

LUKE@LUKEWMORRIS.COM



IT'S NOT A QUESTION OF WANT,
IT'S SIMPLY A MATTER OF
NEED. WHEREVER YOU LOOK,
THEY ARE ALL AROUND YOU. THE
RIGHT ONES ARE CRUCIAL. EACH
WILL HAVE **SOME** EFFECT. YOU
CAN'T AFFORD NOT TO MAKE
THEM COUNT. WHERE ARE YOU
GOING TO GET YOUR **WORDS?**

PORTFOLIO

IT Security Article

<https://www.quostar.com/blog/siem-solutions-guide/>

SIEM Solutions Guide: What is SIEM and why is it an essential investment for all businesses?

According to a recent UK government survey, eight out of ten businesses say that cyber-security is a high priority for their senior management boards. The huge rise in working from home this year has further increased security concerns for business leaders and IT departments will need to prioritise the detection and management of security incidents in 2021 to stay ahead of the curve.

That's no simple task with the increasingly complex IT environments and constantly evolving cyber-security landscape. With new threats appearing every day, IT Managers need to build an effective stack of cyber-security tools to help them keep their infrastructure as secure as possible. In this article, we will explore the role of SIEM solutions within that toolset.

What is SIEM?

A Security Information and Event Management (SIEM) solution aggregates and analyses activity from existing resources across your IT infrastructure. It collects security data from devices on your network and applies analytics to discover trends, detect threats, and enable your organisation to investigate any alerts.

A SIEM solution is put in place to protect your IT estate from external attacks. It can be configured to automatically isolate and deal with many detected threats, but it also needs to be closely monitored by skilled engineers to handle more sophisticated attacks and ensure nothing is missed.

Why SIEM solutions are essential for professional service businesses

Gartner first coined the term SIEM in 2005 when Mark Nicolett and Amrit Williams proposed combining Security Information Management (SIM) and Security Event Management (SEM) to create a new, all-encompassing, security information system.

Since then, the technology has been steadily evolving and improving and has become ever more important as cyber-attacks have increased across the world. A UK government report from earlier this year found that [46% of all businesses suffered cyber-security breaches or attacks in the previous 12 months](#). And this figure rose to 68% for medium-sized businesses.

A 2020 global IBM security report found that the average cost of a data breach, including lost business due to increased customer turnover, lost revenue due to system downtime, increased cost of acquiring new business due to diminished reputation, and remedial work to resolve the data breach was £2.87 million. This is in no small part down to an average time of [280 days to identify and contain a breach](#). The report also found that businesses with fully deployed security automation in the form of a SIEM solution saved an average of £2.6 million when dealing with a data breach compared to those with no security automation.

Prevention is always better than cure for any part of your IT infrastructure, and when there is such potential to incur significant costs, it makes sense to invest upfront in protecting your business.

What are the main benefits of a SIEM solution?

1. Data aggregation and normalisation

The larger and more complex your [IT infrastructure](#) becomes, the more difficult it is to keep track of every single link between devices and applications across your network. This can lead to opportunities for hackers to exploit and access your systems unbeknownst to you until they choose to launch their attack. SIEM solutions gather security event information from the entire network at a central point, uncovering any potential vulnerabilities or malicious activities. This data is then normalised or reformatted as required by your organisation so that it can be easily understood by your staff and dealt with swiftly and efficiently.

2. Threat detecting and security alerting

SIEM solutions can connect your security team to multiple threat intelligence feeds so that they are always up to date on the latest threats to businesses like yours. Coupled with the aggregation and normalisation of the data across your network, SIEM solutions perform real-time analysis of potential threats then log alerts for your incident management team to investigate and resolve as quickly as possible.

3. Regulation compliance

Virtually every business in every industry requires the fulfilment of at least some regulatory mandates such as [GDPR](#) and [ISO 27001](#). This is even more true for professional services businesses and failing to meet these can result in loss of sales or expensive lawsuits.

Many SIEM solutions provide out-of-the-box report templates for most compliance mandates and often much of this information can be collated automatically to save your security team time and resources.

