# cloudshare

How Venafi Increased Partner Activity & Efficiency With CloudShare

Introduction

Venafi, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, provides machine identity management solutions to Global 5000 companies to help prevent cyberattacks. As an enterprise software company, out-of-the-box product integrations with industry-standard IT products and services is a key differentiator that allows their customers to start utilizing the Venafi solution from day one. However, the process of working with dozens of partners across their extensive ecosystem and providing them with a virtual environment was a core strategy and is directly connected to revenue.

The Challenge

The company tried using AWS as a platform to deliver their virtual environments. The process of creating and sharing these POC environments was managed internally by the Customer Support team. This approach proved to be costly, resource-intensive, and was a substantial bottleneck to the process. In addition, there was no visibility into the usage of these environments to help the company measure partner engagement and performance.
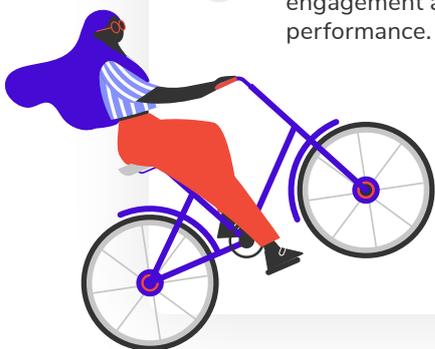
The Solution

Venafi chose CloudShare's all-in-one solution for its out-of-the-box functionality, its unique dedication to Venafi's success, and because CloudShare perfectly matched their specific requirements.
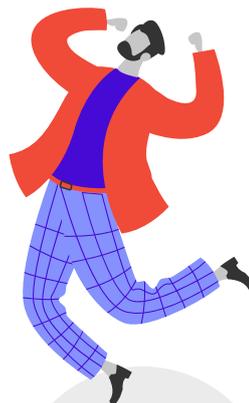
The Results

After a smooth onboarding process with ongoing support from the CloudShare team, Venafi slashed environment setup time and maintenance, eliminated Customer Support overhead, and increased Partners efficiency and overall activity.

The Challenge

Venafi's Ecosystem Technical Team relied heavily on providing potential partners with a fully functional working virtual environment so they could build integrations for software connectors to Venafi's platform. The initial approach was to create a virtual machine in AWS and provide individual access to each partner.

Over time, it became clear that this was not an ideal solution:

1. **Cumbersome setup and heavy Customer Support bottleneck.**

   Every time a partner expressed interest in building an integration with Venafi, the Ecosystem team would evaluate the request, and then ask the Customer Support team to create an environment, which took another 24 – 28 hours. Once the environment was available, the Ecosystem Team didn't even have access to it, and couldn't work with the partner's developers directly. Support for the partners fell to the support team to handle, a completely unnecessary bottleneck.

2. **No visibility into real-time partner interaction in the environment.**

   Because the Support Team was managing the environments for the Ecosystem team, the key stakeholders didn't have visibility into the usage at all. "We got an environment for AWS 'until eternity,' meaning until we didn't need it anymore. There was absolutely no insight into how often the partner's developers accessed it or what they were doing with it; the environments were just a black box."

3. **High maintenance for the homegrown solution.**

   Finally, the Customer Support team itself did not have the right tools and expertise needed to create a fully functional, engaging POC environment. Instead, it used a homegrown solution, which was hard to maintain and update and it lacked best-of-breed features included in a dedicated virtual POC platform.
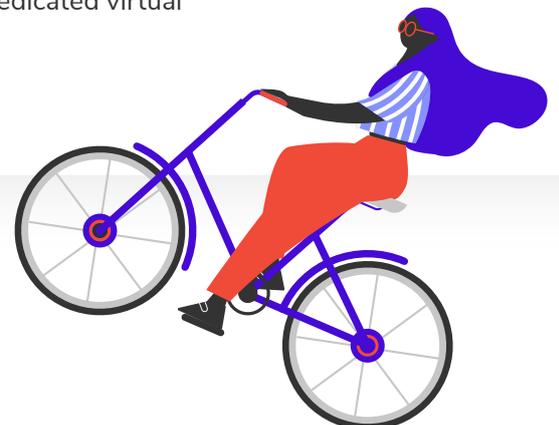
The Solution

" *We wanted a single price that included everything; not one that you never really know how much it costs in the end with all the additions. So, during the evaluation process, our preference was CloudShare because they offered an all-inclusive price that did not require us to pay separately for additional services or features*

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Paul Cleary, who heads up the Ecosystem group at Venafi, researched three solutions. When considering one of CloudShare's competitors, he soon realized that many of the feature sets they needed were considered 'premium add-ons' that drove up the cost of the initial quote.

