Infosys brings its services expertise to data protection and privacy with iEDPS offering

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Data protection and privacy have never been more important. Remote work necessitates the secure and compliant sharing of data across the virtual organization, often spanning regulations and jurisdictions. Infosys Enterprise Data Privacy Suite brings not only core data protection and privacy features but also services that help achieve privacy objectives.

451 Research

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Introduction

The management of data privacy today is growing more multifaceted, with more distributed means of data management becoming the norm and regulations continuing to evolve around the world. The expanded remote work model has further complicated the secure sharing and access of data, particularly for multinational businesses. So within a given organization, data privacy efforts can be extremely broad in terms of stakeholders and technology. Yet responsibility for directing this effort is often nebulous. According to 451 Research's Voice of the Enterprise: Data & Analytics, Data Management & Analytics survey, only 8.4% of respondents report that their organization has a dedicated data privacy team holding the primary responsibility for managing data privacy and data protection requirements. In half (50.5%) of cases, the IT team holds this de facto responsibility in addition to their existing workload.

Given this complexity and frequent lack of dedicated data privacy responsibility, many organizations can benefit from professional services and guidance to help achieve both compliance and business productivity objectives. This is the approach Infosys is taking with its data privacy and data protection offering, the Infosys Enterprise Data Privacy Suite (iEDPS). The platform offers not only core technical mechanisms for ensuring data protection, but an accompanying broad range of professional support and consulting services help customers optimize privacy strategy.

451 TAKE

The iEDPS offers a broad swath of the core data protection mechanisms that are considered table stakes for a functioning enterprise data privacy program, but that is not necessarily what makes it most notable. In providing the suite, Infosys is also bringing its rich heritage in professional services and consulting. Each organization's own IT environment is unique, and the product plus services approach can help the enterprise optimize data privacy strategy and practices considering existing IT investments and adjacent objectives such as worker productivity. With many enterprise privacy programs lacking a clear captain at the helm, outside services can provide the structure to help businesses allocate internal efforts and talent more efficiently to meet privacy requirements.

However, Infosys's focus on the large enterprise has the risk of hitting an asymptotic limit in terms of customer acquisition. Many large organizations already have relatively mature data privacy efforts (or at least believe they do), and it's the midmarket that could potentially benefit the most from a services-centric product approach. By tailoring services more aggressively to midsized organizations, which often face the same privacy requirements as large enterprises but with less resources, Infosys could gain additional ground in the dynamic 'PrivacyOps' segment.

Context

Little introduction is needed for Infosys, which is known globally for its consulting, IT and outsourcing services. The company was initially founded in 1981 in Pune, India, but subsequently moved it headquarters to Bangalore, where the headquarters remain this day. The publicly traded firm reports roughly $13bn in revenue and has over 240,000 employees. According to 451 Research's M&A KnowledgeBase, Infosys inked four acquisition deals in 2020 alone, almost exclusively focused on IT services and consulting.

The company also offers dedicated technology offerings, one of which is iEDPS. The development of a packaged data privacy technology suite began in 2010. Over time, the proliferation of global data privacy and protection regulations drove enterprise demand for approaches that could help navigate increasingly complex and multinational requirements. The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is largely considered to be the vanguard of these modern data protection and privacy mandates; since it went into effect in May 2018, many more regional regulations around the globe have borrowed its core principles. But despite similarities, each regulation has its own nuances, creating a challenge for any multinational or multi-regional organization that must juggle multiple requirements. Given this context, iEDPS was designed to address a broad swath of global requirements and can be used to supplement compliance efforts for the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA), HIPAA requirements in the US and any number of Personal Data Protection Acts (PDPA) across the APAC region, as well as other data privacy and protection mandates.

The iEDPS offering is developed under Infosys's incubation center, which is called the Infosys Center for Emerging Technology Solutions (iCETS). The center focuses on emerging technologies and looks to develop products designed to accelerate innovation for customers. At the present, Infosys has 50+ client implementations of iEDPS.

Product

The iEDPS offering is a suite of data privacy and data protection capabilities rather than a monolithic product. Its capabilities can be broken into five categories:

Sensitive data discovery. Data discovery capabilities are designed to identify and locate potentially sensitive data – including unstructured data – across the IT ecosystem, regardless of its source or location. For many organizations trying to establish a data privacy program, the biggest challenge is simply knowing what sensitive data they have and where it is.

Data source protection. Core data protection functionality gives organizations several options for protecting sensitive data once it has been identified and located. Functions include encryption, anonymization and pseudonymization. iEDPS provides a library of 200+ data protection algorithms and 75+ data generation algorithms. Data protection capabilities also include masking of data on mainframe systems.

Data lineage and inventory management. Understanding data's provenance and journey through the organization is critical to supporting privacy efforts, as well as general insight initiatives. iEDPS provides data lineage and mapping functions to give the organization a holistic view of data assets, supported by broad data source compatibility.

