

# WITH AUTOMATION, ANSIBLE DRIVES CYBERSECURITY FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



*With state and local IT teams stretched to the breaking point, cybersecurity initiatives risk being lost in the shuffle.*

*In this Q and A, Red Hat Business and Strategy Advisor Nick Lenaeus describes how an open-source approach to security automation can free up technology time and talent while improving cyber outcomes across the state and local government landscape.*

## Why do state and local governments struggle with cybersecurity?

Many critical applications in the public sector have been in service for multiple years — in some cases, a couple of decades. There are well-known vulnerabilities due to age, despite everyone's ongoing efforts to prevent access to those vulnerabilities.

For state and local government, these fragmented legacy technologies can introduce a lot of risk, as security was likely an add-on to the original systems. Ideally, security needs to start in the design and incubation phase and be part of how you build your infrastructure.

## How does security automation help address this?

Automation is critically important as the average IT worker is tremendously overburdened. Security automation helps, especially for things like application development where organizations can automate the testing and scanning of code. Automation integrates security throughout the whole DevOps (development and

IT operations) pipeline. You are automatically putting those safeguards into place and remaining compliant.

## How does this approach support government-specific needs around privacy and compliance?

State and local governments can follow policies set by organizations like the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA). Agencies can implement security automation practices that follow these agency's standards, which is much more effective than trying to do this manually.

## How does Ansible bring this to life?

Ansible helps bring DevSecOps to life in several ways. First, as an open-source innovator, Red Hat brings expertise and a shared sense of innovation to the table with our open-source work.

Second, there is the ongoing work with our partner community — including Cisco, VMware, Microsoft and Palo Alto. All these brand names are certifying their content with Ansible.

With network automation around your existing firewalls, and around your existing switching and routing and Wi-Fi infrastructure, you don't have to undo what you've already done with Ansible. For example, VMware and Microsoft both have a great hypervisor. Ansible talks directly to those hypervisors to automate their end-to-end workflows. That's the power of certified content.

## What are some best practices for IT teams looking to implement security automation?

Start with the small, repetitive tasks. You can automate tasks like opening, updating and closing a ticket. People dislike that part of the job. By automating these repetitive and routine tasks, you can increase your team morale so they can focus on innovation.

As IT leaders, it's important to let people know they don't need to be scared of automation. The point isn't to automate you out of a job. It's to help you do the job better, and free you up from the most boring parts of that job.



## About Red Hat

The adoption of open principles helps the U.S. government start, accelerate, and improve the art of digital transformation — people, process, and technology. As the world's leading provider of enterprise open source solutions, Red Hat uses a community-powered approach to deliver reliable and high-performing Linux®, hybrid cloud, container, and Kubernetes technologies. Red Hat helps customers integrate new and existing IT applications, develop cloud-native applications, standardize on our industry-leading operating system, and automate, secure, and manage complex environments. Award-winning support, training, and consulting services make Red Hat a trusted adviser to the Fortune 500 and 100% of U.S. executive departments. As a strategic partner to cloud providers, systems integrators, application vendors, customers, and open source communities, Red Hat can help organizations prepare for the digital future. Learn more at: [www.redhat.com/gov](http://www.redhat.com/gov)