Nicholas Garner

TARGET ROLE **Deputy CISO | Head of Security Engineering and Operations**

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SUMMARY

Security leader with 25+ years spanning financial services, a global security and networking vendor, and two companies founded and carried to acquisition. Currently accountable for a 120-engineer delivery organization on a two-year, $100M enterprise program at Cisco, including a 150-site secure-by-default network redesign for a regulated pharmaceutical customer delivered under audit scrutiny. Twice built and owned a company's security from zero and represented it through acquirer security and risk diligence to successful exit; at TeleSense, served as functional CISO over a five-year tenure and reported security posture and risk to the board of directors. Began in security at Washington Mutual, designing and operating security services for a national bank under continuous federal examiner oversight. Seeking a Deputy CISO or equivalent senior security leadership role with remit across security engineering, operations, and assurance.

LEADERSHIP SCOPE

Organization led	120 engineers across a multi-workstream delivery organization
Program scale	$100M, two-year enterprise program; 150-site global network redesign
Regulated environments	National bank under federal examiner oversight; pharmaceutical under audit scrutiny; SOC 2 Trust Services Criteria
Governance exposure	Security posture and risk reporting to a board of directors; acquirer security and risk diligence, twice
Outcomes	Two acquisitions: TeleSense (UPL Decco, 2022); SlitherSense (ZooMed Laboratories, 2024)

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Security Program Ownership and Strategy | Board and Executive Risk Reporting | Regulatory, Examiner, and Audit Engagement | Security Operations, Detection, and Incident Response | Cloud and SaaS Security (AWS, Azure, GCP) | Identity and Access, Human and Non-Human | Product Security and Secure SDLC | Third-Party and Software Supply Chain Risk | AI/ML Security and Governance | M&A Security Diligence | Organization Building and Talent Development

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Solutions Integration Architect

Cisco Systems, San Jose, CA | March 2024 - Present

- Accountable to customer and Cisco executive leadership for a 120-engineer delivery organization on a two-year, $100M enterprise program, setting technical direction, structuring workstreams, and owning execution against committed outcomes.
- Delivered a 150-site global network redesign for a regulated pharmaceutical customer under audit scrutiny: secure-by-default baselines, segmentation, infrastructure as code, observability, and high availability.
- Set guardrail-based security architecture standards across AWS, Azure, GCP, hybrid, and on-premise estates: identity-based access, segmentation, secure baselines, logging and monitoring, encryption in transit, and controlled ingress and egress.
- Serve as a customer-facing security authority for a security and networking vendor, advising Fortune 50 security executives on control maturity, posture, and roadmap, and briefing tradeoffs and residual risk to senior leadership.
- Lead secure design reviews and threat models for complex distributed systems, setting the risk-based order in which findings are remediated and driving systemic fixes over point solutions.

Co-founder and Chief Engineer (Functional CISO)

TeleSense, Inc., Sunnyvale, CA | May 2017 - Acquired by UPL Decco, 2022

- Owned the company's security program alongside engineering and reported security posture and risk to the board of directors.
- Built and led the engineering organization across hardware, firmware, and cloud over approximately five years, including hiring, performance management, and technical career development.
- Designed machine identity and delegated-credential boundaries for a large fleet of semi-trusted devices: secure onboarding, credential issuance and rotation, scoped least-privilege permissions, and containment of what a compromised identity could reach.
- Architected the trust boundary between untrusted field input and the cloud platform consuming it, with validation, isolation, and data protection at rest and in transit.
- Carried security and technical diligence through to acquisition.

Founder

SlitherSense, Sunnyvale, CA | 2022 - Acquired by ZooMed Laboratories, 2024

- Built and operated a connected hardware and cloud product end to end as sole engineer, covering device firmware, platform, and infrastructure, through to acquisition.
- Made and owned every security decision for the product: least-privilege IAM, credential and key lifecycle, network isolation, encrypted data paths, host hardening, and CI/CD and dependency security.
- Owned software supply chain integrity from contract manufacturer through field deployment, including build pipeline controls, dependency security, firmware signing, and update trust.
- Represented the product's security posture through acquisition diligence, answering the acquirer's technical and risk review directly.

Principal Consultant, Security and Compliance

Pignology, Sunnyvale, CA | 2025 - Present

- Assess SOC 2 control design and operating effectiveness against the Trust Services Criteria for a technology client, determining what evidence survives audit testing and where remediation is required ahead of examination.
- Designed and delivered a machine learning computer vision system for automated defect detection under a separate automation engagement.

Principal Solutions Architect
Denali AI, Sunnyvale, CA (Remote) | May 2017 - March 2024
- Built computer vision systems end to end for Fortune 50 technology clients, from data pipeline and model training through inference deployment and production operation.
- Designed security architecture for AI and ML training and inference environments, including protection of training data and model artifacts and control of access to both.
- Led proof-of-concept development and secure integration of machine learning workloads across complex multi-vendor systems.

Solutions Integration Architect
Cisco Systems, San Jose, CA | January 2007 - May 2017
- Delivered customer-facing security and architecture consulting for enterprise and datacenter environments across global accounts, building credibility with customer technical and security leadership.
- Specialized in segmentation, isolation, and security design for regulated and compliance-driven environments.

Network Security Engineer
Washington Mutual, Northridge, CA | January 2002 - January 2007
- Designed, deployed, and operated security services protecting the financial systems of a national bank across a five-year tenure, in an environment governed by continuous federal examiner oversight and formal audit remediation cycles.
- Built the regulated-environment discipline that shaped the rest of this career: controls evidenced rather than asserted, and findings tracked to closure.

AWS and Machine Learning Instructor
Pearson, Sunnyvale, CA | 2016 - Present
- Develop and deliver AWS and machine learning certification curricula covering IAM and authorization models, encryption and key management, secure API design, and container and orchestration security (Docker, ECS, EKS).
- Lead Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) preparation covering offensive technique, threat modeling, penetration testing methodology, and common vulnerability classes.

Network Security Engineer
United States Marine Corps, Quantico, VA | 1997 - 2001
- Managed firewalls and edge routers for secure military communications.

TECHNICAL DEPTH

- **Security Operations:** telemetry and alerting pipeline design, detection engineering, vulnerability management, incident response, containment and remediation, disaster recovery
- **Cloud and SaaS Security:** AWS (primary), Azure, GCP; guardrail-based controls, secure baselines, posture management, logging and monitoring; container and workload isolation (Docker, ECS, EKS/Kubernetes); Aviatrix multi-cloud segmentation
- **Identity:** least-privilege IAM, authentication and authorization design, non-human and machine identity lifecycle, delegated credentials and scoped permissions, certificate and key management, identity-based segmentation
- **Product and Application Security:** secure design review, threat modeling, secure SDLC, code review, CI/CD pipeline and dependency security, software supply chain integrity, penetration testing methodology
- **Risk, Compliance, and Assurance:** SOC 2 Trust Services Criteria control assessment, control mapping to ISO 27001, risk registers, vendor and third-party security review, acquisition security diligence
- **AI/ML Security:** threat modeling for agents holding delegated credentials, prompt injection, untrusted model and tool output, training data protection; NIST AI RMF, MITRE ATLAS, OWASP Top 10 for LLMs

CERTIFICATIONS

CISSP | CCIE Security | CCIE Enterprise Infrastructure | Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) | AWS Certified Solutions Architect | AWS Certified Developer | Aviatrix Certified Engineer (Multi-Cloud Networking)

EDUCATION

Self-taught engineer; continuous professional development across security, cloud, and machine learning disciplines.