

Boston Scientific sees 100% adoption of remotely accessed business intelligence software after deploying Akamai's solutions



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— **Rory Abbazio**, Senior Manager of Information Technology, Boston Scientific

Boston Scientific

The Situation

Boston Scientific, one of the top 10 largest medical device manufacturers in the world, transforms lives through innovative medical solutions that improve the health of patients around the world. With a market presence in about 100 countries, the manufacturer employs approximately 23,000 people around the world, of which 6,000 are in sales. To empower the sales force in making timely, informed data-driven decisions, Boston Scientific had chosen to equip its reps with software from Tableau. Getting the most value possible from its investment required the company to make Tableau accessible from any location and on any device.

The Challenge

Rory Abbazio manages the Reporting and Analytics team at Boston Scientific and spearheaded the company's evolution from traditional business intelligence (BI) to modern information and intelligence. Even after replacing earlier generations of BI software with Tableau®, Abbazio had a challenge on his hands. The first thing he heard about Tableau was complaints from every level of the sales department about the need to access the software via a VPN. As Abbazio explains, “We made a significant investment in Tableau, so adoption was critical.”

Boston Scientific's sales reps could generally access Tableau within 5-7 seconds via a VPN — a vast improvement over the time it took to access the previous BI software — but they loathed having to wait for the VPN connection. As a result, adoption of Tableau had plateaued at 80%. Out of frustration, reps sometimes circumvented the VPN and sent data via email.

“Access to and the performance of Tableau over VPN was less than optimal, and we had to address this to drive up adoption and secure our data,” recalls Abbazio.

The Goals

Boston Scientific needed to meet three key requirements to support its objectives:

- **Eliminate the need for a VPN.** To overcome sales' objections to remotely accessing Tableau, the company had to find another way to enable application access
- **Boost adoption.** In order to realize the full return on its investment, Boston Scientific wanted all its sales reps using Tableau
- **Secure data.** Because Tableau contains sensitive and proprietary information, it was imperative that Boston Scientific prevent unauthorized remote access and unsanctioned data sharing

Why Akamai?

Staying with a Proven Partner

Given the global distribution of Boston Scientific's sales force, it became clear to Abbazio that no VPN would enable optimal [application performance](#) of Tableau for all users. As the previous program manager for Boston Scientific's flagship website (www.bostonscientific.com), Abbazio immediately

COMPANY

Boston Scientific
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INDUSTRY

Healthcare & Life Sciences

SOLUTIONS

- Kona Site Defender
- ION

KEY IMPACTS

- Realized 100% adoption of critical application
- Streamlined application access for end users
- Improved application performance by nearly 60%
- Eliminated need for a VPN
- Enhanced protection against web application attacks

Boston Scientific

turned to Akamai. “We use Akamai Ion to ensure optimal performance of our main site. I was confident Akamai would have a solution to address this issue,” explains Abbazio.

The best solution was to circumvent the use of a VPN and instead deliver the Tableau application via the Akamai platform, while protecting the application and its data. To that end, Akamai recommended **ION** and **Kona Site Defender**, complemented by AirWatch® for certificate-based, two-factor authentication of the enterprise application. While ION optimizes application performance, Kona’s **web application firewall** provides highly scalable protection against web application attacks, including SQL injections, cross-site scripting, and remote file inclusions. At the same time, the certificate-based authentication helps keep Tableau secure as it’s being accessed remotely.

Streamlining Access and Boosting Adoption

After implementing Akamai, Boston Scientific’s sales reps can simply open a browser and go through certification-based authentication to access an SSL tunnel. In fact, reps can generally access Tableau within 2-3 seconds – nearly 60% faster than before. The result? One-hundred percent adoption of Tableau. According to Abbazio, as soon as the browser opens, sales reps can now view data and reports from Tableau over Akamai’s secure network. This ready access from anywhere and from any device has helped Boston Scientific’s global sales force better prepare for sales calls and more quickly execute contracts. It has also helped sales managers better manage

territory assignments and easily identify account issues. “With ready access to Tableau, our reps and managers can use their time more intelligently. Plus, the data supports interactions with prospective customers, for better engagements,” says Abbazio.

Realizing Additional Business Benefits

Boston Scientific has also realized ancillary benefits by boosting the adoption of Tableau. For one, business users are now empowered to create their own reports, reducing the number of consultants needed for this task. Abbazio estimates an annual savings of \$500,000 to \$1 million for this alone. At the same time, just about anyone can take advantage of Tableau because it is so easy to use. This is in contrast to previous business intelligence applications that required users to have an SQL background.

Revolutionizing Company-Wide Enterprise App Use

According to Abbazio, moving Tableau off of the VPN was a huge win for Boston Scientific’s IT group. “This sent the message that IT is a business enabler and it opens everyone’s minds to what is possible with our enterprise applications.” In fact, going forward, Boston Scientific plans to move as many applications as possible to the Akamai network. By doing so, it will be able to eliminate its VPN concentrator.

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About Boston Scientific

Boston Scientific transforms lives through innovative medical solutions that improve the health of patients around the world. As a global medical technology leader for more than 35 years, we advance science for life by providing a broad range of high-performance solutions that address unmet patient needs and reduce the cost of healthcare. For more information, visit www.bostonscientific.com and connect on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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