ONTIC

A Guide to Gaining Approval and Budget

Advice from Corporate Security Leaders

A Note from Ontic

Security practitioners are not just professionals; they are their organizations' planners, mitigators, and chief defenders. To others, their work seems daunting, perhaps the stuff of movies or books. While pledging to secure environments is a seamless action for those in this space, business tasks — like securing budget asks — can seem daunting and, at times, insurmountable.

We hear you!

At Ontic, we value client insights, so we commissioned a research study to understand better how corporate security leaders like you navigate these challenges. Through in-depth interviews with clients, we listened to real stories, including how they navigated their approval journeys, how they articulated Ontic's value across their corporate security program, who they persuaded (and how), and what they wished they had known at the start.

Business success is often about incremental improvements; small changes bring significant transformations over time. We hope that by sharing these stories, we can help you design (or refine) your business process and strategies and successfully navigate your approval journey.

Thank you,

Chuck Randolph

Chuck Randolph
Chief Security Officer
Ontic

Featured Interviewees

Alan Borntrager
Global Head of Corporate Security
Dell Technologies

John Fluker
Director, Global Security
BRP

Lou Silvestris
Risk Intelligence and Investigations Manager
American Family Insurance

Tony Spencer
Senior Manager of Global Security
Polaris

Joshua Oldag
VP of Health, Safety, and Environment
Oceaneering

Anonymous
Vice President, Chief Security Officer
Fortune 500 Software Company

Anonymous
Executive Director of Investigations
Global Hospitality and Travel Company

Anonymous
Senior Director of Safety and Asset Protection
Top 10 Largest American Restaurant Chain

Anonymous
Director, Global Safety and Security
Fortune 500 Software Company

Table of Contents

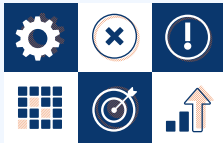# Establishing a Strategic Vision for Corporate Security

Corporate security leaders who participated in the research study needed functional capabilities for their staff like real-time threat detection, risk assessment, case management, and more. But above those functional requirements for "getting the job done," they envision creating a corporate security culture around a concept they called a **"shared risk consciousness."**

The concept of a "shared risk consciousness" in the context of corporate security is an innovative vision that seeks to create a unified culture around a comprehensive and empowered security organization. It aims to empower all interdependent security roles throughout an organization, whether corporate, physical, cyber, and so on, to thrive. This woven approach involves awareness and collaborative engagement in risk management. Participants in the study viewed this as an objective for their corporate security programs, with some finding that this goal was already aligned with an initiative embraced by C-suite executives in their corporations.

A key foundation to achieve a shared risk consciousness is utilizing a platform like Ontic — collaborative software that offers continuous threat detection and risk intelligence. It enables users to act on alerts and incidents, manage investigations and cases, and provide automated data connections, collaboration workflows, metrics dashboards, and visualization tools. Ontic acts as the foundation for fostering a shared risk consciousness within the corporation, empowering the development of a proactive, best-in-breed corporate security program.

In essence, a shared risk consciousness is a strategic approach to building a state-of-the-art corporate security program that is resilient, vigilant, and strategic.

"[I] cast the vision of a converged security organization, ...a fully integrated security and resiliency program, integrating crisis management, business continuity, IT disaster recovery, product and application security, insider risk investigations, physical security, supply chain security, cybersecurity, and the corporate security function. ...The force multiplier, if you will, was finding a technology solution that aided the people and the processes in delivering on a **shared risk consciousness**. And that's exactly where we landed with Ontic — real-time situational awareness and the shared risk consciousness. Knocking down the silos, having that unified view of risk, security, and resiliency, regardless of where it fell. ...Ontic enables the team to deliver against that mission."

