ARMIS®

Fast-Growing Georgia County Finds a Better Way to Discover Devices and Secure the Network

Armis becomes an indispensable tool for boosting the county's security posture.
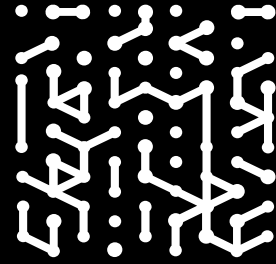
Henry County, Georgia

Industry
Local government

IT Environment
About 1,800 full-time employees and a network that connects all departments of the county government.

The Henry County IT department in the Atlanta area was working overtime to stay on top of security updates and patches for the many assets on their network. With a rapidly growing citizen population, the county knew they needed to invest in their infrastructure to keep up.

Armis provided the IT team with an easy way to manage software updates, greatly reducing the burden on their team. Armis's centralized dashboard has expanded visibility and has provided detailed insights into devices for the team—something that was not possible before. The result? Everyone feels better protected and is less worried about any future security incidents.

About thirty miles south of Atlanta, Henry County is one of the fastest growing counties in the country. From a population of about 40,000 in the 1990s, Henry County has since grown to a population of approximately 250,000. Henry County's Technology Services Department is focused on ensuring the network infrastructure runs smoothly and functions properly in a safe and secure way for the 1,800 employees and the county's residents. They provide technology and network services for the county sheriff, the county courts, and the department of transportation, which are all on the same network.

"Henry County is a wonderful place to live, and it seems like everyone wants to come here," said Melissa Robinson, the Henry County's Public Information Director. She noted that, because of the county's rapid population growth, investments in infrastructure are necessary to keep things running well. "Tech Services is instrumental in every department of the organization and necessary for the proper functioning of the county," she said. "It's fair to say that county management is very supportive of IT."

CIO Jamie Pownall meets weekly with the county manager to share reports and discuss priorities and concerns. Pownall said he is grateful and encouraged with the level of funding and support provided by leadership to the department.

"County management has been very supportive of initiatives, products and and equipment that we've requested in order to provide the best technology service to our stakeholders ," he said.

Keeping up with updates is now easier

"If things aren't patched, that's when you have problems," explained Pownall, stressing the need to stay on top of the latest security updates. In the past, checking in on each device, operating system, and application software individually was "tedious and time-consuming," Pownall pointed out. He continued to say that his team even worked nights and weekends to protect their network.

"There have been a lot of times when we've spent a lot of effort on things like that."

A few years ago, the team experienced a cyber incident, which was a turning point, showing them they needed to boost their security posture. The team learned about Armis through their

Challenges

- Seeing what devices are on the network

- Staying on top of patches and updates

- Boosting overall security posture

reseller and started on a month-long proof of value (PoV), but the value was proven "within a week." Pownall recalled, "As soon as it kicked off and started recognizing potential issues, we figured out pretty quickly that it does exactly what it's supposed to do. It will find everything that's on your network and tell you if it's up to date or not and whether there is a problem that needs to be addressed." Pownall said it is paramount to ensure the future safety and security of all systems.

"When it comes to whether somebody gets into our network or not, we have to be right 100% of the time, and the intruder only has to be right once. Armis has helped us tremendously with identifying devices that may be out of date for software or patches."

One pane to see what you need to see

During the PoV, the team integrated Armis with several other major security platforms. Pownall said he appreciates how the centralized dashboard gives his team a fast and effective way of knowing when something is plugged in to the system.

"We've had issues in the past where somebody would bring in a device from home that they shouldn't connect. Now with Armis, as soon as something like that happens, it gives us immediate notification," he said. "It's pretty amazing how it can take all the different inputs and combine everything to give you one pane to see what you need to see."

Since the Armis PoV, there have been a few surprises that came up along the way. Pownall said they had quite a few cell phones trying to connect to the network, but because of some "unique" items showing up on Wi-Fi, they got blocked.

Armis Results

- Makes it easy to see which devices need patches

- Blocks problematic devices from accessing the network

- Prevents future security incidents

- Saves substantial time and effort
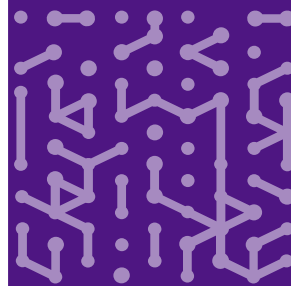
"It was pretty surprising what Armis would show and what it would let you know in terms of what was trying to connect to your network," he said. "And we're still finding things. Occasionally, we change some of the settings on Armis, and, as we do that, we find new things, and so we can deal with those items as we discover them. It's a very different process compared to the laborious way the team handled the updates prior to Armis. As time goes on, the team is finding even more ways to use Armis. "We recently signed a contract to swap out some new printers. The vendor sent us a list of the printers that were due to be exchanged and their locations. However, several printers were not in the original locations but we were able to utilize Armis to find the correct locations for those particular machines. That is a huge timesaver for staff," said Pownall.

A growing IT team to support a growing county

As a testament to the success of the Armis deployment, Henry County has even hired a new full-time employee to focus mainly on Armis. With a supportive county manager, a growing team, and tools that help get the job done, Pownall is pleased with how things are going so far and plans, in the near future, to release a monthly security status report that will include Armis data to the county manager and other administrators.

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Jamie Pownall
CIO, Henry County

ARMIS®

Armis is the leading unified asset intelligence and security platform designed to address the new threat landscape that connected devices create.

Our customers trust our real-time and continuous protection to see with full context all managed, unmanaged, and IoT devices, including medical devices (IoMT), operational technology (OT) and industrial control systems (ICS).

Armis provides passive and unparalleled cybersecurity asset management, risk management, and automated enforcement.

Armis is a privately held company and headquartered in California.

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