Closing the Skills Gap: How Cobalt Assesses and Develops Cyber Talent

EXPERIENCED TESTERS ON SHORT NOTICE

The Cobalt team started with a straightforward challenge — improving the timeliness of security testing without sacrificing quality. To do this, the team connects customers with its global community of testers based on skill set, experience and availability. The results are engagements kicking off in as little as 24 hours with well vetted testers. Cobalt's approach has been incredibly well received. "We have hundreds of pen testers in our community and the numbers of yearly tests we conduct is doubling year over year," said Caroline.

Cobalt has numerous applicants seeking to join the community, and must sift through these requests to identify experienced candidates. According to Wong, "Cobalt receives a huge number of inbound pen tester applications each month, and I'd estimate we only accept about 3 to 4% of the inbound applicant number. It's a rigorous trust-building process."

Cobalt needed a way to quickly scale their recruitment process with a real-world automated assessment they could trust.

ACCELERATING ASSESSMENTS

CMD+CTRL Cyber Ranges help organizations better assess and grow security competency. To maintain its "high bar" for quality, Cobalt requires real world environments to quickly assess the testing capabilities and communication skills of applicants. These assessments must keep pace in three key areas:

Volume
As applications continue to grow, more processing effort is required

Screening
Early stage processing of applicants is critical and becomes increasingly challenging with volume

Quality
Accurately determining the practical skills of screened applicants is critical

In particular, the number of applicants drove the need for assessments to be performed on-demand, spanning multiple global regions, and specific skill sets.

In order to adopt the right assessment offering, Cobalt evaluated various technologies, from traditional multiple choice quizzes to newer educational offerings like "Find the Fix" products. After much investigation, the choice was clear — CMD+CTRL Cyber Ranges provided the right technology, delivery model, and technical capabilities to address Cobalt's needs. The on-demand availability, progressively difficult ranges, varied technology stacks, real-time reporting capabilities, and the industry's most accurate approach to assessing skills provided a perfect fit for Cobalt. Ultimately, the Cobalt team required a turnkey, automated solution that could clearly identify skilled applicants, and only CMD+CTRL could provide it.

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Caroline Wong, Chief Strategy Officer, Cobalt

RAPID GROWTH AND REAL RESULTS

In the first year, the number of applicant tests performed doubled and is on track to double again in 2020. The use of CMD+CTRL Cyber Ranges resulted in several immediately notable benefits:

On-Demand
daily evaluations due to the continuously growing volume of applicants

50% Increase
in planned evaluations to keep pace with Cobalt's business momentum

Reduced Costs
on international background checks for those not passing minimum score results during Cyber Range evaluations

The CMD+CTRL Cyber Ranges turned an effort-intensive manual recruitment process into a streamlined, automated vetting system that has kept pace as Cobalt's applicant pool has grown exponentially. The CMD+CTRL Cyber Ranges allow anyone to quickly and accurately baseline and develop software security skills in a real-world environment with ease. It is an invaluable platform for companies looking to recruit, train and advance the skills of builders, operators and defenders within organizations.

Want a faster, more accurate and engaging way to build and identify highly demanded skills?

Visit www.cmdnctrlsecurity.com.

ABOUT COBALT.IO

Cobalt provides a Pentest as a Service (PtaaS) platform that is modernizing penetration testing. With a globally distributed team and offices in San Francisco, Boston and Berlin, Cobalt is transforming pentesting by providing streamlined processes, developer integrations, and on-demand pentesters who have undergone rigorous vetting. With Cobalt, customers can build their pentest program in as little as five minutes and start a pentest in 24 hours.

The Cobalt vision for the future is clear to CEO Jacob Hansen: "The pentesting industry doesn't need another cool tool, it needs people and process innovation. That is why we created a way to engage the best cybersecurity talent, via our pentest management platform, allowing customers to move from a static pentest to platform-driven pentest programs. Cobalt ultimately drives better security and improves return on investment for each customer."

ABOUT CMD+CTRL SECURITY

CMD+CTRL Security is a pioneer in software security training. For over two decades, organizations of all sizes, from mid-sized to Global 100 companies, have relied on our training solutions to transform their software security. Our role-based modules, skill labs, and hands-on cyber ranges are designed to build skills that stick. Visit cmdnctrlsecurity.com to learn how we can help you launch a best-in-class training program.