Alan Borntrager
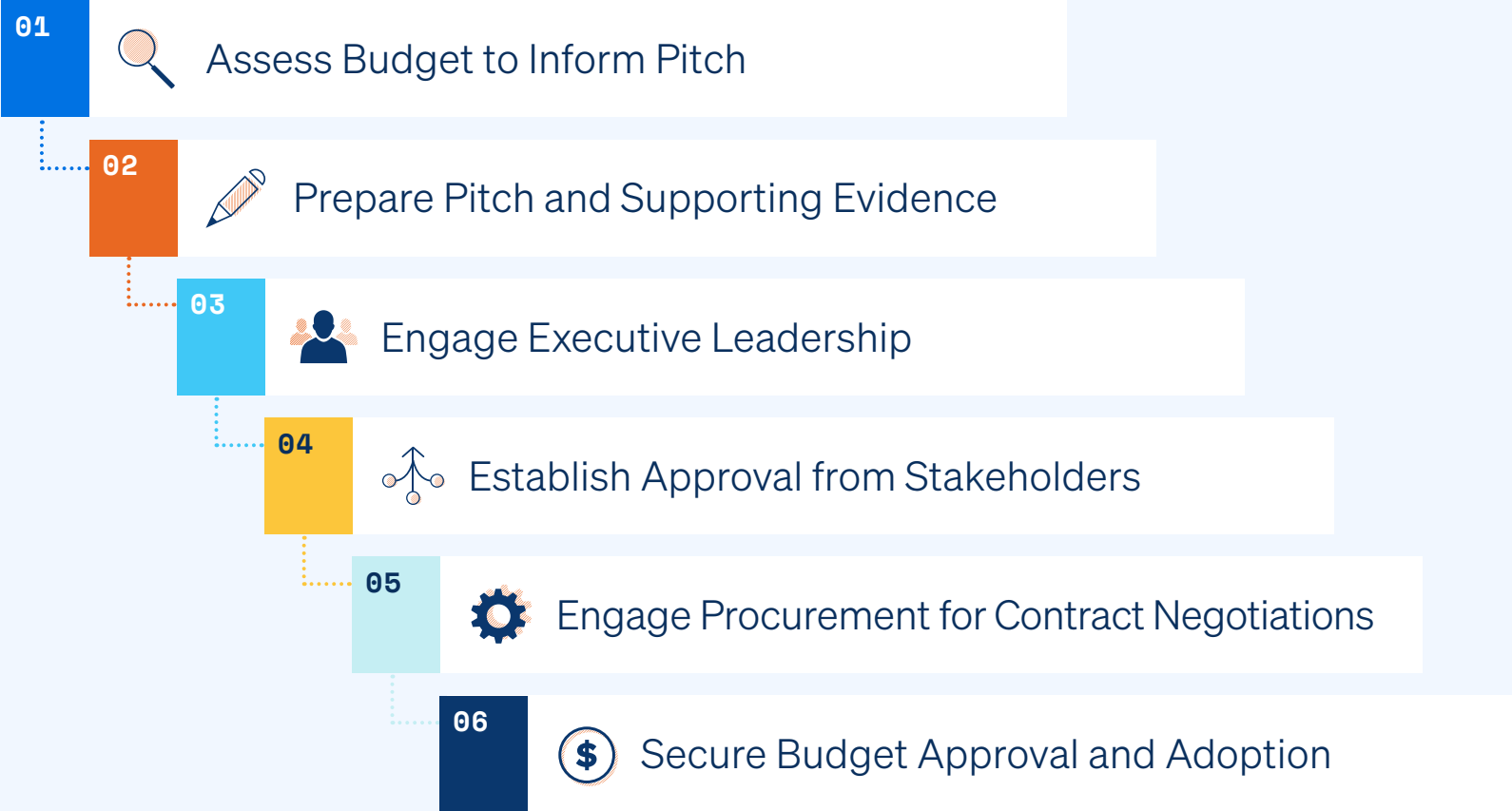Global Head of Corporate Security
Dell Technologies

"The data, everything, everything lives in Ontic — incident numbers, documents, files, photos, videos, whatever it is. Ontic has been a game changer."

Tony Spencer
Senior Manager of Global Security
Polaris

The Approval Journey Takes Time With Multiple Stakeholders

Clients shared that the journey on the road to budget approval and ultimate approval frequently required months to traverse and generally required the following six stages:

01 — Assess Budget to Inform Pitch

02 — Prepare Pitch and Supporting Evidence

03 — Engage Executive Leadership

04 — Establish Approval from Stakeholders

05 — Engage Procurement for Contract Negotiations

06 — Secure Budget Approval and Adoption

**Let's dive into each stage and the actions you can take** ↻

Assess Budget to Inform Pitch

Think ahead. Is the Ontic investment already in the approved budget? If not, you'll need to identify potential sources of funding, along with the stakeholders controlling those purse strings.

Clients shared three common approaches to addressing budget limitations:

1. Align the Ontic value and purpose to an existing executive-level initiative related to corporate security (such as executive protection).

2. Bring on other teams/divisions as partners who contribute to the investment.

3. Recoup funds that have previously been used to fund security solutions that become redundant with Ontic.

While some organizations lack a security tech stack prior to Ontic, many have point solutions in place. Because Ontic is a comprehensive security platform with multiple products, it often eliminates the need for such existing solutions in your security tech stack. Consolidating or eliminating these redundancies adds to your available budget, and the dollars spent on these solutions can be reallocated towards the Ontic investment.
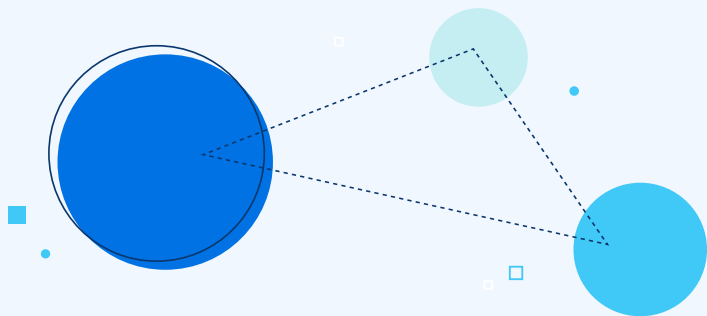
"When we were looking at the funding, we had to come up with the way to do it. Funding at American Family [is by budget allocations]: Protective Services has its budget, then there's an IT budget, then there's the executive support budget. We had to lay out what Ontic does, what we were going to use it for, and how it fit into those different buckets of money."

