
SECURING PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Cybersecurity for the Hospitality Sector

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1 The National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (NCCoE), a part of the National Institute of
2 Standards and Technology (NIST), is a collaborative hub where industry organizations,
3 government agencies, and academic institutions work together to address businesses' most
4 pressing cybersecurity issues. This public-private partnership enables the creation of practical
5 cybersecurity solutions for specific industries or broad, cross-sector technology challenges.
6 Working with technology partners—from Fortune 50 market leaders to smaller companies
7 specializing in IT security—the NCCoE applies standards and best practices to develop modular,
8 easily adaptable example cybersecurity solutions using commercially available technology. The
9 NCCoE documents these example solutions in the NIST Special Publication 1800 series, which
10 maps capabilities to the NIST Cyber Security Framework and details the steps needed for
11 another entity to recreate the example solution. The NCCoE was established in 2012 by NIST in
12 partnership with the State of Maryland and Montgomery County, Md.

13 To learn more about the NCCoE, visit <https://nccoe.nist.gov>. To learn more about NIST, visit
14 <https://www.nist.gov>.

15 This document describes a particular problem that is relevant across the hospitality sector.
16 NCCoE cybersecurity experts will address this challenge through collaboration with members of
17 the hospitality sector and vendors of cybersecurity solutions. The resulting reference design will
18 detail an approach that can be used by hotels and other hospitality organizations.

19 **ABSTRACT**

20 Hospitality organizations rely on Property Management Systems (PMS) for daily tasks, planning,
21 and record keeping. As the operations hub, the PMS interfaces with several services and
22 components within a hotel's IT system, such as Point-of-Sale (POS) systems, door locks, Wi-Fi
23 networks, and other guest service applications. Adding to the complexity of connections,
24 external business partners' components and services are also typically connected to the PMS,
25 such as on-premise spas or restaurants, online travel agents, and customer relationship
26 management partners or applications (on-premise or cloud-based). [1] The numerous
27 connections to and users of the PMS could provide a broader surface for attack by malicious
28 actors. [2] Demonstrating methods to improve the security of the PMS can help protect the
29 business from network intrusions that might lead to data breaches and fraud. [3]

30 Based on industry research and in collaboration with hospitality industry stakeholders, the
31 NCCoE is starting a project that aims to help hospitality organizations implement stronger
32 security measures within and around the PMS, with a focus on the POS system through
33 network segmentation, point-to-point encryption, data tokenization, multifactor authentication
34 for remote and partner access, network and user behavior analytics, and business-only usage
35 restrictions.

36 In collaboration with the hospitality business community and technology vendors who
37 implement standards that improve cybersecurity, the NCCoE will explore methods to
38 strengthen the security of the PMS and its connections and will develop an example
39 implementation composed of open-source and commercially available components. This

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40 project will produce a NIST Cybersecurity Practice Guide—a freely available description of the
41 solution and practical steps needed to effectively secure the PMS and its many connections
42 within the hotel IT system.

43 **KEYWORDS**

44 *Behavior analytics; hospitality cybersecurity; multifactor authentication; network analytics;*
45 *point of sale; point-to-point encryption; property management system; tokenization*

46 **DISCLAIMER**

47 Certain commercial entities, equipment, or materials may be identified in this document in
48 order to describe an experimental procedure or concept adequately. Such identification is not
49 intended to imply recommendation or endorsement by NIST or NCCoE, nor is it intended to
50 imply that the entities, materials, or equipment are necessarily the best available for the
51 purpose.

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53 Organizations are encouraged to review all draft publications during public comment periods
54 and provide feedback. All publications from NIST’s National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence
55 are available at <http://nccoe.nist.gov/library>.

56 Comments on this publication may be submitted to: consumer-nccoe@nist.gov

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75 **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

76 **Purpose**

77 The purpose of this project is to help hoteliers implement stronger security measures within
78 and around their Property Management Systems (PMS), with a focus on the connection to a
79 point-of-sale (POS) system. The project will identify typical hotel IT infrastructures and PMS-
80 POS configurations, systems, and components that typically integrate or interface with both
81 applications, and interactions between hoteliers and third-party service provider (SP) systems
82 (e.g., online booking or customer relationship marketing partners). The project will identify
83 security-mitigation technologies and provide an example implementation.

