

SecuritySkinsReplaceSecurityWalls ¹

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Abstract. Building walls around our treasures has been a successful practice for millennium. In the security realm these walls started as physical security; bricks and concrete that protected our metal boxes full of treasure data. The rapid evolution of communication and mobile technologies has resulted in an explosion in the number of systems we must manage and secure. The wall as a security model is failing us.

Biological ecosystems are complex interconnected and messy. There are many stories of well meaning attempts to control some aspect of an ecosystem that resulted in an ecological disaster. DDT used to kill off malaria mosquitoes poisons birds, which kill the cats, which allows an explosion in rats, which lead to an outbreak of plague. As our technologies become increasingly connected in a wireless world we are reaching a level of complex ecology. New products find ecological niches and applications that cannot adapt quickly become extinct. There are predator/prey cycles as hackers discover and exploit vulnerabilities.

How then does a security manager provide confidentiality, integrity and availability in an increasingly complex technological ecosystem? How do we keep out the bad guys in an increasingly complex world? Perhaps security needs to be viewed not as a wall but rather as a skin around each intelligent appliance.

Watch this space for the complete paper – coming soon.

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