Lou Silvestris
Risk Intelligence and Investigations Manager
American Family Insurance

"…we could eliminate some of those solutions into a single solution. And look, there's also a cost benefit analysis associated with us eliminating those and consolidating to this single source repository…"

Alan Borntrager
Global Head of Corporate Security
Dell Technologies

Prepare Pitch and Supporting Elements

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PITCH?

A "pitch" is a persuasive presentation or argument made with the intent to convince someone about the value or potential of an idea, product, or proposal. It's similar to how law enforcement might present a case to a district attorney or how a Special Operations team might propose a mission plan to their commanding officer.

In this case, the "pitch" is how you'll secure the support you need and budget approval. But, while your end goal might be to receive budget approval for Ontic, the first objective is to get agreement from your stakeholders that acknowledges a problem needs to be addressed (implications or missed opportunities like cost savings, efficiency, etc.). From there, you'll be positioned to explain why investing in the Ontic Platform benefits corporate security. It means outlining the problems that Ontic can solve, how it can improve efficiency or effectiveness, and the return on investment that can be expected. The goal is to convince the decision-makers that the benefits of investing in Ontic outweigh the costs. **Success depends on the clarity of the presentation and the strength of the evidence.** In other words, it's about making a strong case for why Ontic is the right choice for your organization.

In addition to your full pitch, you should have an elevator pitch version that you can deliver to someone in less than 2 minutes. Read on for samples of both.
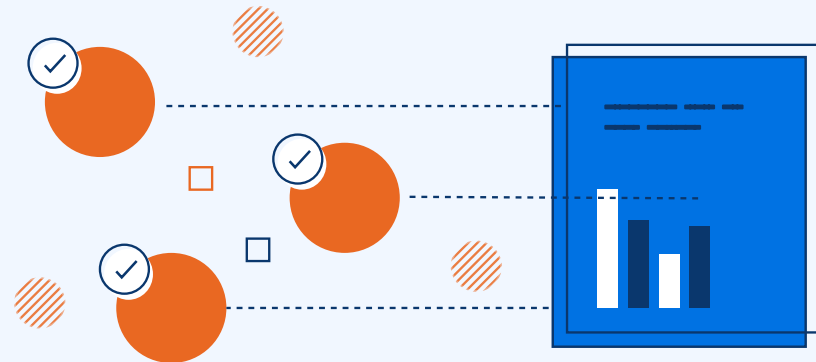
Every client we spoke with emphasized the importance of preparing a business case when presenting and/or discussing the Ontic proposal. It was typically accompanied by an appendix of supporting documentation, including a cost-benefit analysis (sometimes referred to as ROI).

Clients explained that the business case they developed became the basis for the talking points they used in discussions with executive leadership and other stakeholder groups. Oftentimes, they presented the business case in a brief slide deck accompanied by an appendix. Occasionally, the case took the form of a detailed email memo. When thinking about developing your business case, make sure to:

- Frame the context for your request around a problem that already has widespread support in your organization. Aiming for future capabilities can ultimately undermine your position.

- Have all relevant documentation in an appendix. You don't need to get bogged down in the details, but those who want more background can review the appendix after your pitch.

- Clearly present tangible costs, potential cost savings, and the financial risks of lack of action. Consider the right language for your audience when discussing cost — clients have different opinions when it comes to calling this a "cost-benefit analysis" or "ROI assessment."

BOLO later in the guide for tools you can use to achieve success in this step

"We built that business case. We thought it was solid, it was strong, and we showed them the value that it added and how it elevated our team to be able to provide that risk intelligence that helped to drive the business, and that was going to continue to make business possible. No matter where we went in the world, no matter where we do business at, we wanted to have the ability to provide them that business level intelligence and kind of be able to identify risks that could really impact the business."

John Fluker
Director, Global Security
BRP

"One single business case. And then again, if there were resistors or there were particular nuances that needed to happen at the individual team or business unit level, we adjusted. But broadly speaking, it was a core single platform or single set of talking points. One business case."

Alan Borntrager
Global Head of Corporate Security
Dell Technologies

Engage Executive Leadership

Leadership engagement should begin early to shape the environment, limit surprises, and demonstrate understanding. It should be a continuous shaping discussion throughout the cycle, ensuring requests are adjusted as necessary to avoid surprises during the official pitch. Participants explained that bringing executive leadership at the C-suite level involved brief presentations, first with their direct supervisor, who was typically in the role of Chief Security Officer (or equivalent title), and then with the CEO and CFO. At this stage of the approval journey, it's critical to be ready to deliver a brief but formal presentation of the business case. The supporting documentation is provided as supplemental material for executives to peruse at their discretion. Getting buy-in from the CEO as early in the journey as possible smooths the way with remaining stakeholders, who tend to fall in line when CEO support has already been granted.

