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How Varonis Gives a U.S. College Google Drive Visibility

> " Varonis makes remediation easier. It pinpoints the exact server, the exact file, and tells me what's going on. It saves me an immeasurable amount of time.

About this case study:

Our customer is a college in the United States. We have happily accommodated their request for anonymity.

Challenges

- Gaining visibility into student activity in the cloud

- Protecting the school's reputation

- Minimizing the risk of threats such as ransomware

Solution

Varonis Data Security Platform:

- **DatAdvantage** provides complete visibility and control over your critical data and IT infrastructure

- **DatAdvantage Cloud** gives complete visibility into cloud service app activity

- **Data Classification Engine** finds and classifies sensitive data automatically

- **Data Classification Cloud** finds and classifies sensitive data across cloud apps

- **DatAlert** monitors critical systems and detects abnormal behavior

- **Edge** detects and helps prevent data exfiltration

Results

- Stopped a student who was sharing copyrighted material via the school's Google Drive

- Limited open access and reduced overexposed data

- Proactive risk mitigation gives peace of mind

Challenges

Gaining visibility into Google Drive activity

Do you have visibility into your company's cloud activity? One American college (anonymous by request) didn't until an emergency prompted fast action.

The college's IT specialist says:

> **"During a Data Risk Assessment, Varonis spotted unusual geolocation activity on a user's Google Drive."**

A crime was being committed. At this college, every new applicant received his or her own Google Drive. But one student was using Google Drive to distribute copyrighted material.

The college's IT team needed to figure out who was responsible and put a stop to the activity. But with tens of thousands of students and no visibility into user activity, they had no way of finding the proverbial "needle in a haystack."

> **"We had a syslog (system log) server that was pulling the data from the servers we wanted, but there was no way to sift through it."**

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With the school's reputation at stake, the IT team needed a way to quickly get a handle on their cloud environment. To solve the issue, they needed Varonis.

> "We needed to limit exposure to the school, lock down file shares, find out who was over-privileged, and more than anything, see what was going on in Google Drive."

"During a Data Risk Assessment, Varonis spotted unusual geolocation activity on a user's Google Drive."

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Solution

A solid data security foundation

Years before the incident, the college engaged Varonis and purchased a subscription for **DatAdvantage**. This robust data audit and protection software enables the IT team to lock down their on-prem environment and enforce least privilege across file shares and Active Directory.

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> **"Once I got behind the wheel and started exploring Varonis, I began to appreciate how much it could do for us. Varonis clearly showed us the magnitude of the issues, gave us direction to our remediation efforts, and validated at several points that our network was very secure."**

The college also added **DatAlert**, which detects abnormal behavior across critical systems, and **Edge**, which analyzes perimeter devices (DNS, VPN, etc.) to detect attacks.

Having the ability to see what's at risk, drill down into alerts, and take proactive steps to fix issues has augmented the IT team's ability to protect data and reduce the blast radius of potential attacks.

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> **"Before Varonis, I was running multiple reports and felt like I was wasting time digging through those reports to extrapolate the information I needed. Now, I get alerts when something needs my immediate attention. I have so much more context, which makes investigations and threat hunting more efficient."**

Extending data protection to the cloud

As a next step, the school needed visibility and advanced data protection in Google Drive. **DatAdvantage Cloud** gives them the ability to visualize excessive external sharing, uncover potential misuse that could lead to reputational damage, and accelerate cross-cloud investigations.

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> **"Our DatAdvantage Cloud proof of concept shone a light on our current risk. It confirmed what we suspected, and revealed other issues we didn't know about. We finally had visibility into tens of thousands of accounts and we were able to zero-in and decrease our overall exposure."**

During the proof of concept, Varonis identified unusual geolocation activity from the user who was pirating television shows and movies. The IT team quickly put a stop to their activity.

The college also added **Data Classification Cloud** to its cybersecurity lineup. Data Classification Cloud helps the IT security team by automatically identifying sensitive data in their Google Drive. The IT team is now able to easily find and lock down exposed data, and monitor and control data access in Google Drive.

> **"Varonis makes remediation easier. It pinpoints the exact server, the exact file, and tells me what's going on. It saves me an immeasurable amount of time."**

> **"Now, I get alerts when something needs my immediate attention. I have so much more context, which makes investigations and threat hunting more efficient."**

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Results

The right visibility and resources to reduce risk

Over the years that this college has had Varonis in place, they've used the software to dramatically decrease their exposure. They've rooted out Google Drive issues — from misuse, like the student sharing copyrighted material, to PII that was accidentally saved to the cloud.

> **"The most important thing Varonis does is uncover issues we didn't know about and offer fixes."**

At a time when cyber insurance costs are rising, the IT specialist says that Varonis helps them show their provider that the college is prepared to defend against cyberattacks.

> **"With requirements from ransomware insurance, there are criteria, such as multi-factor authentication and other measures, that must be in place — and that's expensive. Having the complete suite of Varonis products in place fills gaps and provides detailed information if we are audited by the insurance company. I can quickly generate reports to validate products are functioning as requested and provide a POC that Varonis will detect, quarantine, and shut down the source of the ransomware. It demonstrates we are going above and beyond."**

The IT specialist says that they rest easier at night, knowing that the college has taken steps to lock down student data and prevent those worst-case scenarios proactively.

> **"In the last couple of years, I know of two other schools that were exploited by ransomware. If it happened to us, Varonis would detect the attack and shut it down. Then I would immediately go to the Varonis Incident Response team. We would investigate it together, quickly resolve the issue, and it would be back to business as usual. Having that confidence makes me feel great."**

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Protect your most critical data, no matter where it lives.

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