

A stylized illustration of an iceberg floating in a blue ocean. The iceberg is composed of many sharp, angular facets, giving it a crystalline appearance. The top portion of the iceberg is above the water line, while the much larger, more complex and jagged portion is submerged below the surface. The background is a gradient of blue, from a lighter sky blue at the top to a darker ocean blue at the bottom.

Hidden Costs of Manual Inbound Security Reviews

Executive Overview

In today's fast-paced business environment, time is money. Yet, many companies continue to spend a disproportionate amount of time shackled by manual processes slowing down operations, jeopardizing inbound revenue, and inflating costs. One of the most significant but often overlooked inefficiencies is in handling security documentation requests from customers and prospects as well as responding to inbound security review questionnaires.

These manual processes typically involve coordination across several teams (i.e. security, GRC, sales, legal, etc), multiple communication loops, and considerable time and effort — leading to higher operational costs, deal slowdown, and bottlenecks.

In this eBook, we'll explore the real cost of handling security documentation requests and inbound security review questionnaires **manually**, and how implementing a self-serve customer-facing [Trust Center](#) as well as AI automation for questionnaire review can streamline these processes, reduce operational costs, and help close deals faster.

What's the difference between a **security documentation request** and an **inbound security review questionnaire**?

A security documentation request and an inbound security review questionnaire are not exactly the same, though they are related...

Security Documentation Request:

This typically refers to a customer or partner requesting specific documents or reports related to your organization's security practices, compliance certifications, or audit results.

Examples include requests for SOC 2 reports, penetration testing results, security policies, or other compliance documentation.

Inbound Security Review Questionnaire:

This is a more structured request where a customer or partner sends a series of questions to assess your organization's security practices, policies, and controls. These questionnaires are often part of a larger vendor security assessment process, where the customer seeks detailed answers to ensure the vendor meets their security standards. These can be much more detailed and require a comprehensive response.

The Anatomy of Security Documentation Requests and Inbound Security Review Questionnaires

To better understand the cost of manual handling, let's break down the typical cycle for both security documentation requests and inbound security review questionnaires:

Security Documentation Requests

These are typically requests from customers or partners for specific security documents, such as SOC 2 reports, penetration testing results, compliance certifications, and security policies.

The process looks like this:

- 1. Customer Request:** The customer requests a specific document or report.
- 2. Account Executive (AE) Involvement:** The Sales AE communicates with the GRC (Governance, Risk, and Compliance) team to obtain the required document.
- 3. GRC Team's Role:** The GRC team locates the document, ensures it's up to date, and sends it to the AE, who then forwards it to the customer.

Inbound Security Review Questionnaires

These are more detailed sets of questions sent by customers or partners as part of their vendor risk management process. These questionnaires are typically part of a more structured security review and can include inquiries about data protection, incident response, encryption practices, and overall security policies.

- 1. Customer Sends Questionnaire:** The customer submits a security questionnaire with detailed questions about your organization's security practices.
- 2. Account Executive (AE) or Security Team Involvement:** The AE, Security, or GRC team reviews the questionnaire and coordinates the responses with the appropriate teams (e.g., IT, security, legal).
- 3. Security/GRC Team's Role:** The Security/GRC team compiles responses to each question and sends the completed questionnaire back to the customer.

Both types of requests — security documentation requests and inbound security review questionnaires — typically involve:



Days or weeks to source the right answers and pull up to date documentation



Multiple email exchanges externally with prospect or customer



Internal, cross functional coordination (assignment, tagging, alignment, tracking, review, approvals)



Delays in deal progression or deprioritization of other initiatives to meet review deadlines