In comparison, CloudShare provided a rich, full complement of functionality out-of-the-box for a single price which made the decision clear to go with CloudShare; **he knew exactly what they'd be spending for the complete, all-in-one solution.**

" *CloudShare's account team has been phenomenal- the best team I've ever worked with. The team played a part in my decision; they made it clear that CloudShare was not just another vendor but a true partner that is genuinely interested in Venafi's success which was key for me.*

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Even before committing, Paul had free access to the system so he could get familiar, experiment, and ask questions. Paul's confidence was important because for the first eight months he managed the system, built blueprints and integration environments, and invited each new partner to their POC by himself.

The Results

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"Now that we've got CloudShare, as soon as the partner is interested, I can provide them with a POC environment in 30 seconds, and if they have an issue, I can just log in, look over their shoulder and fix it for them, without any bottlenecks and overhead. CloudShare makes a lot of sense for our program and the flexibility it provides lets us tailor it specifically to our needs."

Cleary explains that CloudShare was the right product to solve their particular problems:

1   **Greater Visibility Into Partner Usage:** They can now see when their partners are using the Venafi environment, how active they are in the environment, and ultimately, whether they generated revenue for Venafi.

2   **Insight Into Venafi's ROI:** "If the partners' developers don't do anything with the environments that Venfai provides them with, it's Venafi's net loss," Paul explains. Having analytics and visibility through CloudShare and being able to determine, for example, that a particular partner had access but they haven't done anything yet, enables Venafi to decide to spin down environments for that partner until they're ready to continue.

3   **Overhead and Time Dramatically Reduced:** Management time has gone down significantly with fewer repeated unnecessary manual steps for new partners. With CloudShare, Paul creates blueprints and templates in no time: "Before CloudShare, every time a partner's developer came on board, the environment creation was a big deal, consuming time and resources. Now we can provide an environment immediately."

4 **Improved Partner Sales Efficiency:** CloudShare helped Venafi streamline and optimize their work process with their partners.

"Having that ability to log in, see how they're using the environment, and what they're doing in real-time when there's a problem – without asking another team to be involved - is invaluable."

5 **Increased Activity:** Upon implementing CloudShare, usability went up immediately. According to Cleary, "The change in usability was meaningful. We don't waste time spinning up machines that are not used; we spend our resources focusing on partners that are in the environment building integrations our customers want, and that is ultimately the whole purpose of our program."

Conclusion:

Expansion to Other Business Units

Perhaps the most significant indication of this success story is Venafi's plan to expand CloudShare's use to the Customer Support team, which will leverage CloudShare to create their own version of lab infrastructure for self-paced or VILT purposes.

About Us
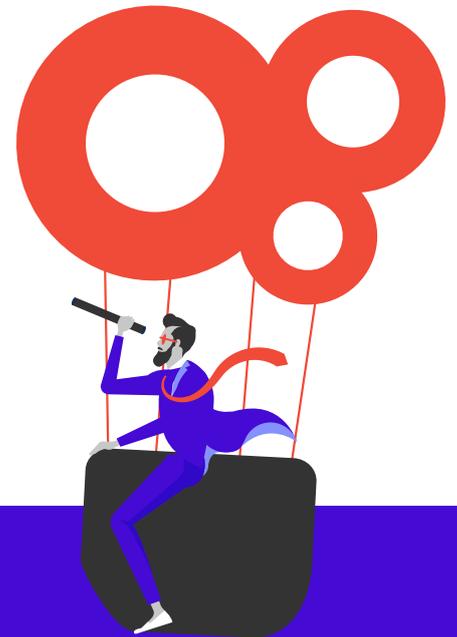
What is CloudShare?

CloudShare is a leading software experience platform that helps software companies increase customer acquisition and retention by creating highly engaging hands-on virtual POCs, demos, and training environments in minutes.

Our virtual environments are easily replicated in the cloud and purpose-built to generate user engagement that ultimately impacts key business metrics such as customer retention, repeat purchase rates, lower support costs, higher win rates, faster sales cycle, and more.

We are proud to serve leading global software companies such as Palo Alto Networks, RSA, Motorola, Atlassian, SAI Global, ForgeRock, Dell, Salesforce, and many more.

To learn more about how CloudShare's advanced hands-on software training solutions can benefit your business, visit cloudshare.com

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