Enable Business Safely, Not Block Business Safely

By: Jaiz Anuar

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Cybersecurity should enable organisations to create value safely and sustainably—not become the bottleneck that drives risk outside governance.

One of the biggest misconceptions about cybersecurity is that the role of security is to prevent things from happening.

Postpone the go-live. Delay the change release. Request another assessment cycle. Push the decision to the next governance forum. KIV the cloud migration. Reject the exception request. Return the architecture design for rework. Escalate unresolved findings.

Many cybersecurity teams unintentionally become known as the department that slows momentum.

Eventually, business stakeholders begin to avoid engaging security early because they already know the conversation they expect to have. Security will ask for more documents, more evidence, more controls, and more time.

That is a dangerous place for cybersecurity to be.

Business priorities do not stop. Projects continue. Transformation continues. Technology continues. Only this time, security may no longer be sitting at the table when decisions are made.

The result is often shadow IT, unmanaged risks, late redesign, expensive remediation, and difficult conversations shortly before production deployment.

Ironically, organisations sometimes become less secure when security becomes too difficult to engage.

Business Exists To Create Value

The purpose of business is straightforward: serve customers, create value, generate returns, improve efficiency, and enable growth.

Technology exists to support these objectives. Cybersecurity exists to ensure these objectives can be achieved safely and sustainably.

The objective was never to eliminate risk. No organisation operates without risk. No board expects zero risk. No regulator expects perfect security.

The objective is to understand risk, deliberate risk, and make informed decisions regarding risk ownership and treatment.

That distinction changes everything.

Cybersecurity should not be measured by the number of projects it delays. It should be measured by the number of projects it enables safely.

Shift Left Is Not About Saying No Earlier

One of the most common complaints from project teams is that security becomes involved too late.

Architecture has already been approved. The vendor has already been selected. Contracts have already been signed. The go-live date has already been announced.

Then security arrives with findings: encryption requirements, identity requirements, network-segmentation requirements, logging requirements, and compliance requirements.

At that stage, every recommendation feels like an obstacle. Not because the control is unreasonable, but because the timing is wrong.

This is why modern cybersecurity increasingly embraces the principle of shift-left security.

Security should participate during ideation, architecture discussions, procurement evaluation, solution design, and integration planning.

The earlier security becomes involved, the more options become available. Design changes are easier. Compensating controls are easier. Risk treatment becomes cheaper. Business objectives remain achievable.

Shift-left security is not about moving security earlier so that security can say “no” earlier.

It is about involving security early enough so that the answer can become: Yes, and here is how we can do it safely.

Cybersecurity Deliberation Is More Valuable Than Cybersecurity Dictation

Security architecture should not operate as a policy-enforcement machine. It should operate as a risk-deliberation function.

A project team may request internet exposure for an application. A business unit may request an exception to an existing control. A platform team may require temporary access beyond normal standards. An operational team may request delayed implementation of a security recommendation.

The easiest answer is often: “No.”

The more valuable response is to ask:

What business problem are we trying to solve?

What risk is introduced?

What controls already exist?

What compensating measures can reduce the risk?

Who owns the residual risk?

Is the decision aligned with organisational risk appetite?

These discussions are often more important than the control itself. Cybersecurity is rarely about determining whether something is secure or insecure. More often, it is about determining whether the risk is understood and acceptable.

That is cybersecurity deliberation.

Controls Are Rarely Binary

Consider multi-factor authentication. MFA is considered best practice, but the objective is not MFA itself. The objective is reducing identity-compromise risk.

There may be situations where additional controls achieve a similar security outcome:

Privileged Access Workstations

Conditional Access Policies

Jump Servers

Session Recording

Network Segmentation

Identity-Aware Proxies

Behavioural Analytics

The discussion therefore should not become: “Do you have MFA?”

The better question is: How are you reducing identity-compromise risk?

The control matters. The security outcome matters more.

Good Security Architecture Creates Safe Paths

A bridge does not stop people from crossing a river. It creates a safer way to cross it.

Cybersecurity architecture should operate in the same manner.

When business wants cloud adoption, architecture should design secure cloud patterns. When business wants API integration, architecture should design secure API standards. When business wants artificial intelligence, architecture should design identity governance, data protection, and monitoring controls.

When business wants third-party integration, architecture should design trust boundaries and assurance mechanisms. When business wants rapid delivery, architecture should design secure-by-default patterns that can be reused repeatedly.

The answer should rarely be: “You cannot do this.”

More often, the answer should become: You can do this safely if these controls are implemented and these risks are accepted.

That is not compromise. That is governance. That is architecture. That is enablement.

The Cost Of Becoming A Bottleneck

When cybersecurity repeatedly becomes associated with delay, several things begin to happen.

Business teams bypass governance processes. Shadow IT emerges. Projects engage security only at the final stage. Risk decisions become invisible. Security teams lose influence.

Ironically, organisations often become less secure.

People rarely avoid risk because they are blocked. They simply find another route.

Security therefore must become the preferred route rather than the obstacle standing in front of it.

The Best Security Teams Ask Different Questions

Instead of asking, “How do we stop this?”, they ask: How do we enable this safely?

Instead of asking, “Which policy is violated?”, they ask: What risk is introduced and how can we manage it?

Instead of asking, “How do we avoid risk completely?”, they ask: How do we reduce risk to an acceptable level?

The quality of cybersecurity decisions often depends on the quality of cybersecurity questions.

Final Thoughts

Cybersecurity was never intended to become the department of delay. Its purpose is not to slow business, reject innovation, or create bureaucracy.

Cybersecurity exists so that organisations can innovate confidently, adopt technology responsibly, and grow sustainably in an increasingly hostile digital environment.

The organisations that succeed in the coming decade will not be those that move the slowest. They will be the organisations that can move quickly while managing risk intelligently.

Security has a role in that future—not as the team standing in front of the business, but as the team walking beside it.

Because ultimately, the objective of cybersecurity is not to block business safely. It is to enable business safely.

Security should not become the reason business stops moving. It should become the reason business can move with confidence.