84 The publication of this Project Description is the beginning of a process that will identify project
85 participants, as well as standards-based, commercially available, and/or open- source hardware
86 and software components. These products will be integrated and implemented in a laboratory
87 environment to build open, standards-based, modular, end-to-end reference designs that will
88 address the security challenges introduced by networking the PMS and POS. The approach may
89 include architectural definition, logical design, build development, security character analysis,
90 test and evaluation, security control mapping, and future build considerations. The output of
91 the process will be the publication of a multi-volume NIST Cybersecurity Practice Guide that will
92 help hoteliers implement stronger PMS-POS security.

93 **Scope**

94 The scope of this example solution includes the implementation of point-to-point encryption
95 (P2PE), data tokenization, multifactor authentication for remote and partner access, access
96 control, network and user behavior analytics, and business-only usage restrictions on the PMS
97 and POS. For this project, the security controls implemented within third-party SP applications
98 are out of scope; however, their interface and connection to the PMS-POS systems are in the
99 project's scope.

100 **Assumptions**

101 A reference design for securing PMS can provide numerous security benefits, including reduced
102 risk of network intrusion and data breach, and associated financial and reputational costs. The
103 NCCoE understands that a hospitality business would weigh the cost of investment in a PMS-
104 POS security solution with its potential benefits.

105 **Background**

106 The NCCoE, working with hospitality organizations such as the American Hotel & Lodging
107 Association and Hotel Technology Next Generation (HTNG), identified the need for an example
108 implementation to improve connections to and from the POS and PMS, and other integrated
109 services and components. The NCCoE participated in HTNG's North American Insight Summit in
110 August 2016 to discuss this project and solicit input from stakeholders that were incorporated
111 into shaping this effort.

112 **2. SCENARIOS**

113 **Scenario 1: Guest checks in, dines on-premise – Tokenization, P2PE, Network and User**
114 **Analytics**

115 A guest checks in at the front desk, and the hotel clerk logs in to the PMS. The clerk checks the
116 guest's identification and finds that she is a member of the hotel's loyalty program. The clerk
117 finds an available room in the PMS, reserves the room, and swipes the guest's credit card for
118 incidentals. This process takes only a few minutes, after which the guest leaves for her room.
119 The hotel clerk logs out of the PMS and/or locks the computer.

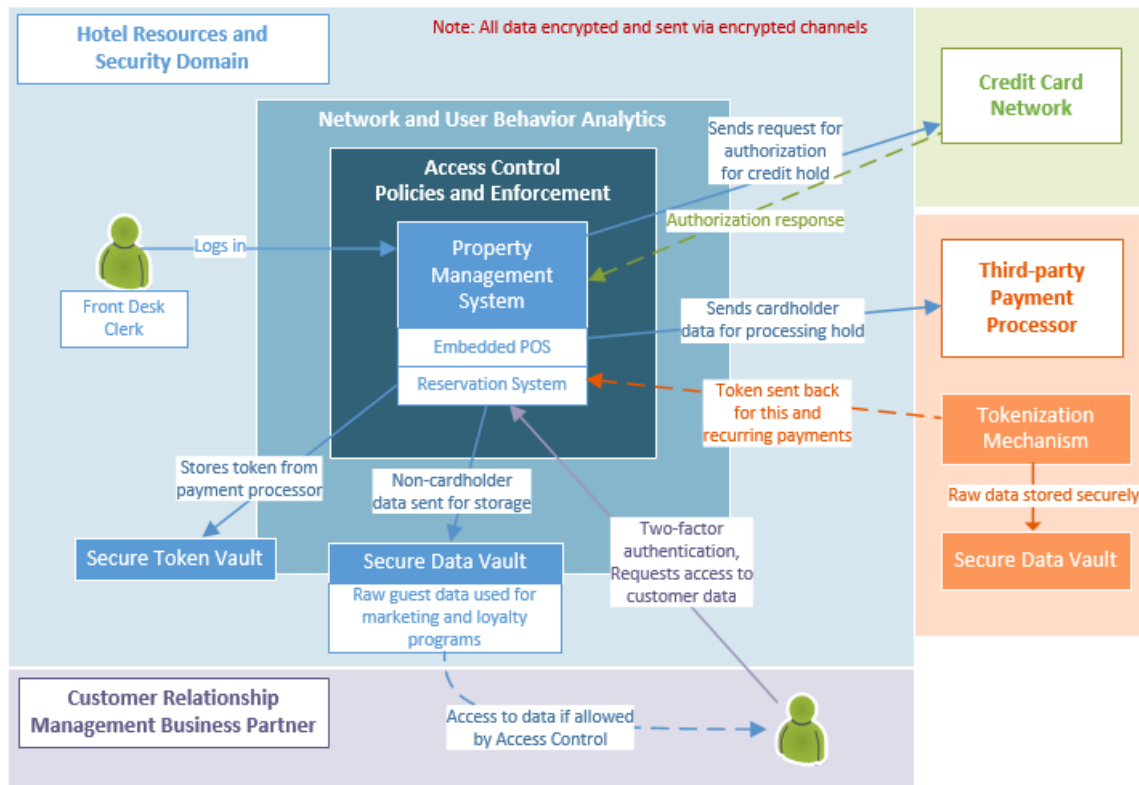
120 In the background, the guest's payment information is tokenized, such that after a transaction
121 authorization is returned from the credit card network, a trusted third party stores all the
122 actual cardholder data (defined by the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard as
123 cardholder name, primary account number, and expiration date) and issues tokens, which are
124 stored in the hotel's system. The hotel's system can then use that token for recurring charges,
125 as well as for the loyalty program. Any other non-payment data pertaining to the guest is
126 encrypted and sent through encrypted channels to be stored in the hotel's own databases or at
127 the hotel's third-party trusted SPs. Furthermore, the hotel's monitoring and analytics system
128 produced no alerts or warnings because the hotel clerk's activity within the PMS is consistent
129 with a baseline, following a typical check-in process with no deviation, and the computer
130 hosting the PMS was used exclusively for business purposes.