4. Increased efficiency

Incident handling is streamlined by the data across your network being collated in one place, allowing security threats to be dealt with as quickly as possible. As well as having a direct impact on your security team, this can lead to a wider reduction in incidents across your IT department as potential attacks are identified and dealt with before they can create incidents for other teams to deal with.

5. Customer attraction and retention

By showing customers and prospects that you have a fully functioning SIEM solution, you can give them confidence that their data will be safe with your organisation, and the service you provide them will not be threatened by a cyber-attack. Conversely, if your business is the victim of a cyber-attack and is unable to deal with it efficiently and effectively, it may take years for your reputation to recover to previous levels. In the short term, this can result in the loss of existing customers and, in the long term, a significant increase in the cost of acquiring new business.

How to choose the right SIEM solution for your business

Defining your requirements

As with any IT project, you can't do anything until you are 100% clear on your requirements. For SIEM solutions, these fall into two distinct categories:

1. Collection, storage and compliance:

- What data sources do you need to log, and do you need to collect all data or a subset?
- How long do you need to store the data for?
- What compliance regulations do you need to meet?

2. Analysis, reporting and personnel:

- How will you use your data once collected?
- What sort of reports do you need, and do you need the ability to customise them?
- Do you have existing expert staff in-house who can manage the solution, or will you need external assistance?

Assessing available solutions

SIEM solutions can be purchased as an appliance or an application. And they can be implemented and managed entirely by your own team or purchased as a service from an outsourcing provider who can do the implementation for you and provide ongoing management if required. Once you have defined your requirements, you can identify the products which best match and request demonstrations. At QuoStar we have a team of security experts who can assist you in identifying the most suitable SIEM features for your organisation and arrange a live demonstration to help you make the best choice.

Deployment

You need to understand how the solution will be deployed within your organisation before you make your final decision. It's critical that you are confident in the provider as, even if you are doing the implementation yourself, you will require their expertise for the more technical aspects. If you decide to engage a partner to deploy the solution for you, you need to be comfortable that they have a full understanding of your network and requirements, as well as the SIEM product itself.

Ongoing SIEM management

Any SIEM solution is only as good as its administrators. You need to have a plan in place from the start in terms of who will manage it on a day to day basis. Both in terms of the administration of the solution and the management of incidents created by the SIEM tools.

What else do you need to know about SIEM solutions?

The most important thing to understand is that the successful implementation of a suitable SIEM solution is not the end of the journey. It is only the beginning. The landscape is constantly evolving – both within your network and externally in terms of the cyber-threats you face. If you are not regularly reviewing your SIEM tools and features, you run the risk of being compromised by a new form of attack.

At QuoStar, our security experts are constantly reviewing the latest trends and assessing these against our clients' existing setups to ensure everyone is fully protected.

We can provide a [fully outsourced Security Operations Centre \(SOC\) incorporating SIEM](#) and any other tools which are critical to the security of your IT network, allowing you to focus on other key projects safe in the knowledge your infrastructure will not be compromised by any malicious external threats.

SEO Blog Post

<https://www.counterpoint.co.uk/blogs/blogs/cubase-for-schools-how-to-make-music-remotely-and-in-the-classroom>

Cubase for Schools: How to Make Music Remotely and in the Classroom



Working from home is becoming more and more common. Whilst this can bring many benefits, it also creates challenges, such as how to access all the software that you use in your office or classroom. Thankfully, when it comes to creating music remotely, the Steinberg eLicenser for Cubase makes this transition much easier.

Cubase for Schools

Cubase is a fantastic product for teaching music-making and is available at discounted educational prices.

Steinberg products are known as the industry stand for music and audio production. By teaching your students with these you are giving them invaluable experience of the tools they will be using professionally in the future.

Whether your students want to work in a recording studio, agency, film studio, radio station or concert hall, learning with Cubase will give them a decisive head start and set them up for success.

But, as you would expect for professional software like this, licensing is very strict, meaning that it isn't straightforward to use it in different locations outside of the classroom.

Fortunately, with the latest technology, you can give your staff secure, easy access to Cubase no matter where they are in the world.

What is an eLicenser?

