OVAL Board Meeting (2/26/2013)

Attendees

Dave Waltermire - NIST
Eric Walker - IBM Corp.
Kent Landfield - McAfee Inc.
Tim Keanini – nCircle Network Security, Inc
Adam Montville – Tripwire, Inc.
Scott Armstrong – Symantec Corporation
Morey Haber – eEye Digital Security
Chandrashekhar B – SecPod Technologies
Steven Piliero – Unified Compliance
Blake Frantz - Center for Internet Security

Jon Baker - MITRE
Matt Hansbury - MITRE
Dan Haynes - MITRE
Luis Nunez - MITRE

Meeting Summary

Introduction

During the RSA Conference in San Francisco, the OVAL Board held an informal meeting at the San Francisco Marriott Marquis. The purpose of the meeting was to continue our ongoing conversations about the possibility of transferring OVAL to a formal standards body, specifically engaging the OVAL Board in person where possible.

With no formal agenda, Matt Hansbury started by briefly recapping the history of the Language and where we find ourselves today, focusing on the maturity of the Language and that over the years the community has taken a more active development role. From there, the floor was opened to the Board members thoughts and comments.

Discussion Points

The following topics were discussed during the meeting:

- There was some concern that the conversations have been focused on the transfer of the OVAL Language only, as opposed to also considering the OVAL Interpreter and the OVAL Repository.
- Some folks believed that it is important to begin socializing the idea of OVAL to the IETF group as soon as possible.
    - There was general agreement that this was important.
    - It was also mentioned that we need to better socialize the IETF to the OVAL Community

- One suggestion was that the team could create an Informational Draft for the IETF that would explain the value and purpose of OVAL. This could begin the socialization of OVAL within the IETF.
- The MITRE team agreed to create this draft. (Note: This draft would not contain any official transfer, but rather a simple description of OVAL)
- It was asked whether risks exist as we move forward with this process.
  - The Open Automated Compliance Expert Markup Language (O-ACEML) effort was mentioned as one possible risk, as it could be viewed as a competing effort with OVAL.
  - It was also mentioned that additional international groups were also working on competing efforts as well.
- NIST would like to be able to move SCAP over to an international standards body. This is more easily facilitated with OVAL also moving to a formal standards body.
- OVAL validation and Specification certification was also mentioned. It was suggested that we should consider adding this to the standards body discussion.
- There was some discussion around whether the OVAL Board as it is today would persist past any transfer of OVAL to a standards body.
  - The general consensus here was that the Board as is it today could continue to exist for as long as it was deemed necessary.
  - Additionally, it was suggested that the Board could evolve into something like a governance body, in the same way that groups like the Trusted Computing Group (TCG) and if-map.org do.
  - It was also recognized that some resources need to exist that could promote the usage of OVAL, even after a formal standards body transfer.
- On the topic of the OVAL Interpreter, a few deficiencies (lack of unit tests, additional build automation, etc.) were pointed out that, if filled, would facilitate the ability to transfer the OVAL Interpreter and would allow for more groups to contribute to the project.
- Additionally, it was mentioned that the IETF SACM group is also working on the idea of standardizing around content repositories. The OVAL Repository could also be involved in these discussions.
  - It was mentioned that GitHub could be a way to make OVAL content available as well.

Action Items
- MITRE team to draft an Informational Draft for the IETF as a way to introduce OVAL to the international community.