Skopos Financial

LOAN SERVICES PROVIDER SUCCESSFULLY SPINS UP NEW LINE OF BUSINESS DURING A TUMULTUOUS TIME, POWERED BY A SECURE, ROBUST, HIGHLY SCALABLE CUSTOMER-FACING APPLICATION

The Challenge

Pivoting to a new business line is a monumental task. Doing so at the start of a global pandemic is uncharted territory. This was precisely the situation that Skopos Financial found itself in, in early 2020. Skopos was initially founded as an auto finance company in 2011. After building up that business, executive leadership decided to expand into the consumer lending market.

While the underlying business structure of auto lending and consumer lending are similar, the differences in the prospective customer base are stark. Whereas Skopos is a secondary lender working with dealers on the auto side, its consumer lending business would service loans direct to consumer. It meant that essentially its customer base would grow from 3,000 to 200 million overnight.

It also meant it needed a top-class B2C web application that was easy to use, highly secure, and endlessly scalable. The new web app also needed to integrate with third-party affiliates as well as Skopos' own direct marketing and lending channels.

Since this was an entirely new offering, each day expenses were going out while the application was being built, but there was no revenue coming in. Thus, getting it launched to the public was extremely urgent and strategic, with visibility at the highest executive levels of the company.

The Solution

Having identified a need for robust modern authentication and security concepts to be built into the application that would power this new line of business – plus a tight launch schedule – Skopos determined it needed a trusted partner. Skopos chose Presidio to secure the Springlight Financial online loan application system and an API gateway to connect clients, servicing vendors and referral partners with all necessary backend data sources. Skopos also needed Presidio to deploy its identity management solution.

The application's core functionality allows customers to apply for consumer loans online and then process those loan applications. Therefore, it required stringent security at every potential point of vulnerability before it could confidently be offered to clients.

Presidio performed a comprehensive security review to understand possible gaps and determine how to design against them for the impending rapid implementation.

Springlight is a Java-based application, so Presidio and Skopos used Spring Boot, an open-source Java-based framework, to build out microservices. Spring Security was also leveraged to provide authentication to the application. Additionally, Presidio deployed Keycloak to satisfy complex identity management requirements, creating security tokens for consumers and business partners that came to the site.

"PRESIDIO WAS FAST MOVING AND MORE RESPONSIVE THAN ANY OTHER VENDOR EXPERIENCE. DELIVERY EXCEEDED EXPECTATIONS. WE HAVE LEARNED A LOT FROM PRESIDIO'S DIGITAL BUSINESS SERVICES TEAM IN API, APPDEV, AND DEVOPS. WE LOVE THEIR PROCESSES AND APPROACH."

- Kevin Kleibrink, CIO

Skopos had an in-house API gateway that needed to be bolstered to securely handle the increase in expected traffic and the additional integration points for Springlight. Presidio assisted with this effort by designing, testing, and ultimately delivering a high-performing, airtight gateway that distributed calls to Skopos' critical web services. Keycloak ensures that only the authorized individuals or entities can access data from any public call made through the API gateway.

Following an extremely tight timeline, Presidio crucially was able to supply expert resources familiar with the technology stack and do so in a hybrid on- and offshore model. This 24/7 resolution assessment capability proved critical to meeting development, testing and security review timelines. Any security concerns that emerged during U.S. business hours could be relayed and translated to offshore resources during their business hours. The resulting remediation of any programmatical issues was swift and comprehensive.

"IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PANDEMIC, THIS WAS A TIME OF FEAR, A TIME OF FAILURE, AND A TIME OF BUSINESSES GOING UNDER. THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PRESIDIO TEAM SHEPHERDED THE PROJECT TO SUCCESS DURING A TIME WHEN SUCCESS STORIES WERE FEW AND FAR BETWEEN."

- Graham Fagan, Group Director of Technology & Operations, AIB

The new application was successfully launched on time despite the inherent challenges presented by the pandemic. Post-launch, Presidio provided HyperCare support of the production environment for the first month that it was live, ensuring that Springlight was performing optimally at scale and securely.

Results / Benefits

The adage "time is money" gets thrown around a lot, but in the context of developing a mission-critical application that provides the backbone for a brand-new line of business, it's unquestionably true. The combined Presidio and Skopos team designed, architected, implemented, tested, and deployed the new product in less than two months. The result was a new business getting turned on that could begin generating revenue immediately.

The successful launch of a secure and robust product was indeed priority number one, but a somewhat unexpected long-term benefit also arose as a part of this project. Namely, the agile development methodology and DevOps principals Presidio demonstrated are now an integral component of Skopos' strategy for projects going forward. Working in true partnership with Presidio, the Skopos development team picked up agile best practices that it has now adopted in a very similar fashion. This transfer of knowledge has helped Skopos become self-sufficient in its ability to manage the Springlight environment and has set them up for many more successful releases down the road.

About Presidio

Presidio is a global digital services and solutions provider accelerating business transformation through secured technology modernization. Highly skilled teams of engineers and solutions architects with deep expertise across cloud, security, networking and modern data center infrastructure help customers acquire, deploy and operate technology that delivers impactful business outcomes. Presidio is a trusted strategic advisor with a flexible full life cycle model of professional, managed, and support and staffing services to help execute, secure, operationalize and maintain technology solutions.

For more information on how we connect IT of today to IT of tomorrow, visit presidio.com