Cubase requires a USB dongle to access all the fully licensed professional functionality. This is fine when you're using it on one computer, but becomes a problem when you are regularly switching locations and/or it needs to be accessed by different users. Dongles can easily be lost when they are constantly being transported and passed around. And there's always the chance of one being accidentally left on a device in an office or classroom and stolen.

That's where the Cubase eLicenser comes in.

Using the latest hardware and software technology, Counterpoint can configure Cubase so that all your licenses are held centrally and securely, and can easily be accessed by users either in the classroom or working remotely.

This also ensures that you only pay for the licenses you need, as you can easily track the number available on your server.

Gone are the days of having to carry around extra bits of hardware to enable you to use your music software. Now all you need is a computer and an internet connection.

Cubase via Server

In order to take advantage of the flexibility that the eLicenser offers, you need to purchase hardware for your server cabinet which allows you to plug in your USB dongles and share the licenses via your network.

The dongleserver Pro is suitable for most educational institutions, providing secure and reliable access to your licenses.

However, larger organisations may prefer the dongleserver ProMax which offers additional reliability and redundancy with two built-in power supplies and two network connections. Additionally, the parameters, passwords and certificates are automatically backed up to an integrated SD card, and the device is equipped with a multi-segment status and fault display for information at a glance.

Both devices can be rack-mounted for use in an IT server room, or free-standing as required.

Whichever option you choose, your USB dongles always remain securely locked away within the dongleserver. Once it has been installed and the software has been configured on the server, a user can establish a connection to a certain dongle through a control panel on their computer, and then they can use Cubase locally. Once they have finished using the software, the connection to the dongle is deactivated and the license is freed up for another user.

If you're not sure which is the right dongleserver for you, Counterpoint can advise you on the best solution for the particular requirements of your organisation, as well as configuring it for you and providing ongoing support so as to maximise uninterrupted uptime.

Extended warranty and advance replacement packages are also available to protect your organisation against any downtime should the worst happen.

Cubase via VPN

Once you have the dongleserver and eLicenser configured, all you need is a secure VPN or standard internet connection to access your school network, and you can use Cubase anywhere in the world as long as you're connected to the internet. So whether you're in the classroom, working from home, or at another remote office space, you can always be making beautiful music.

Can I use Cubase on 2 computers?

Yes. The eLicenser tracks concurrent users. So if you are the only person using a license, you can use it on your school computer when in the classroom, and pick up that Cubase rack where you left off when you are working from home.

You can't use the same license on 2 computers at the same time. So you need to ensure you have the right number of licenses for the number of people who may be using the software simultaneously.

[Compare Cubase Editions](#)

If you're not sure which is the right version for you, or how to configure it with your school network, contact Counterpoint today and our expert consultants can guide you through the process.

News Article

<https://www.women-into-construction.org/equality-and-diversity-lead-to-prosperity/>



BUILD, BUILD, BUILD... TOGETHER.

Don't be left behind

What if, rather than thinking about other countries where labour could be imported from, there was an untapped workforce already in the UK, which could not only bolster the ranks in the construction industry, but improve its overall performance and value?

Right now is the best chance we have ever had to revolutionise the construction industry in this country and set it up to be stronger and better for decades to come.

As of October 2019, just one in eight construction workers in the UK were women. This is despite it being well reported for many years that gender diversity in the workplace creates both financial and creative benefits for organisations that can successfully embrace it.

However, these benefits can only be realised when diversity is viewed as normality.

A steady stream of EU nationals leaving Britain to return home following the Brexit referendum has grown bigger by the day, add to the ever-increasing UK construction skills shortage. Add this to the industry's ageing workforce and

delivering on the UK Government's call to "build, build, build" suddenly seems a great challenge. The Covid-19 pandemic has both sharpened the issue and shone a light on the sector's lack of diversity.

It's not enough just to bring women and BAME people into the workforce. Environments need to be created to encourage them to stay, and to thrive.

According to [Randstad's latest Women in Construction report](#), of those one in eight female construction workers, 72% experienced gender discrimination in 2019. This is down from 80% the previous year – slow progress. 47% of women said that a male dominated culture would be the number one reason for leaving the industry.