"Have your story be compelling... Believe in it, when you tell it, you're the subject matter expert... they feel like, 'wow, I have no other choice but to believe...' Be able to tell that story like telling it to a bunch of kids, and they're just on bated breath waiting for more..."

John Fluker
Director, Global Security
BRP

"The CEO had made a trip out to our headquarters and we got to sit down with him for a little while. He got to hear the overview and everything. That helped in convincing everyone else."

Lou Silvestris
Risk Intelligence and Investigations Manager
American Family Insurance

For this step, consider growing a deeper understanding of your executive leadership to earn their buy-in:

- **Send out a survey to gauge how executives feel about the existing security program:** A satisfaction survey can help you better understand the effectiveness and value of your program by determining how executives perceive security within your organization, as well as what's working and what's not. This will help you glean insight into how you can better engage end-users.

- **Conduct interviews that ask about executives' goals and objectives:** Candid conversations can be helpful, but having more formal interviews with a standardized set of questions is better, especially when speaking with senior stakeholders. This will help you explore their understanding of your program, existing security related concerns and perceived ownership of security processes.

- **Developing personas for executives:** Personas are research-based prototypes developed to represent individuals within a demographic — including their challenges, needs, and motivations. These highly realistic yet fictional characters can help you understand how a person might feel about a product or service offering.

  - For example, a CLO would be especially concerned to learn that security issues are creating vulnerabilities and jeopardizing business continuity — particularly when an unmitigated security vulnerability creates a compliance shortfall or a duty of care lapse.

"It was about five minutes. It was informal and I said, hey, look, this is what we plan to do. And this is why. ...Obviously I had to sell the need, but it wasn't hard. The CEO has seen the benefit of corporate security already."

Joshua Oldag
VP of Health, Safety, and Environment
Oceaneering
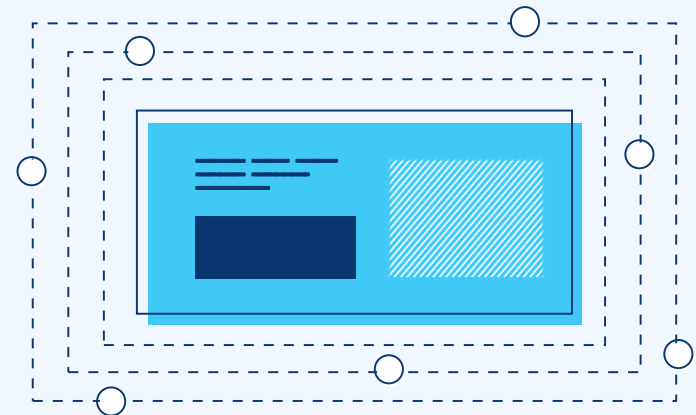
Establish Approval from Stakeholders

Depending upon your organization's processes and review procedures, the Ontic approval journey may require input and buy-in from several groups and divisions across the organization, including other security functions like HR, IT, Legal, and Compliance. For that reason, make a list of key stakeholders and translate your key message into their business language. Other security functions may find Ontic's comprehensive functionality valuable for their own processes and workflows. IT tends to be interested in any anticipated impact on staffing related to the administration and maintenance of the software solution. The challenge in this stage of the approval journey is with legal and compliance, which ensures that PII and other protected data are properly secured. For this reason, participants recommend reaching out to legal and compliance teams very early in the journey.

A tactic clients wish they had tried is to secure a preemptive endorsement from key departments — especially Legal. Moving into your pitch being able to say, "I ran this past IT. I ran this past Legal. They're on board" can help to reduce concerns about security and regulation that can appear to be roadblocks and otherwise overshadow the benefits outlined in your pitch.

Strive to achieve endorsements from a broad group of stakeholder teams. Apart from executive leadership, approval from those in specialized roles who will also benefit from Ontic involved with the implementation and execution of the solution will bolster the credibility of your pitch even further and help your audience envision the process of adoption and implementation moving smoothly.

