

## CASE STUDY



# BAXTER CREDIT UNION PRIORITIZES CLOUD SECURITY FOR ITS MEMBERS' DATA

# BCU

## COMPANY PROFILE

**COMPANY:** Baxter Credit Union  
**INDUSTRY:** Credit Union  
**ARMOR SOLUTIONS:** Armor Anywhere  
**CLOUD PROVIDER:** Microsoft Azure  
**WEBSITE:** BCU.org



Credit unions face many challenges when operating online. Unlike banks and other financial institutions, they are not-for-profit entities that provide services for members, as opposed to customers and businesses. Because of this unique relationship, special care must be taken to ensure members can access financial data easily and securely. Balancing these customer expectations and operational objectives, while maintaining robust security, can be a challenge for even the most security-savvy credit union.

This was the challenge Illinois-based Baxter Credit Union (BCU) faced when seeking a convergence of member satisfaction and cyber security while also supporting its hybrid cloud strategy.

## EMBRACING THE CLOUD

BCU prides itself on offering members more innovative services than can be found at many other financial institutions. Of course, standing apart from the competition requires thinking outside the box, and in the case of BCU, thinking beyond legacy, on-premises hosting solutions for sensitive data workloads. To truly differentiate themselves, executives needed to hybridize their infrastructure and embrace the public cloud.

For Jeff Johnson, Chief Information Officer at BCU, the potential benefits of fully embracing cloud hosting were obvious.

"The cloud in general is a fantastic opportunity to put our time and resources towards non-commodity IT practices," he said. "Having vendors that can support both physical and cloud data centers allows for more consistencies in BCU's processes, fewer vendors and contracts to manage, and the ability to form long-term relationships that can meet our strategic security needs. The more automated tools that we have, the less manual activities that need to be performed, allowing us to free up our professional resources to add great value."

Unfortunately, BCU's existing security provider was not capable of supporting the move to a hybrid cloud infrastructure, so the credit union began searching for a provider who could provide that service.

### About BCU

**The fastest-growing credit union  
in the past 30 years**



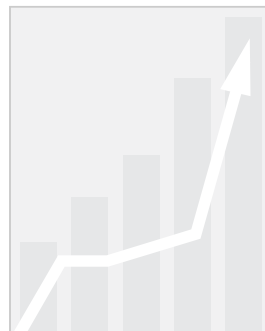
**\$2.6 BILLION**

full-service financial institution



**200,000 MEMBERS**

in all 50 States and Puerto Rico



BCU is regarded as having set new standards for bringing together technology and member service in the fast-changing world of financial services delivery.

For more information about BCU, please visit [BCU.org](http://BCU.org).

## FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Similar to the situation BCU encountered with its own managed security provider, the credit union soon discovered that finding the right security partner would not be an easy task. “We found a lot of resistance and hesitation from managed security providers when it came to the cloud,” Johnson said. “Even though the systems run the same, they wanted to diminish the services offered just because it was on the cloud as opposed to being on-premises.”

