

\*CYBERSECURITY 18  
Ratkaisu Magazine Issue Excerpt

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# IT SECURITY IS A TOP PRIORITY FOR ALECTA

The trust of its customers means everything to pensions giant Alecta. This is why the ability to protect their customers' information is one of the most important parts of the business. Together with CGI, Alecta has reinforced its cybersecurity dramatically in recent years. At the same time, they have created ways of working more proactively to deal with current threats.

BY MATTIAS KARÉN PHOTOS EVELINA CARBORN AND SHUTTERSTOCK

**W**ith almost 2.5 million private customers, Alecta is Sweden's biggest occupational pension company. Alecta manages more than SEK 800 billion in capital, an enormous responsibility that also demands IT security of the very highest level.

"In our industry, credibility is extremely important. The customer must be able to rely on us to manage their information in a safe, responsible way. That's our top priority. We can't afford to lose that trust," says Ulf Larsson, Head of IT at Alecta.

To secure its customers' information and funds, Alecta has chosen to outsource IT

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Head of IT,  
Alecta

operations to CGI. This collaboration started back in 1996 and has been reinforced considerably over the last five years as cybersecurity moved higher up the management agenda.

"We've increased investments significantly in just a few years when it comes to IT security, and together with CGI we've increased the levels of protection. IT security is now part of virtually all our commercial businesses and an issue that is dealt with at Board level. That's not how it was five, ten years ago. There's a very big difference," says Larsson.

Among other things, Alecta made a strategic decision to follow the ISO 27000, international standard for IT security. They are also using CGI's SOC (Security Operations





3

tips on  
IT security

1

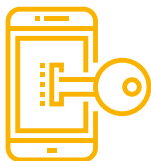
Don't think you can do it all by yourself. It's a large, complex area that is constantly evolving. You must ally yourselves with experts and build strong relationships with them.

2

Set a clear standard to work by, that helps all employees to focus on meeting that standard. If you can't agree on which way you're headed, all initiatives will be left hanging in the air.

3

Make sure that the entire management team is on board and has a focus on this area. If it's not already on the Board's agenda, it must be. Otherwise you will have to fight for every initiative. There must be an awareness at management level that this is important.



"At Alecta, IT security is now part of virtually all our commercial businesses and an issue that is dealt with at Board level," says Ulf Larsson, Head of IT at Alecta.

Centers) services to maintain a total overview of various threats.

"The biggest threat is not taking this seriously. So it feels extremely reassuring to have a big and competent partner like CGI taking our security very seriously indeed. While we're good at developing insurance systems, we're not as good at IT security," states Larsson.

Like all major financial companies, Alecta has to protect itself against both internal and external threats. They also have to deal with continuous internal audits as well as inspections by the Swedish Financial Supervisory Authority and other bodies.

"After all, there's a lot of money passing through our systems, so we have to be protected from both a system perspective, and do the right thing internally. For us, it's about

being reassured that we're doing the right things. Even so, something can always happen. However, we've worked seriously and credibly on these issues and can be certain that we're at a good level," says Larsson.

Services such as CGI's SOC also help Alecta to protect itself against new global threats, and Larsson believes that these kinds of proactive solutions are an important strategy to deal with a future in which more and more IT infrastructure is in the cloud.

"CGI's SOC is helping us to take the step from reactive IT security to proactivity. CGI has the in-depth cybersecurity expertise that we can never achieve ourselves in this area. Security nowadays is largely about proactive monitoring and pattern recognition and the like. We must be on board that train," says Larsson. ✨

## ABOUT ALECTA

ALECTA LOOKS AFTER occupational pensions for 2.4 million people and 34,000 companies in Sweden. The company is owned by its customers and only handles collectively agreed occupational pensions such as supplementary pensions. Alecta is one of the biggest shareholders on the Stockholm Stock Exchange and one of Sweden's biggest property owners. The company was formed in 1917 and currently has around 350 employees.

## ABOUT CGI SOC's

CGI'S GLOBAL NETWORK of Security Operations Centers (SOCs) provides a total overview of various threats across all sectors and geographical locations. CGI's security teams identify and deploy advanced solutions continuously in order to maintain secure infrastructures. CGI collaborates closely with international security organizations and standardization bodies, and is one of the few suppliers to have three accredited facilities for security certification in Canada, the UK and the U.S.

