

INDUSTRY PIONEERS

A look at a number of influencers who have made significant contributions to the IT security field over the past 20 years.

Marcus Ranum CSO, Tenable Network Security



The firewall was really born on a day in 1986 when Ranum, then a network administrator at Johns Hopkins University, noticed something strange: Someone was able gain access to an MRI machine via a Sun Workstation default configuration. Nothing malicious happened, but Ranum knew right then that big problems weren't far off. "People were connecting to the internet and they had no idea what they were doing," he recalls. Not long after, he built the first commercial-grade firewall for Digital Equipment Corp. and later, the White House. A few years later, he was among the first to market intrusion detection systems. "A lot of my career has consisted of moving ideas from the research world into the commercial world," says Ranum, who turns 47 this month. "I like to think of myself as a filter for good ideas." But don't count on any new inventions from him. Today's development tools lead to too many bugs: "I'm still using coding models from the early 80s," he says.



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Tenable Network Security, Inc.
7063 Columbia Gateway Drive, Suite 100
Columbia, MD 21046
Sales inquiries: sales@tenablesecurity.com
Website: www.tenablesecurity.com

