relaunch under the name Sanctum should hopefully help the company increase its visibility — the name Sanctum is intended to reflect what the products provide. Although the former Perfecto had loyalty among its customer base and a strong technical team backing it, it had not yet achieved the market awareness it needed. With a solid new product, a strong name, and new programs planned, Hurwitz Group expects the company to take off in the near term.

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*Web Application Security Takes Center Stage*  
is a reprint from the June 22, 2000 edition of *The Hurwitz Trend Watch*,  
written for the Hurwitz BalancedView Security Strategies Knowledge Center.

Published by: Hurwitz Group, Inc.  
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