Data augmentation and test data management. A major privacy challenge in development initiatives is the tendency to use production data, which may include highly sensitive fields and information. The suite offers options for generating synthetic data sets that maintain the analytical qualities of production data

Data sub-setting. In many analytical use cases, only a subset of data is needed from a database or repository; for privacy use cases, this can be useful to exclude sensitive data. However, just making a copy of this data for analysis elsewhere strips the data of any relationships and dependent references. The data sub-setting capabilities of iEDPS allow for subsets of data to be taken while maintaining referential integrity.

Strategy

With the iEDPS offering, Infosys is certainly providing a collection of packaged technology capabilities, but the overarching strategy is to accompany these products with a robust array of professional services and guidance. Broadly speaking, Infosys's services are designed to help organizations craft sustainable data privacy programs that reflect individual IT environments. Rather than just striving to help meet baseline compliance requirements, Infosys is aiming to assist organizations in achieving synergies between their data protection efforts and data productivity efforts, helping achieve competitive advantage.

Consulting related to iEDPS can be broken into three categories: implementation and support services, advisory services, and enablement services. Implementation and support services aim to ensure appropriate deployment and configuration to meet necessary data protection and privacy standards, with ongoing support for continuous improvements and recurring audits. Assessments, certifications and metrics/tracking are part of implementation and support services as well. Advisory services are designed to minimize risk and help organizations identify areas for improvement and optimization. These include (but are not limited to) gap assessment, readiness assessment, risk assessment and evaluation of third-party relationships for compliance and contract risk. Enablement services offer people-centric support designed to help establish data privacy culture, provide appropriate worker training and assist with change management.

At present, Infosys generally targets the large enterprise market for its iEDPS offering and related services; however, this doesn't mean that data-driven midsized businesses wouldn't benefit from capabilities and support. Much like the broader data management market, Infosys is focused on further developing and advancing its ML-driven and automated functionality, lowering the bar to product use and helping iEDPS scale to ever larger volumes of data.

Competition

Infosys casts a wide net in terms of data protection and privacy functionality with iEDPS. From a technical perspective, notable competitors which can tout a similar spread of capabilities would include IBM and Informatica. IBM Security Guardium covers many of the same data protection bases with data discovery and classification capabilities in addition to remediation functions such as data encryption. Other areas of the IBM portfolio offer test data management and governance-related functions such as data lineage, and IBM additionally is known for its global services portfolio. Informatica has an extremely comprehensive data management portfolio, including the Informatica Data Privacy Management (formerly Secure@Source) offering, which manages functions such as data discovery and remediation capabilities such as dynamic masking. The company additionally offers test data management and lineage; all products are tied into Informatica's unified metadata layer, which leverages the CLAIRE AI engine for automated functionality.

A number of providers offer data discovery and/or classification capabilities intertwined with higher-level data privacy management controls, often combined with data remediation and protection capabilities. Examples of these include 1touch.io, BigID, DataGrail, Io-Tahoe, NetApp (via Cognigo assets), PKWARE (via Dataguise acquisition) Privacera, Securiti.ai, Spirion, STEALTHbits and Varonis.

In addition to many of the vendors mentioned above, several other providers compete for 'mindshare' in the data management market segment that 451 Research has identified as PrivacyOps. Most have some degree of data source protection functionality, or work with partners to ensure data protection functionality via integrations. Major names in this space include OneTrust and TrustArc, with the former offering automated data discovery as well via its acquisition of Integris Software. Other data privacy specialists include 2B Advice, Ardent, Ethyca, PHEMI, Privitar and WireWheel.

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

Infosys's expertise in professional and IT services makes iEDPS more of a 'complete package' in terms of privacy functionality, because many organizations struggle to implement data protection controls in a way that consistently meets the needs of overarching data privacy programs. Data protection can facilitate data privacy only when it is implemented correctly, and Infosys is dedicated to implementation.

WEAKNESSES

Many of the popular PrivacyOps products on the market appeal heavily to less-technical line-of-business users, doing so by providing consumerized UI and emphasis on workflow orchestration capabilities. The iEDPS offering is more technical in nature, and Infosys as a brand has a stronger connection with the IT function of organizations. Infosys will need to build rapport with additional privacy influencers within the organization, not just IT.

OPPORTUNITIES

While Infosys is currently focused on the large enterprise market, many of the organizations that struggle the most with data privacy strategy and execution are midsized. If Infosys can package iEDPS with accessible and appropriately priced services designed for the midmarket, they could potentially serve as the natural extension for many privacy programs that are in the middle of the maturity curve, helping them accelerate compliance and outcomes.

THREATS

The data management market segment that 451 Research deems PrivacyOps is still young, but highly dynamic and crowded. As a services company, Infosys doesn't have the initial product recognition that many data privacy specialist vendors can tout. As consolidation continues to occur in this space, organizations may be apt to go with a large software vendor that can claim to be a data privacy 'one-stop shop' rather than trying to lean on professional services offerings.