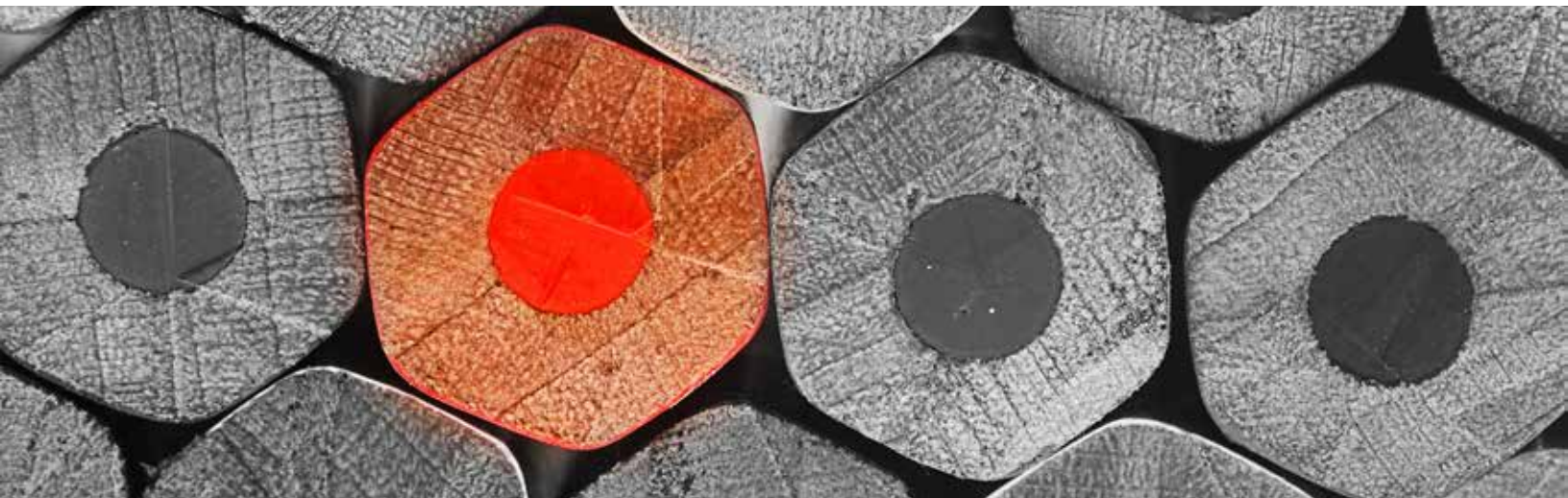
There was the additional complication of BCU meeting PCI compliance requirements. Any solution it integrated into its cloud strategy would have to be both agile and secure—flexible enough to adapt to any cloud infrastructure while also capable of meeting the standards set by the PCI Council.

A recommendation from a vendor led BCU to Armor. Executives were quickly impressed by Armor’s managed approach and the level of protection Armor Anywhere, a PCI 3.1-compliant managed security solution, provides for workloads on Microsoft Azure. With Armor Anywhere, BCU has the flexibility and level of control needed to achieve its cloud-based aspirations.



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— Jeff Johnson, Chief Information Officer



## A BETTER CLOUD

Armor Anywhere secures BCU's Microsoft Azure-hosted instances from persistent cyber threats—providing 24/7/365 incident detection and response along with advanced threat intelligence capabilities for its members' sensitive data.

"One thing that intrigued us with Armor versus our other managed security provider was Armor's cloud aptitude and competency," Johnson said. "Working with the Security Operations Center (SOC) has provided great resource-saving value. The team members are knowledgeable about their clients, as well as security, so there aren't unnecessary escalation events sent to our team to deal with."

Armor's proactive approach to cloud security services contrasts with other managed security providers the credit union encountered, including its previous cloud security provider. Armor's focus on expanding its services to support public cloud infrastructure was a welcome approach for BCU.

BCU also benefited from Armor's expertise in mitigating online threats. This is a value that Johnson said is essential to maintaining a secure cloud environment.

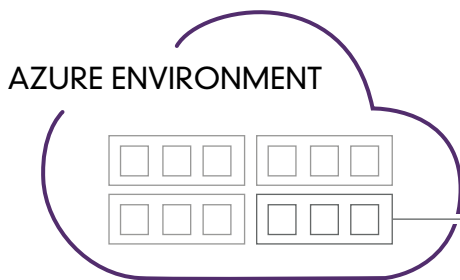
"The first step to overcoming the risks of hosting in the cloud is having the capabilities to identify abnormal behavior as it's happening and then responding instantly to minimize or prevent any damage," he said. "With Armor Anywhere, we have the detection and prevention tools we need to feel secure in our environment."



