

TECH CHOICES

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PortAuthority Is An ILP Leader With Strong Product Functionality And Strategic Vision

The Forrester Wave™ Vendor Summary, Q4 2006

by **Jonathan Penn and Reedwan Iqbal**

with Thomas Raschke

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PortAuthority Technologies offers a leading, functionally rich, information leak prevention (ILP) solution, with a track record of innovation and strong strategic vision. In our Forrester Wave study of eight leading ILP offerings, PortAuthority scored highly in nearly every area of functionality we reviewed, standing out particularly in policy management, non-text accuracy, and external system connectivity. Organizations wanting a functionally comprehensive solution, but wary of adding desktop agents to users' systems, will deem PortAuthority an attractive option.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Security and risk professional, IT infrastructure and operations professional

PORTAUTHORITY IS BEST SUITED FOR COMPANIES THAT DEMAND INNOVATIVE VISION

PortAuthority Technologies specializes in providing information leak prevention (ILP) solutions that stop the unauthorized distribution of sensitive information by monitoring internal and outbound communications and delivering policy enforcement in real time. The company is privately held and backed by a number of venture capital firms. PortAuthority is headquartered in Palo Alto, California, and has offices throughout North America. Forrester estimates its fiscal year 2005 revenues to be between \$5 million and \$10 million. The company has more than 50 customers using its ILP solution.

Forrester evaluated PortAuthority's current offering and strategy in ILP against 39 criteria (see Figure 1). With a track record of innovation, strong technology and license partners, and an impressive product road map, PortAuthority scores top marks for strategy. It is slightly disappointing then that growth is not as solid as some of its competitors — Forrester estimates PortAuthority's year-on-year growth to be between 100% and 200%. The company's ILP solution is strong to market-leading in nearly every area of functionality we surveyed, excelling particularly in policy management, accuracy, and its ability to integrate with external applications and data repositories through a data management API and ODBC protocols. However, some companies may feel discouraged by the lack of a desktop agent, which results in the inability to recognize and protect against violations in file and application activity. The product is a good fit for buyers that:



Headquarters

Forrester Research, Inc., 400 Technology Square, Cambridge, MA 02139 USA
Tel: +1 617/613-6000 • Fax: +1 617/613-5000 • www.forrester.com

- **Need exceptional policy management, connectivity, and non-text accuracy.** PortAuthority offers a strong accuracy engine that understands non-text files through custom fingerprinting as well as through individual characteristics. When coupled with an OCR application, the solution is also able to recognize the text content of image and scanned documents. Policy management is strong, supporting hierarchical policies through a painless, wizard-based tool and offering the ability to tie these in with external data sources. The vendor provides strong external integration and crawling capabilities with a range of data repositories and information systems.
- **Demand innovative vision, with the least user intimidation.** PortAuthority is the strongest solution without a desktop agent. The small user footprint may play to a client's advantage in certain situations where strong, non-intrusive violation detection is critical — such as a network in which alien and user-owned machines are dominant. Clients recognize PortAuthority as a strong innovator that has pushed out six industry firsts — 80% of current customers chose to upgrade to the latest version of the product this year. The system is one of only two to hook into internal mail servers, and, uniquely, it provides print and fax protection. For those who want to extend the vendor's functionality to the desktop, Safend integrates PortAuthority technology.

For more information on how PortAuthority stacks up against seven other competitors, see the Forrester Wave information leak prevention evaluation.¹

Figure 1 PortAuthority’s Information Leak Prevention Evaluation Overview

CURRENT OFFERING	
Accuracy	PortAuthority has a very accurate network-based ILP solution, with a solid inspection engine relying less on discerning context.
Enforcement	PortAuthority monitors activity at the network and system levels but does not enforce data-at-rest. It provides comprehensive enforcement across most network activity.
Policy management	PortAuthority offers easy policy management with hierarchical policy support, a wizard-based policy builder, and integration with data repositories including crawling capabilities.
Administration and reporting	PortAuthority’s reporting supports delegated administration functions for remediation and reporting, and provides SIM integration.
Ease of deployment	PortAuthority is a network-based solution. An appliance version is available with limited desktop capabilities only.
Forensics	PortAuthority captures but cannot replay entire sessions. It also cannot digitally sign logs. However, the product logs policy changes, provides log history and trend analysis, offers full native case management, and integrates with third-party tools.
Comprehensiveness	PortAuthority is protocol-aware, but its protection is not limited to well-known ports. However, the product does not protect against violations in host-based file and application activity. It works with Blue Coat to decrypt encrypted content on the network.
Personal versus corporate information protection	PortAuthority offers prebuilt policies and manual configuration of customized rules and policies.
Architecture	PortAuthority integrates with data repositories and databases using the Data Management System API (DMS) to register content and policies.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 1 PortAuthority’s Information Leak Prevention Evaluation Overview (Cont.)


STRATEGY

Cost	PortAuthority products are delivered as a product line of appliances and server agents. For enterprise-class environments, the management appliance costs \$50,000, the monitoring/enforcement appliance costs \$45,000, and server agents for internal mail and network printer cost \$25,000 per server. Premium-level support is priced at 22% of license cost.
Product strategy	PortAuthority’s solution road map includes expanding policy-based enforcement capabilities, extending the breadth of communication channels it supports on the network, bringing protection down to the desktop, better integrating into the IT infrastructure, and simplifying deployment and configuration. PortAuthority has developed many industry firsts with its product.
Partners	PortAuthority leads the competition in establishing OEM license, reselling, and technology integration partners.

MARKET PRESENCE


Installed base	PortAuthority has between 50 and 100 customers, most of which are on the current major version of the product. The largest deployment is within a financial services company and covers more than 30,000 employees.
Revenue	Forrester estimates PortAuthority annual revenues to be between \$5 million and \$10 million, with reported growth between 100% and 200%. The average deal size for PortAuthority is between \$50,000 and \$150,000.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.



The Forrester Wave™
Smart data for smart decisions

Go online to download additional in-depth data and scores for this vendor and other vendors included in this Forrester Wave evaluation.



SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Online Resource

The underlying spreadsheet for Figure 1 is available online. The spreadsheet includes more detailed data and scores for this vendor.

This detailed data and scores for this vendor are also available online through an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don't fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of questionnaires and discussions. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and readers are encouraged to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Forrester evaluated leading information leak prevention (ILP) vendors across 39 criteria and found that Vericept and Vontu have established early ILP leadership because of their rich analysis capabilities, while PortAuthority Technologies stands out for its strong strategy scores and unique monitoring capabilities. Solid functionality and rich context-based analysis and detection capabilities earn desktop-centric Verdasys the final slot among the leaders. Each of the remaining vendors are strong performers and shine in particular areas: Tablus and Oakley Networks are strong in administration and reporting as well as ease of deployment. Proofpoint excels in administration and reporting as well as integration. Orchestria is notable for its integration capabilities, accuracy, and desktop-based controls. During the next 24 months, the ILP market will converge with the broader client security suite and content security markets. Longer term, Forrester sees ILP's analysis and classification capabilities playing a stronger role in information management in general — not just in security. See the December 15, 2006, Tech Choices "[The Forrester Wave: Information Leak Prevention, Q4 2006](#)."