Consider engaging with executives from teams such as:

- IT/Cybersecurity
- Human Resources
- Legal/Compliance
- Finance
- Marketing/Communications

"Our data privacy attorney has a cow anytime you suggest putting this kind of information into a new tool... If you surprise the data privacy people and our governance risk compliance people, the IT security side, with this new tool, they're either going to put up roadblocks or you're going to significantly slow down your ability to implement it."
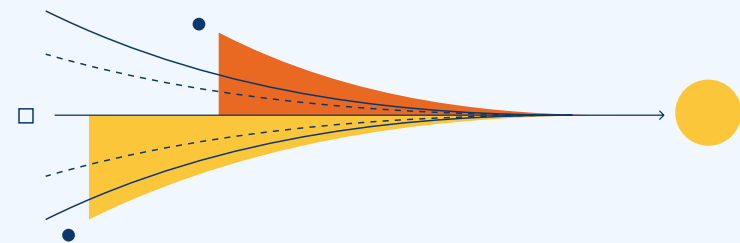
Anonymous
Senior Director of Safety and Asset Protection
Top 10 Largest American Restaurant Chain

"I got on Ontic first, and fortunately, all these groups... ultimately report up to my boss... I went around and said, 'this product says it can do it for everybody'."

Anonymous
Executive Director of Investigations
Global Hospitality and Travel Company

Engage Procurement for Contract Negotiations

Procurement will facilitate contract negotiations, especially around final pricing. This unit will expect an overview of your solutions evaluation process and a rationale for the Ontic recommendation, but won't directly affect the go-no-go decision. In some organizations, procurement is only involved if the process begins with an RFP (request for proposal).

There are a few important elements you'll want to ask procurement about upfront:

- **Procure-to-pay (P2P) system:** Does your company have a procure-to-pay (P2P) system in place, such as COUPA, SAP ARIBA, or Ivalua? If so, there is typically a standardized process associated with moving a contract through the system.

- **Purchasing contact:** Will someone be assigned from the purchasing and procurement department? What is this individual's role (Contracts Administrator, Procurement Officer/Specialist, etc.), and how do they perform their duties as a liaison between your company and the vendor?

- **Vendor validation team:** Is there a separate vendor validation team? It is customary for all new vendors to be verified, which typically requires a unique form to be completed that can include standard items, such as the vendors W-9 and banking details.

Do note that the purchasing and procurement individual is typically juggling multiple administrative duties for incoming vendors in various stages. Ask the vendor to do everything in their power to make things easy with all of the documentation bundled up and ready to go for your team. Also, check to see if they are already an established vendor in the most common P2P platforms.

> "Procurement is only involved if we're opening up an RFP... Our company only requires that over a certain dollar amount... But I do get procurement involved to look at the pricing and look at the contract so that all runs through them."
>
> **Anonymous**
> Senior Director of Safety and Asset Protection
> Top 10 Largest American Restaurant Chain
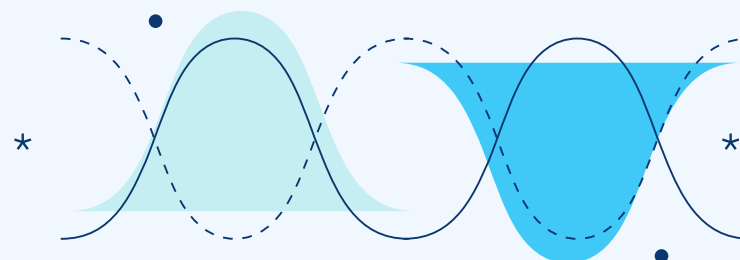
Secure Budget Approval and Adoption

Congratulations! You've reached the end of the approval journey… and now the work begins! It's time to plan for the internal resources associated with onboarding and implementation.

Understanding and preparing for the approval journey will ensure a smoother process and minimize unexpected requests and issues, getting you to yes faster and easier. With this goal in mind, framing your business case and pitch can be a straightforward process. This approval journey is a repeatable process. Whether big or small, understanding and embracing this concept will help you across the board and make you a better business leader.
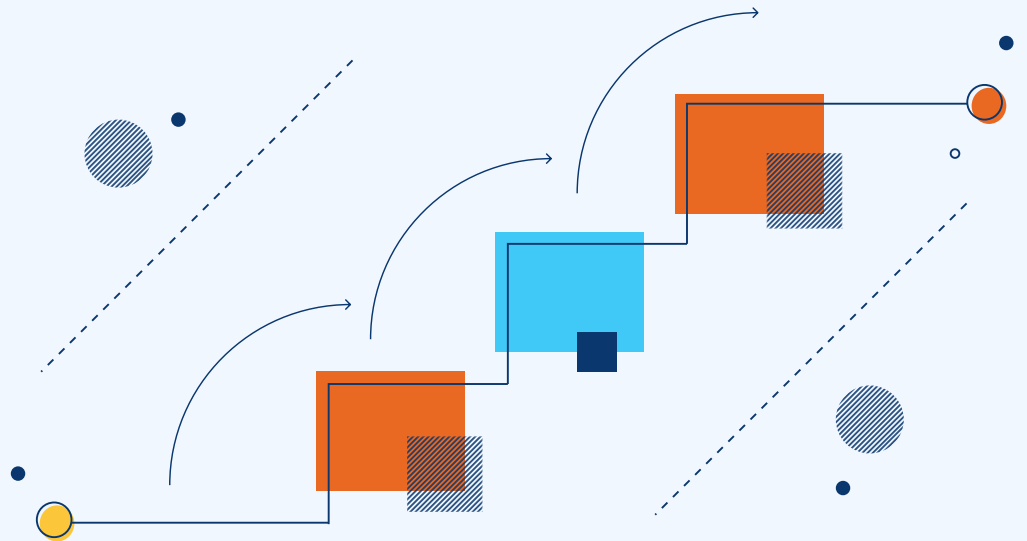
Now that you have an understanding of the road to approval and the actions to take along the way, we've developed three tools that will help get you started:

1. Preparing a business case using the SCIPAB framework
   Read Now →

2. A sample business case using the SCIPAB framework
   Read Now →

3. A sample elevator pitch to gain approval
   Read Now →

A Framework for Preparing the Business Case

Writing a business case can feel intimidating. The SCIPAB framework[1], created by Mandel, is a tried-and-true approach to a persuasive business case.

SCIPAB

⚙️ **SITUATION**

✕ **COMPLICATION**

! **IMPLICATION**

▦ **POSITION**

◎ **ACTION**

📊 **BENEFIT**

Read on to see what the framework entails ↻

[1] SCIPAB is a messaging framework created by Mandel. Learn more at https://www.mandel.com/scipab-messaging-tool

SITUATION

What is the current problem or opportunity? This should be something that already has broad agreement among your audience. Getting agreement at this stage increases the likelihood of a yes at the end of the presentation. A problem may be a micro-issue like an understood need for a case management solution, while an opportunity may be a stated corporate vision for enhanced corporate security.

What clients said on communicating the Situation:

"They [C-Suite] want to move at the speed of business. They want to do so without risk. How can we support that?"

Tony Spencer
Senior Manager of Global Security,
Polaris

"We had identified a vision for a shared risk consciousness across the organization. But the tools were all disparate, separately held data repositories. That was a gap."

Alan Borntrager
Global Head of Corporate Security
Dell Technologies

COMPLICATION

What are the pressures or demands that impact the situation? Here, briefly explain any challenges related to the situation. For the corporate security leaders in the study, complications included limited staffing resources, vulnerability gaps in the current security tools, and an increased occurrence of various threats.

The Complications clients faced:

"We had multiple solutions, ...none of which were fully integrated and or were communicating with one another. ...Those were all disparate and separately held data repositories. Those repositories were not communicating with one another."

Alan Borntrager
Global Head of Corporate Security
Dell Technologies

IMPLICATION

What are the consequences of failing to act on the problem identified in the Complication? Make this point compelling by estimating the potential financial risks associated with a security breach should subsequent legal actions and negative public relations coverage occur.

Implications in a client's own words:

"That's a preventative thing. I'm hopefully preventing that from happening in the future. I like to do the risk analysis and flip the discussion. Say, what's the cost of not having these tools? The potential risks and the cost of those risks. That's when you list those things out: you could get sued; you don't have the video stored, you don't have your written narrative, all your evidence isn't stored in one place, blah, blah, blah. That leads to lawsuits, that leads to jury verdicts. If you have a lingering threat incident that's not tracked, the threat actor ends up coming up to the restaurant and hurting somebody, then that leads to bad PR, etc. You look at what's the cost of doing it? What do you get for it? And then what's the cost of not doing it? What's the cost of the status quo?"

Anonymous
Senior Director of Safety and Asset Protection
Top 10 Largest American Restaurant Chain

POSITION

What solution are you proposing to the problem? The Ontic Platform is the right solution for the Situation, given the Complications, and preventing the Implications.

What a client said on their Position:

"...The service that [Ontic] provides helps me help a small security, physical security team have a tool that can accomplish many requirements that we need. Number one was the availability of real time intelligence from open source, open sources, or as you would call the OSINT, open source intelligence from social media, dark web that could give me information so I could make informed decisions for actionable intelligence to help me on security operations, protect my employees, our partners, our business guests, and physical locations with just information."

Anonymous
Vice President, Chief Security Officer
Fortune 500 Software Company

ACTION

What action do you need from your audience? Make a statement about how your audience can act to support your Position, whether by approving budget, sharing resources, or something else.

A client on their audiences Action:

"I think Ontic was a fairly easy sell, primarily because this was a new capability everybody had agreed upon, and they were really just trusting me to go buy it."

Anonymous
Senior Director of Safety and Asset Protection
Top 10 Largest American Restaurant Chain

BENEFIT

What are the benefits of taking the desired action and adopting the solution proposed in the Position? Back up the benefits with supporting documentation like a cost-benefit analysis.

Benefits in a client's own words:

"...the data that we get from Ontic is going to help elevate what we didn't know before... We're excited about delivering more robust information sharing with our business leaders so they can make really good decisions about what they do next."