131 **Scenario 2: Third-party service provider remotely accesses hotel system – Multifactor**
132 **Authentication, Access Control, Network and User Analytics**

133 A third-party SP needs remote access to one of the hotel system's components. The SP user
134 remotely connects and begins authentication with a username and password. To complete the
135 authentication process, the SP user must provide a second authenticator. The hotel system
136 verifies the identity of the SP user with multifactor authentication and allows the authenticated
137 user to access certain resources. The hotel's analytics component produces no alerts or
138 warnings because the SP user's second authenticator was valid, his activity is consistent with a
139 baseline, and no unusual network or user activity was detected.

140 **3. HIGH-LEVEL ARCHITECTURE**

141 **Diagram 1: High-level Architecture**



142

143 **Component List**

144 To better secure the PMS, an example solution may include, but is not limited to, the following
145 components:

- 146 • PMS and POS system(s)
- 147 • P2PE
- 148 • Data tokenization
- 149 • Multifactor authentication mechanism
- 150 • Access control platform
- 151 • Network and user behavior analytics
- 152 • Data logging
- 153 • Data storage

154 **Desired Requirements**

- 155 • Automated network and user behavior analytics
- 156 • P2PE
- 157 • Data tokenization and token management

- 158 ○ Token generation
- 159 ○ Token mapping
- 160 ○ Non-credit card, sensitive consumer data vault
- 161 ○ Cryptographic key management
- 162 ● Multifactor authentication for remote and third-party access
- 163 ● Access control for internal and third-party users
 - 164 ○ Automated logging of access requests and decisions
 - 165 ○ Access control policy creation
 - 166 ○ Determining access control decisions based on policies
 - 167 ○ Access control policy enforcement
- 168 ● Automated logging of analytics and component interactions

169 4. RELEVANT STANDARDS

- 170 ● American Institute of CPAs, Reporting on Controls at a Service Organization Relevant to
171 Security, Availability, Processing Integrity, Confidentiality, or Privacy (SOC 2®)
172 [https://www.aicpa.org/InterestAreas/FRC/AssuranceAdvisoryServices/Pages/SOCGuides
andPublications.aspx](https://www.aicpa.org/InterestAreas/FRC/AssuranceAdvisoryServices/Pages/SOCGuides
173 andPublications.aspx)
- 174 ● Hotel Technology Next Generation, Secure Payments Framework for Hospitality, Version
175 1.0, February 2013, [https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/htng.site-
ym.com/resource/collection/CC1CE2B8-0377-457E-9AB0-
27CFDD77E17B/HTNG_Secure_Payments_Framework_v1.0_FINAL.pdf](https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/htng.site-
176 ym.com/resource/collection/CC1CE2B8-0377-457E-9AB0-
177 27CFDD77E17B/HTNG_Secure_Payments_Framework_v1.0_FINAL.pdf)
- 178 ● ISO/IEC 27001, Information Technology – Security Techniques – Information Security
179 Management Systems <https://www.iso.org/isoiec-27001-information-security.html>
- 180 ● ISO/IEC 27018, Information technology -- Security techniques -- Code of practice for
181 protection of personally identifiable information (PII) in public clouds acting as PII
182 processors <https://www.iso.org/standard/61498.html>
183 http://www.iso.org/iso/catalogue_detail.htm?csnumber=61498
- 184 ● ISO/IEC 29146, Information Technology – Security techniques – A framework for access
185 management, <https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:iso-iec:29146:ed-1:v1:en>
- 186 ● NIST Cybersecurity Framework - Standards, guidelines, and best practices to promote
187 the protection of critical infrastructure
188 <http://www.nist.gov/itl/cyberframework.cfm>
- 189 ● NIST SP 800-53, Recommended Security Controls for Federal Information Systems
190 <http://csrc.nist.gov/publications/drafts/800-53-rev4/sp800-53-rev4-ipd.pdf>
- 191 ● NIST SP 800-122, Guide to Protecting the Confidentiality of Personally Identifiable
192 Information (PII) [http://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/SP/nistspecialpublication800-
122.pdf](http://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/SP/nistspecialpublication800-
193 122.pdf)