At Women Into Construction, we are working with organisations across the industry to help them reap the full rewards of gender diversity.

And we are making progress. In 2018, 49% of construction workers said that they had never had a female manager. In 2019, this was down to 40%.

Our [initiatives](#) are working, but we need more organisations to buy into what we know to be true.

Not only does diversity increase your pool of talent, but [studies from McKinsey & Company](#) have measured increased performance and financial returns at 3.5% in earnings for every 10% increase in gender diversity. Yet 15% of those construction firms surveyed by Randstad had never promoted a woman to a senior position. 43% have no women at all on their board of directors. This is despite only 5% of all respondents believing that a female manager would have a negative impact on their role.

[It's time for the leaders of the industry to play their part.](#)

Since the beginning of 2013, when the Social Value Act came into force, it has become more important than ever for construction companies to illustrate the economic, social and environmental benefits they can deliver when bidding for public sector contracts.

Social value is increasingly a standalone set of criteria on bids and accounts for up to 25% of the overall assessment. With the government's recent call to speed up the building of hospitals, homes, schools and roads, there is work to be had for the construction firms who can demonstrate their economic, social and

environmental worth. A more diverse workforce improves performance in all these areas.

In September 2018, an independent analysis of our [Changing the Face of Construction](#) project found that for every £1 invested, we generate a huge £5.66 of social value. Every woman who secured employment via the project said that they would not have been able to secure a job in the construction industry without it.

Our member companies benefit from having access to a pool of women who are work ready, enthusiastic, and supported by Women Into Construction to stay in work and progress in their career. By working with us, construction companies can easily increase their gender diversity, as well as massively increasing the social value of their tenders, giving them more opportunity to win those all-important public sector contracts.

Kath Moore MBE, Chief Executive of Women Into Construction, said "Since the 2012 London Olympics, Women Into Construction has paved the way for more and more women to enter, and remain in, the UK construction industry. But there is still so much to do to allow gender diversity to reach its full potential. Brexit and Covid-19 have had, and will have, significant impacts upon the industry. But we must take full advantage of this opportunity for radical change to ensure that the UK can build its way to a more equal, prosperous future."

To find out more about how Women into Construction can revolutionise your organisation and prepare you for the new world, [contact us now](#).

Feature Article

<https://www.saddleworthlife.com/white-or-red-rose/>

Growing up on the south coast of England, I always knew I was different.

My parents made sure I knew where I came from. I might have looked and sounded like all the other kids in Bournemouth, but I knew I was from a place in the North called Oldham, and I was always proud to tell my friends about it.

'Oldham?' They'd say. 'Where's that?'

'Near Manchester,' I'd say. Because everyone knew Manchester United.

And it made me feel special. Knowing that I came from somewhere that seemed like another world to all the kids who were born and raised down south.

After I moved to London in my early twenties, whenever I was asked where I was from, I'd say, 'Well, I grew up in Bournemouth, but I'm from the North originally.'

'Oh yeah? Whereabouts?'

And I'd tell them, and then the conversation would move on to something else. Until that is, I met a guy called Shaun, who ended up becoming one of my best friends.

'No way, I'm from Oldham," he told me.

It took me a while to convince him I really was from the same place as him. But when I started telling him about how I lived in Delph he got more enthusiastic as he had family in Saddleworth. In a city full of strangers, it was easy to bond over our shared roots, and it helped me feel closer to the town of my birth.



Our house in Delph in the late 70s

We had mutual friends from the other side of the Pennines, so friendly discussions of Lancashire versus Yorkshire would often take place in the pub. But imagine my surprise one day when Shaun turned to me and said, 'You know you're part Yorkshire though?'

I thought he was pulling my leg. 'Oldham's in Lancashire, mate. What are you talking about?'

'Yeah, but Saddleworth isn't. Well, some people think it is. Some people think it's in Yorkshire.'

All my life I'd been a proud Lancastrian, telling anyone who would listen how great the North is, and how the Red Rose is always best. And now I was hit by the bombshell that, actually, I might be a Yorkshireman.

