

Customer Reference: Emerging Markets Payments Group

PCI DSS Compliance at Leading Financial Services Provider
Shell Control Box Case Study



EMP

EMERGING MARKETS PAYMENTS

”Shell Control Box gave us comprehensive control and monitoring mechanisms, while being completely transparent for our vendors. In addition, we get great support from BalaBit’s friendly and helpful team.“ - Mr. Mohammad Ashkaibi, IT Security Engineer, Emerging Markets Payments.

The **Emerging Markets Payments (EMP)** Group was established to deliver world-class electronic payments services to banks, retailers, governments and consumer finance institutions across the Middle East and Africa. EMP is committed to remaining at the forefront of this revolution by creating a payments platform that drives card penetration and other payment types in these emerging markets. EMP is the leading merchant acquirer, with over 14,000 merchants on its network. The company is headquartered in South Africa and has offices in Jordan, Egypt and Nigeria.

The Challenge

The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) is mandatory for EMP. Among others, PCI DSS requires strong control over and deep visibility of third-party access. EMP also works with third-party IT vendors – among others, they operate EMP’s Card Management System and provide hosting services for the Online Payment Gateway. Consequently, EMP needed to find a solution to control the remote access of these vendors. Though they had Cisco VPN in use, this solution couldn’t completely fulfill this requirement: “Cisco VPN is a good and secure solution with two-factor authentication but it doesn’t provide sufficient monitoring capability in respect to what the vendor is exactly doing.” – adds Mr. Mohammad Ashkaibi, IT Security Engineer of EMP.

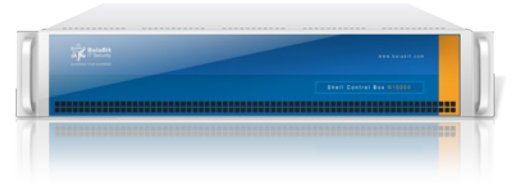
EMP specified comprehensive technical expectations against a possible solution – they required complete audit trails on vendors’ working sessions and they wanted to enforce strict security measures on these connections. These security measures included:

- limiting accessible target servers,
- enforcing strong authentication,
- recording remote sessions,
- time policy-based access and
- long-term archiving of audit trails.

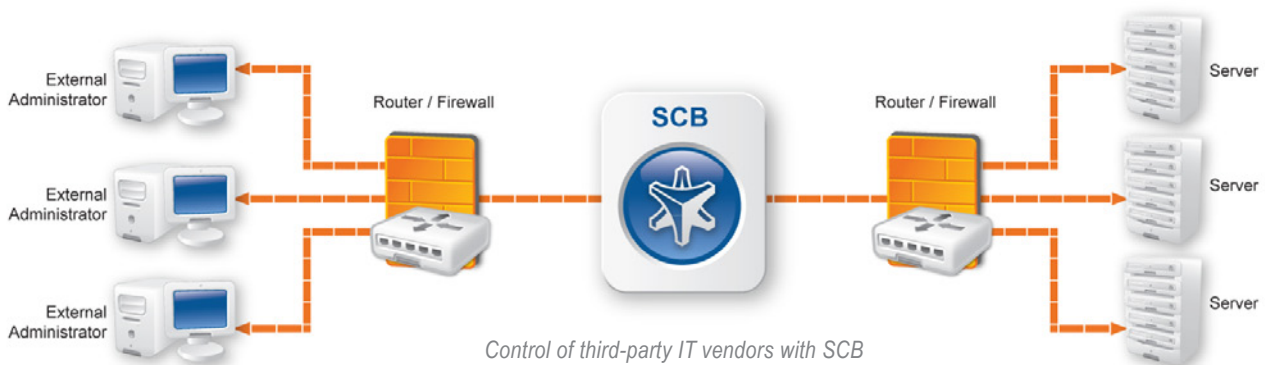
The Solution

EMP experts started to search for a secure remote access solution. "Actually, BalaBit's Shell Control Box, Dell Quest and SecureLink were considered, but Quest was very expensive and had no VMware appliance option, whilst SecureLink had high recurring costs and no support for two-factor authentication. In contrast, BalaBit was the most flexible vendor to conduct a Proof of Concept with, which was an extremely important starting point to us. During the PoC, we discovered the powerful control functions of SCB, while receiving a solid support to configure the device. Furthermore BalaBit offered the most competitive price among the suppliers." – explains Mr. Ashkaibi.

The PoC and testing phase took two months and finally, EMP decided to purchase the Shell Control Box. They purchased the virtual appliance version of SCB, because the VMware-based appliance gave them greater flexibility in deployment. The implementation of the product was fast - the transition from testing to production took only 3-4 days.



Now SCB is in production environment and remote administrators are transparently going through it to reach the core application servers. SCB controls and monitors all SSH and Citrix ICA sessions initiated by the vendors. SSH connections are used for managing UNIX servers whilst Citrix (XenApp) environment is used to support remote database management.



Benefits

SCB provided all the required benefits for EMP. These include:

- Granular controls over remote accesses (e.g., channels)
- Secure recording of sessions
- Fast search in recorded sessions and
- Comprehensive reporting.

"By using BalaBit SCB we can better monitor our vendors' actions, as opposed to digging into OS and application logs done previously. In addition, we have more granular control options as we can allow the required access but restrict it to a preferred level." – concludes Mr. Ashkaibi.

Future Plans

As for the future, EMP plans to utilize further SCB benefits, such as:

- The ability to detect credit card content and intervene if necessary
- The flexible authentication options
- The key/certificate-based authentication for SSH sessions (two-factor authentication).

In addition, EMP intends to extend the same control and monitoring functions to sessions conducted by EMP's internal administrators as well. The company wants to control internal access not just to core application servers but infrastructure servers as well.



About BalaBit

BalaBit IT Security is an innovative information security company, a global leader in the development of privileged activity monitoring, trusted logging and proxy-based gateway technologies to help protect customers against internal and external threats and meet security and compliance regulations. BalaBit is also known as "the logging company", based on the company's flagship product, the open source log server application, which is used by more than 850 000 companies worldwide and became the globally acknowledged de-facto industry standard.

BalaBit, the fastest-growing IT Security company in the Central European region according to Deloitte Technology Fast 50 (2012) list, has local offices in France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and in the USA, and cooperates with partners worldwide. Our R&D and global support centers are located in Hungary, Europe.

More information: www.balabit.com



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