John Fluker
Director, Global Security
BRP

Read on to see a sample business case using this simple framework ↻

A Sample Business Case for Approving Ontic

SITUATION

Our company is striving to establish a robust corporate and physical security program to protect against threats. A key part of this vision is fostering a culture of "shared risk consciousness" across the organization.

COMPLICATION

This vision is challenged by a shortage of security staffing, existing tools that leave vulnerability gaps, and a significant increase in threat occurrences. These threats are not just hypothetical; they are real and growing. For instance, according to Ontic and Clarity Factory's Connected Corporate Security Report, 83% of CSOs expect physical security threats to increase in the coming year.

IMPLICATION

If these vulnerabilities are not addressed, the company risks failing to achieve its vision for corporate security. More importantly, it could face direct costs associated with an attack such as damage, theft, lawsuits associated with failure to investigate and manage cases correctly, negative public relations, and more. The average cost of a physical security breach can vary depending on several factors, such as the severity of the incident, the location, the assets involved, and the type of business.

POSITION

The solution to these challenges is the approval of a comprehensive corporate security intelligence platform, specifically, Ontic. Ontic provides a purpose-built software solution for security teams responsible for proactive threat management, incident investigations, and risk mitigation.

ACTION

We request budget approval for adopting Ontic. This investment will not only enhance our security posture but also align with our vision of creating a culture of shared risk consciousness.

BENEFIT

The benefits of adopting Ontic are numerous:

1. It supports the corporate vision of a shared risk consciousness.

2. Ontic serves as a *force multiplier*, enabling existing staff to do more, be more efficient, and be more effective.

3. It prevents threats from operationalizing by filling the vulnerability gaps that currently exist, thereby saving money by eliminating existing solutions with redundant capabilities to Ontic.

TIP: In addition to the main points, include supporting documentation in an appendix.

- **Cost-Benefit Analysis/ROI:** This should feature a cost-benefit analysis detailing the savings associated with efficiencies of staff time, the reduction of redundant solutions, the threat protection benefits, and any others against the estimated cost of adopting Ontic.

- **Existing Solutions Vulnerability Gaps Analysis**: A table illustrating the capabilities required for the desired security program versus those enabled by existing security solutions.

The business case may be presented using 3–5 slides as visual support or may be distributed as a 1-page document to relevant stakeholders. In this study, corporate security leaders told us that a formal presentation to the C-suite was typical, with more informal conversations held for other stakeholder groups (e.g., IT, HR, etc.). For the more informal conversations, turn the business case into an "elevator pitch."
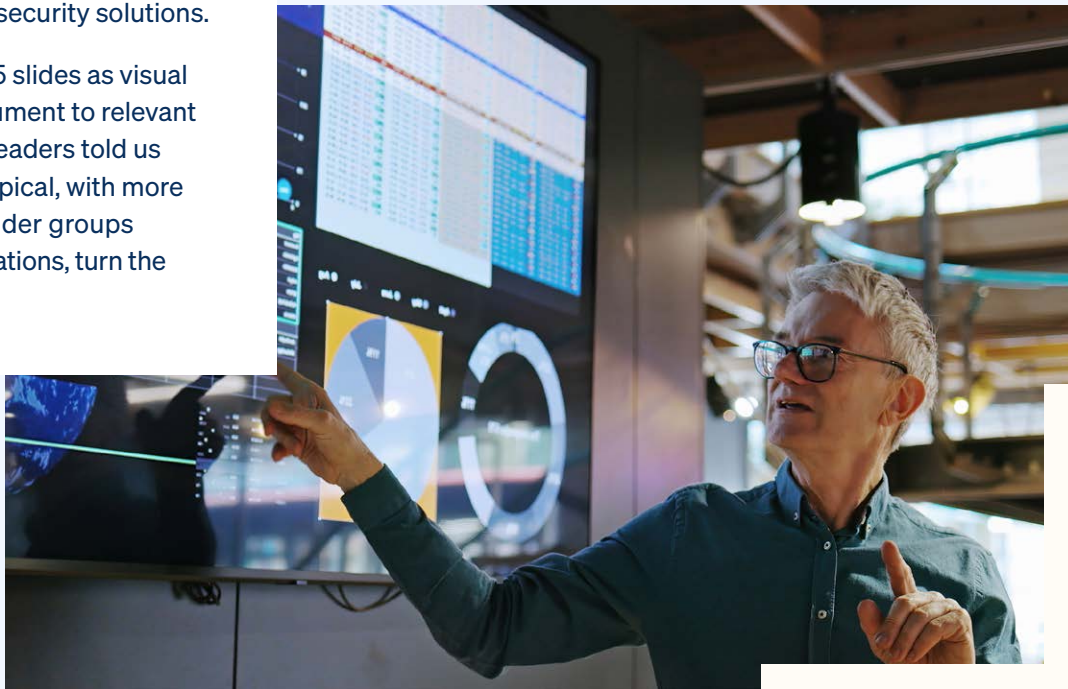
A Sample Elevator Pitch for Approving Ontic

Crafting an effective elevator pitch involves tailoring your message to your audience, starting with a theme to grab attention, clearly articulating the problem your product or service solves and its benefits, keeping it brief and engaging, and ending with a call to action.