Here are the facts:

Until 1974, Saddleworth was part of the West Riding of Yorkshire. That is indisputable. Under the Local Government Act 1972, which came into force on 1st April 1974, the West Riding of Yorkshire was abolished, and Saddleworth was incorporated into the metropolitan borough of Oldham in the metropolitan county of Greater Manchester.

So does that mean anyone born in Saddleworth before 1st April 1974 is from Yorkshire, and anyone born after is from Lancashire? (My brother was born in

February 1974, whereas I was born in 1976, which could explain all the fighting when we were kids.)

Unfortunately, it's not as simple as that.

Technically, in terms of administration, Greater Manchester isn't part of Lancashire, as the same government act created it as a separate county. But good luck trying to tell people from any other part of Greater Manchester that they're not from Lancashire.

It's easy to argue that the Pennines form a natural border between Lancashire and Yorkshire (when I was a kid, I thought they did!) and so it makes sense that Saddleworth is part of Lancashire. But history books tell us that Saddleworth was recognised as being in Yorkshire as far back as the Middle Ages. Although for some of the 17th Century it was part of the ancient parish of Rochdale, in Salfordshire – a subdivision of Lancashire.

Yorkshire Day is proudly celebrated in Saddleworth every year. But there is also the annual Rushcart, which has its origins in Lancashire and Cumbria.



Modern day Rushcart celebrations in Saddleworth

The more I read about it, the more I realise that for every argument in one direction, there is a counter-argument in the other. No wonder there can never be total agreement.

But whichever side you're on, one thing is certain: Saddleworth is an incredibly special place with a unique history, beautiful scenery, and fantastic people. It draws on influences from Yorkshire and Lancashire, creating something which you'll not find the like of in either.

So perhaps, instead of having to choose the white or red rose, we can choose the Tudor Rose to celebrate the coming together of two great counties to make something even better.





Headlines for job adverts

YOU are the boss

Take control and clean up with us

Being taken to the cleaners by your current boss?

JOIN US and **TAKE BACK** control

Want a job that's like a clean breath of fresh air?

Work **WHERE** you want, and **WHEN** you want.

Looking for a clean getaway from a bad job?

YOU decide **YOUR** hours. **YOU** decide **YOUR** customers.

Join the cleaning revolution.

Undervalued and Underpaid?

Nobody understands the value of a good cleaner like we do.

Join us and see your true value appreciated.

Promotional email for Life Coaching business

Subject: How's life?

Hi [name],

How's life?

I haven't heard from you since you downloaded my free guide / attended my free workshop, Get From Ordinary to Extraordinary in 2020, so I thought I'd check in to see how you've been since.

Did you get everything you needed from the workshop/guide? Is your life now on the right trajectory to achieve all your dreams? Great! I hope I've been able to help you find the right path, and I'd love to hear from you if you have a minute to reply and tell me what's changed in the last few weeks.

Or are you still searching for your path?

That's OK. Changing your life takes time. There are no shortcuts. You've got to be prepared to put in the hard work.

But you don't need to do it alone.

Humans are social creatures.

We NEED others around us.

Yes, even those of us who consider ourselves introverts. We still need interaction. Talking problems through with friends is a great way of finding solutions. So, if you haven't already, talk to a friend about what's missing in your life. You might be surprised by the conversations it leads to.

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However, sometimes it helps to have someone outside your normal circle give you a fresh perspective.

That's where I come in.

I won't judge you or make you feel embarrassed or ashamed of anything you've done previously, or want to do in the future. I won't compare your dreams to anyone else's. You and your goals for life are completely unique.

I will push you though. I'll push you to work for the life you want. The life you **deserve**.

You wouldn't be reading this if you didn't want to make changes in your life, so what are you waiting for?

Email me now, and tell me about the changes you're making. Or tell me about the changes you want to make.

Tell me how you've already improved your life. Tell me you know you need to make changes, but you don't know what or how.

Tell me **anything**.

And in return, I'll tell you how I can help. Remember, initial consultations are completely free and come with no obligation whatsoever.

Together, we can think big and achieve the impossible.

Hon Yip