- 194 • Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard, Requirements and Security
 195 Assessment Procedures, Version 3.1, April 2015, PCI Security Standards Council,
 196 https://www.pcisecuritystandards.org/documents/PCI_DSS_v3-1.pdf

197 5. SECURITY CONTROL MAP

198 Table 1 maps the characteristics of the applicable standards and best practices described in the
 199 Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity (CSF) and other NIST activities.
 200 The solution characteristics offered in the table are the ones expected to be explored in this
 201 project. This mapping exercise, which is likely to expand as the project progresses, is meant to
 202 demonstrate the real-world applicability of standards and best practices.

203 **Table 1: Security Control Map**

Solution Characteristic	NIST CSF Category	Informative References
Authentication mechanisms	PR.AC-1 PR.AC-3 PR.AC-4	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 AC-1, IA Family; AC-17, AC-19, AC-20; AC-2, AC-3, AC-5, AC-6, AC-16 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 A.9.2.1, A.9.2.2, A.9.2.4, A.9.3.1, A.9.4.2, A.9.4.3; A.6.2.2, A.13.1.1, A.13.2.1; A.6.1.2, A.9.1.2, A.9.2.3, A.9.4.1, A.9.4.4
Automated user and network analytics	DE.AE-1 DE.AE-2 DE.AE-3	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 AC-4, CA-3, CM-2, SI-4; AU-6, CA-7, IR-4, IR-5, IR-8, SI-4; ISO/IEC 27001:2013 A.16.1.1, A.16.1.4
Automated logging	PR.PT-1	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 AU Family, IR-5, IR-6 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 A.12.4.1, A.12.4.2, A.12.4.3, A.12.4.4, A.12.7.1
Automated data storage	PR.DS-1 PR.DS-3	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 SC-28; CM-8, MP-6, PE-16 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 9.1.6, 9.2.6, 9.2.7, 10.7.1, 10.7.2, 10.7.3
Secure data vaults	PR.DS-1 PR.DS-3	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 SC-28; CM-8, MP-6, PE-16 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 9.1.6, 9.2.6, 9.2.7, 10.7.1, 10.7.2, 10.7.3
Cryptographic key management	PR.DS-1 PR.DS-2	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 SC-28, SC-8 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 A.8.2.3, A.13.1.1, A.13.1.2, A.13.2.3, A.14.1.2, A.14.1.3
Access control	PR.PT-3	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 AC-3, CM-7 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 A.9.1.2
Point-to-point encryption	PR.DS-1, PR.DS-2, PR.DS-5, PR.PT-4	NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 AC-20, AU-9, IA-6, IA-7, MP-6, SA-13, SC-8, SC-11, SC-12, SC-13, SC-17, SI-12 ISO/IEC 27001:2013 6.2.1, 9.4.3, 9.4.4, 9.4.5, 10.1.2, 12.4.2, 12.4.3, 13.1.1, 13.2.1, 13.2.3, 14.1.3

204

APPENDIX A REFERENCES

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- [2] *2015 Data Breach Investigations Report: Hospitality*, Verizon http://www.verizonenterprise.com/resources/reports/rp_dbir-hospitality-2015_en_xg.pdf [accessed 4/11/17]
- [3] *Secure Payments Framework for Hospitality*, Hotel Technology Next Generation, Version 1.0, February 2013, https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/htng.site-ym.com/resource/collection/CC1CE2B8-0377-457E-9AB0-27CFDD77E17B/HTNG_Secure_Payments_Framework_v1.0_FINAL.pdf