



# Imperva SecureSphere Web Application Firewall

## Review From A Customer

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## Review by a Real User

Verified by IT Central Station



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### WHAT IS MOST VALUABLE?

The most valuable feature is the grouping of multiple targets via the scan policy. It is valuable because of the large number of targets and governmental requirements to conduct periodic scans.

### HOW HAS IT HELPED MY ORGANIZATION?

With acquisition of a license to use the product, we received the ability to standardize database scanning and data protection across the enterprise around one product.

### WHAT NEEDS IMPROVEMENT?

Many features are buried under not-straight-forward options and, at times, hard to find screens. Very few import features have clearly defined format requirements. Agent installation for data usage/blocking activities on target boxes requires the involvement of OS admins and DBA's, which complicates coordination of installation and delays implementation. The discovery feature does not accurately discover the instances and instead identifies auxiliary end points (SQL – 1434) and TCP listeners (Oracle – 1521).

### FOR HOW LONG HAVE I USED THE SOLUTION?

I've used and administered Imperva SecureSphere for 2 years.

### WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE STABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?

Periodically, the site stops functioning and the appliance requires a reboot to restore functionality.

### WHAT DO I THINK ABOUT THE SCALABILITY OF THE SOLUTION?

Scalability capabilities are well thought through by product development. Installation of additional MX servers and gateways on remote networks ensures coverage of scanning and data usage monitoring/data protection capabilities.

### **HOW ARE CUSTOMER SERVICE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT?**

Technical support is probably the biggest drawback. No contact with technical support ever results in an immediate response and the solution is usually preceded with series of emails, going on for up to a week, before a live person gets on the phone. But, even then, their task is to observe the manifestation of the problem and request a collection of additional information (logs, traces, etc.) without any attempt to solve the problem during the call/WebEx session. Their technical support staff has at most two or three engineers that have a good working knowledge of the product, but most of the time, a level one technician is running the case. When support staff finally gets on the phone, their first statement is a disclaimer that they are on the call ONLY to collect information and that the customer should not expect any resolution. This pattern of providing technical support greatly differs from what IBM offers for their Guardium product (competitor solution).

### **WHICH SOLUTION DID I USE PREVIOUSLY AND WHY DID I SWITCH?**

We attempted to use several previous solutions. One was Tenable SecurityCenter with its custom, XML-like scripting where each check had to be written by the Database Security Specialist (myself). We also attempted to use AppDetectivePRO, though its performance, lack of customization, scalability, and licensing costs prevented us from continuing with it.

### **HOW WAS THE INITIAL SETUP?**

The setup is very straightforward considering that it's either a physical or virtual (OVF template) appliance. The wizard-like initial setup and configuration are somewhat awkward, but can be completed after reviewing the instructional videos available to the customers.

### **WHAT'S MY EXPERIENCE WITH PRICING, SETUP COST, AND LICENSING?**

Licensing should be chosen based on the current infrastructure setup and growth plans. Purchasing appliances of different types may lead to unnecessary/unjustified expenditures and ultimately lead to complications in administration.

### **WHICH OTHER SOLUTIONS DID I EVALUATE?**

The product that was evaluated and was chosen as the recommendation was IBM Guardium. Unfortunately, its licensing cost was a lot higher. Therefore, the management decided not to proceed with the purchase.

### **WHAT OTHER ADVICE DO I HAVE?**

Be prepared to obtain every piece of documentation that comes with the product. Thoroughly research it to obtain a clear understanding of how to implement the product and ensure you have a dedicated Imperva first-response engineer that can answer your questions without going through a normal support channel. Be patient when encountering a bug or a feature failure, as well as discrepancies between the product interface and/or behavior with the accompanied documentation. Their support is not prepared to jump in and start working on a fix or update the documentation. In many cases, the documentation remains outdated referring to old releases regardless how long you've been asking for an update. Their instructional videos are also out of date, but references to them are consistently sent by their support whenever you may have a question. And finally, thoroughly document your deployment and license-related information, because every email to technical support is responded with an automated reply requesting this information. Not replying to this automated email with correct info will lead to further delays.

Learn more: [Read 9 reviews of Imperva SecureSphere Web Application Firewall](#)