> *"We've established a vision for a state-of-the-art corporate/physical security program and a "shared risk consciousness" culture to protect against threats. Challenges include more security staffing and tools, leading to vulnerability gaps compounded by increasing security attacks. Ontic, a comprehensive corporate security platform, offers a solution. It supports our vision, enables our staff to do more, and fills vulnerability gaps to prevent threats. We seek budget approval for Ontic adoption, aligning with our vision and offering substantial benefits and strategic security for our organization's growth."*

To customize the elevator pitch for your company's unique needs, you can use the elevator pitch template below.

> *"Our company aims to establish a [describe your vision for your security program]. However, we face challenges due to [insert your specific challenges and obstacles]. Moreover, industry statistics show a significant increase in [mention the type of security threats relevant to your organization]. If these vulnerabilities are not addressed, we risk facing [mention the potential risks and implications for your organization]. Ontic, a comprehensive security platform, offers a solution. It supports our vision, fills vulnerability gaps, and enhances security, aligning with our strategic goals."*
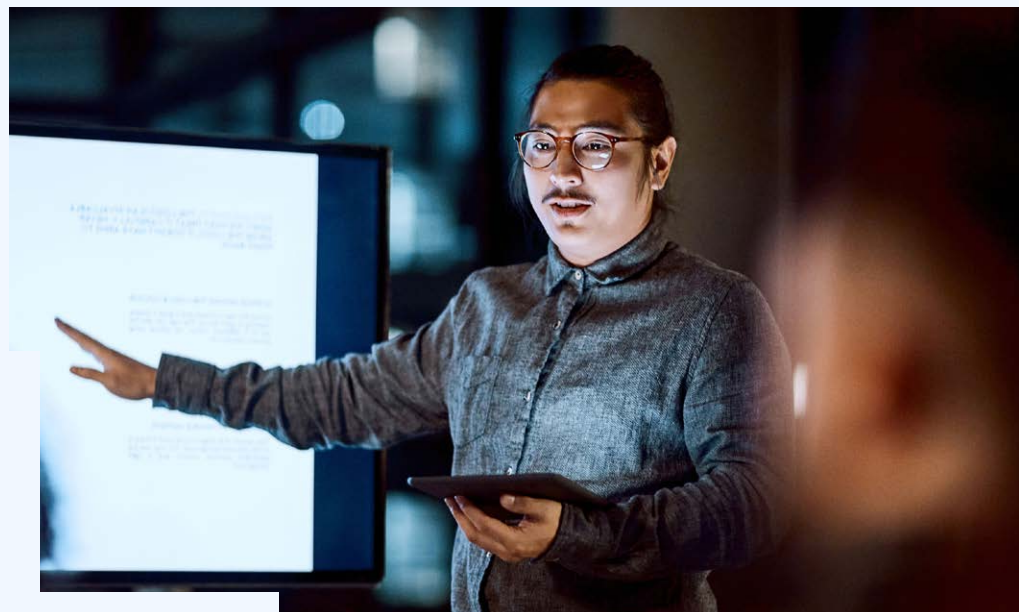
Conclusion

Making the business case for Ontic is a manageable process, passing over many different business units and executives who all need to buy into your vision for Ontic. Crafting your pitch around the Ontic-driven efficiencies gained across each of those business units and explaining how they will all benefit specifically can make for a powerful case, and possibly even create other "champions" within the organization.

Though executives may need more time to grasp the advantages of a unified security view, highlighting current vulnerability gaps and the potential financial and reputational risks of inaction can underscore the need. This approach can further foster a shared risk consciousness across departments.

As a security leader, you know a security incident is not a matter of if but when. Taking the time to prepare upfront can speed up implementation and make your job easier. You can rely on the Ontic team to assist you every step of the way, ensuring your organization is more secure and you are in front of any issue.

METHODOLOGY

This guide presents the findings of a qualitative research study commissioned by Ontic and conducted by Illuminas, a full-service market research consultancy. The study aimed to understand the approval journey of corporate security leaders who recently purchased Ontic's platform. The study used in-depth interviews as the primary data collection method. Nine clients were recruited and interviewed by Illuminas researchers. The interviewees were corporate security leaders at Fortune 500 companies and emerging enterprises from a range of industries, including technology, hospitality, insurance, and manufacturing, amongst others.

ONTIC

Learn more about the top brands upgrading their security with Ontic

Ontic makes software that corporate and government security professionals use to proactively manage threats, mitigate risks, and make businesses stronger. Built by security and software professionals, the Ontic Platform connects and unifies critical data, business processes, and collaborators in one place, consolidating security intelligence and operations. **We call this Connected Intelligence.**

Learn More