How WalkMe Manages GDPR Cloud Requirements and Maintains Data Privacy with Cloud Data Sense

Data privacy entered a new age with the enactment of GDPR. Cloud requirements to meet cost and service availability were now joined by a new challenge: managing and protecting extremely sensitive personal data. For the digital adoption platform maker WalkMe, this meant finding an automated way to identify such data and report on it. The solution they found was NetApp Cloud Data Sense.

In this post, we look at the challenges WalkMe faced in meeting certain requirements of the GDPR, why they chose Cloud Data Sense, and their experiences of using the product so far.

Customer
WalkMe, a California-based SaaS unicorn with a worldwide customer base and more than 35 industry awards

Customer's Offering
Digital Adoption Platform

Challenge
Reduce manual workload involved in identifying and protecting or removing personal data to meet GDPR requirements

NetApp Solution
Cloud Data Sense for Amazon S3

Value Created
Faster response to potential compliance issues and 80% reduction in time spent reviewing data

Privacy by Design for Personal Data: WalkMe's Compliance Journey

WalkMe's software is an invisible overlay across any website, application, or online platform. The software is designed to help organizations gain value out of their digital assets by improving digital experiences for customers and employees, through actionable data that identifies problem areas and visual cues that help users complete tasks and navigate their way through software.

WalkMe's software uses **artificial intelligence (AI)** and **machine learning (ML)** to analyze usage patterns and provide proactive support at potential roadblocks in the user journey. In order to do that, it collects large amounts of usage data, which they keep stored in Amazon S3. Because there is personal data among the information they collect, the company must remain GDPR compliant.

The company was concerned with ensuring compliance as well as the ability to technically control and oversee the personally identifiable information (PII) stored in their system.

To sort through this data manually would have required a level of oversight that would not only be very time-consuming but also open to human error. To avoid those concerns, WalkMe decided to tighten their data governance by implementing a state-of-the-art personal information discovery technology.

An Automated Solution with Cloud Data Sense

Since manually reviewing the data for personal information was untenable, WalkMe decided it needed a solution that could automatically scan its data for personal information that could fall within the scope of the GDPR and other data privacy legislation. The solution they chose was NetApp Cloud Data Sense.

The security team, led by WalkMe's chief information security officer, researched a number of data privacy tools. However, they found other services didn't offer the same range of benefits. Cloud Data Sense was comprehensive: it was able to automate the search process and it allowed data to be scanned in multiple storage repositories, beyond Amazon S3. It also allowed WalkMe to keep their data within their control at all times, which was a major concern.

All Set for Time and Cost Savings

The security team selected a trial S3 bucket to put Cloud Data Sense through its paces and immediately noticed how quickly and easily they could set the service up. Within around 36 hours, the application had already completed a full initial scan of hundreds of GB of data.

Using Cloud Data Sense, the team automatically identified personal information in their system and stored in publicly accessible buckets. Once this data was identified, it was then easy to either protect or remove it, as needed. And once the initial scan was conducted, Cloud Data Sense began to maintain always-on privacy protection, scanning any new data changed in the repository or added to it to identify personal information.

To perform the same work manually would've been a considerable undertaking. Using Cloud Data Sense, that could be avoided. Based on the initial trial, WalkMe estimated that it was able to cut the time it normally spent on keeping data in check by 80%. This translated into a significant reduction in resources and enabled the team to focus on other priorities within IT security.

With Cloud Data Sense now fully implemented, WalkMe can look forward to demonstrating compliance with specific requirements of the GDPR. With cloud requirements for cost controls and data protection fulfilled, WalkMe is confidently moving ahead with use of Cloud Data Sense for its production environments as well.

Beyond Data Classification

How do you keep track of your sensitive personal information in the cloud? Regulations like GDPR are only growing in force, and many companies are already paying the price for not taking these data privacy laws seriously. What happens when data classification isn't enough?

This Cloud Data Sense case study showed how one company turned to NetApp to solve the data privacy challenge. With Cloud Data Sense, they found a way to automatically manage sensitive personal information, respond to some of the most critical GDPR cloud requirements, and extend personal information scanning capabilities across repositories.