# A Russian ransom note can't take the merry out of Christmas

**SoftwareSecured**

Develop your software with intelligent security

**ART**STATION
Showcase- Discover- Connect

# CASE STUDY

## Executive Summary

ArtStation connects artists from all over the world and gives them a venue to show off their images, videos, and 3D models. With an Alexa.com ranking of 2,531 in the US and several million visitors every month, ArtStation began to draw the attention of hackers, who found several vulnerabilities in artstation.com and attempted to extract a large ransom.

**Here's what Software Secured did to help ArtStation get a grip on the situation:**

E
- Identified all the existing vulnerabilities in the application.
- Advised ArtStation on a strategy to neutralize the risk posed by the hackers.
- Provided a solution to continuously test the development team deliverables for security issues.

Leonard Teo, CEO and Lead Developer of ArtStation, says, "Software Secured gives us confidence, knowing that a team of security experts has our back so that we can focus on signing up outstanding artists."

**Software**Secured
Develop your software with intelligent security

## The Challenges for ArtStation

The ArtStation software development team members are coding experts. However, they aren't experienced at finding vulnerabilities in their applications and the underlying networks, which left them open to data breaches and cyberattacks. They also weren't able to properly assess the potential impact that these vulnerabilities could have on their business from a financial and reputational standpoint.

The ArtStation team was taking proactive steps to find a partner who could help integrate security into the software development lifecycle while they focused on improving the bottom line.

Unfortunately, before ArtStation could bring in a security expert, the company received a ransom demand. The attackers required payment in exchange for information about a few artstation.com security flaws that they had uncovered. To make matters worse, ArtStation received the demand ArtStation during the Christmas break, when most of the developers where on holidays.

ArtStation wanted to get out of the situation with minimal or no damage and put the necessary processes in place to keep it from happening again.

## The Solution from Software Secured

Software Secured helped ArtStation neutralize the threat from the hackers and avoid any blow to its reputation, and the developers were able to enjoy the rest of their holiday. Afterward, Software Secured performed a full high-assurance security assessment to uncover all the existing vulnerabilities in the application, thus preventing the hackers from making any other ransom demands.

Based on the baseline assessment results, ArtStation subscribed to the managed web application security services offered by Software Secured, which provides continuous security testing for new functionality. ArtStation management now has the peace of mind that the software team's deliverables are constantly and automatically checked for security issues. This small startup is relieve to have one less thing to worry about.

SoftwareSecured
Develop your software with intelligent security

# The Results

The ArtStation team was thrilled and surprised with the quality of work that Software Secured provided and with the meticulously detailed security report in particular. As CEO Leonard Teo observes, "Software Secured isn't just running tools and scripts — they are intelligently attacking our website."

For ArtStation, there's no question about the benefits of working with Software Secured. "Price is a big concern for us since we are bootstrapped company," says Teo. "The value of peace of mind makes it a no-brainer investment." Instead of hiring a team of security experts, ArtStation now has an extension of its own team at a fraction of the price. Software Secured is there to answer their security questions and to ensure that their next release is free of vulnerabilities.

"Software Secured is a pleasure to work with. They've provided ArtStation with top notch security services. We're very happy with the quality of the work, the reporting and how intelligently they test our systems."

leonard Teo

**Software**Secured

Develop your software with intelligent security

Software Secured helps small to medium-sized technology companies that don't have dedicated application security teams.

Our researchers and engineers become your outsourced security testers. We work hands-on with your application and our security testing platform, which combines proprietary and commercial tools.

Protect your business and users from cyber-attacks, add business value, and stay compliant with our intelligent application security solutions.

255 Centrum Blvd. Ottawa, Ontario K1E 3W3 Canada

Phone : +1 (800) 611 5741
Fax:      +1 (800) 611 5741

info@softwaresecured.com
www.softwaresecured.com

**Software**Secured

Develop your software with intelligent security