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### ARMOR ANYWHERE—SECURITY ON MICROSOFT AZURE



#### SECURITY FEATURES

- Intrusion Detection
- 24/7/365 Active Monitoring Alerts
- Log & Event Management
- File Integrity Monitoring (FIM)
- Vulnerability Scanning
- Managed Malware Protection
- Patch Monitoring

## SHARING RESPONSIBILITY ON AZURE

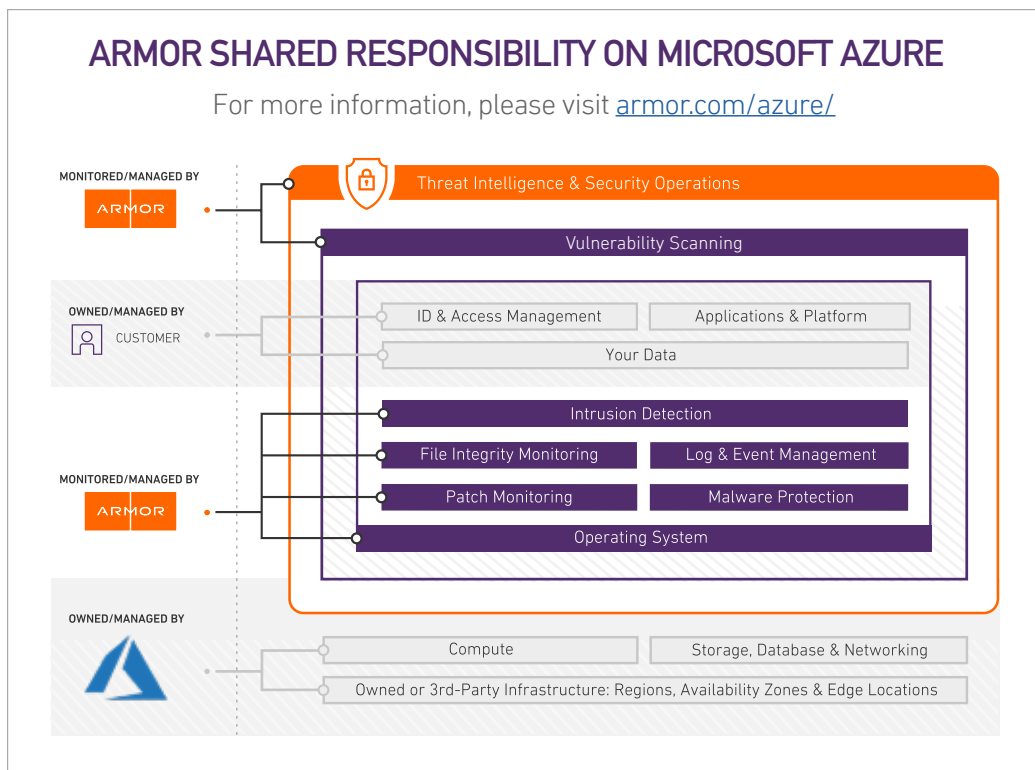
Armor Anywhere also helps BCU manage the shared responsibility model of securing workloads on Azure, ensuring it maximizes the value of its public cloud investment. This is a core benefit for Johnson and BCU, as they are keenly aware that accountability for the security of their Azure instances falls to them.

“You can’t lose focus that, at the end of the day, managing security on Azure is still our responsibility,” he said. “You need to make sure that when you move your assets into Azure—just like when you move your assets into a new datacenter—that you’re maintaining the security and you’re bringing the appropriate security with you as you go to the cloud.”

## WHAT’S NEXT FOR BCU

BCU has seen Armor Anywhere evolve more rapidly than services offered by Armor’s more traditional hosting-focused peers. These enhancements include greater vulnerability and patch management, along with enhanced monitoring features such as host-based intrusion protection.

Characterizing Armor as “more of a value-added partner,” Johnson is optimistic about the relationship going forward: “The responsiveness has been great and so has the evolution of the product. We’re looking forward to expanding its usage across our services.”





[ARMOR.COM](https://armor.com) | (US) +1 844 682 2858 | (UK) +44 800 500 3167

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