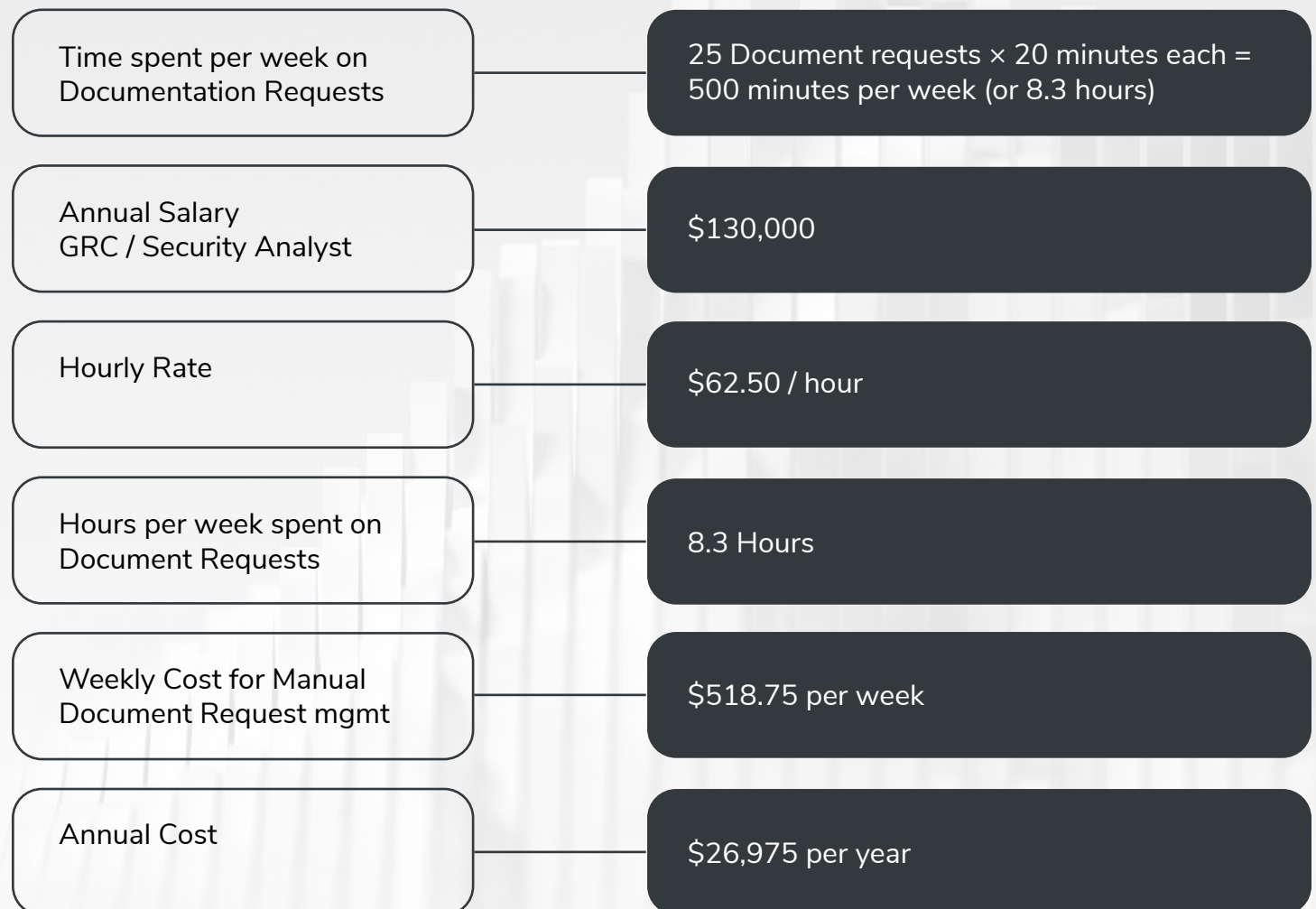
Save time by having answers ready for the Top 100 most commonly asked security questions on inbound questionnaires.

We polled 1,000+ SafeBase customers to identify the most frequently asked security questions on inbound questionnaires. Having up to date answers to these questions helps you respond to the bulk of inbound requests faster.

Get the List

Time + Cost Drain of Sending Security Documentation Manually

When you multiply the time spent on each document request by the number of requests per week, the cost becomes more significant:



That's nearly **\$27,000 annually** spent just to send out security PDFs — **manually**.

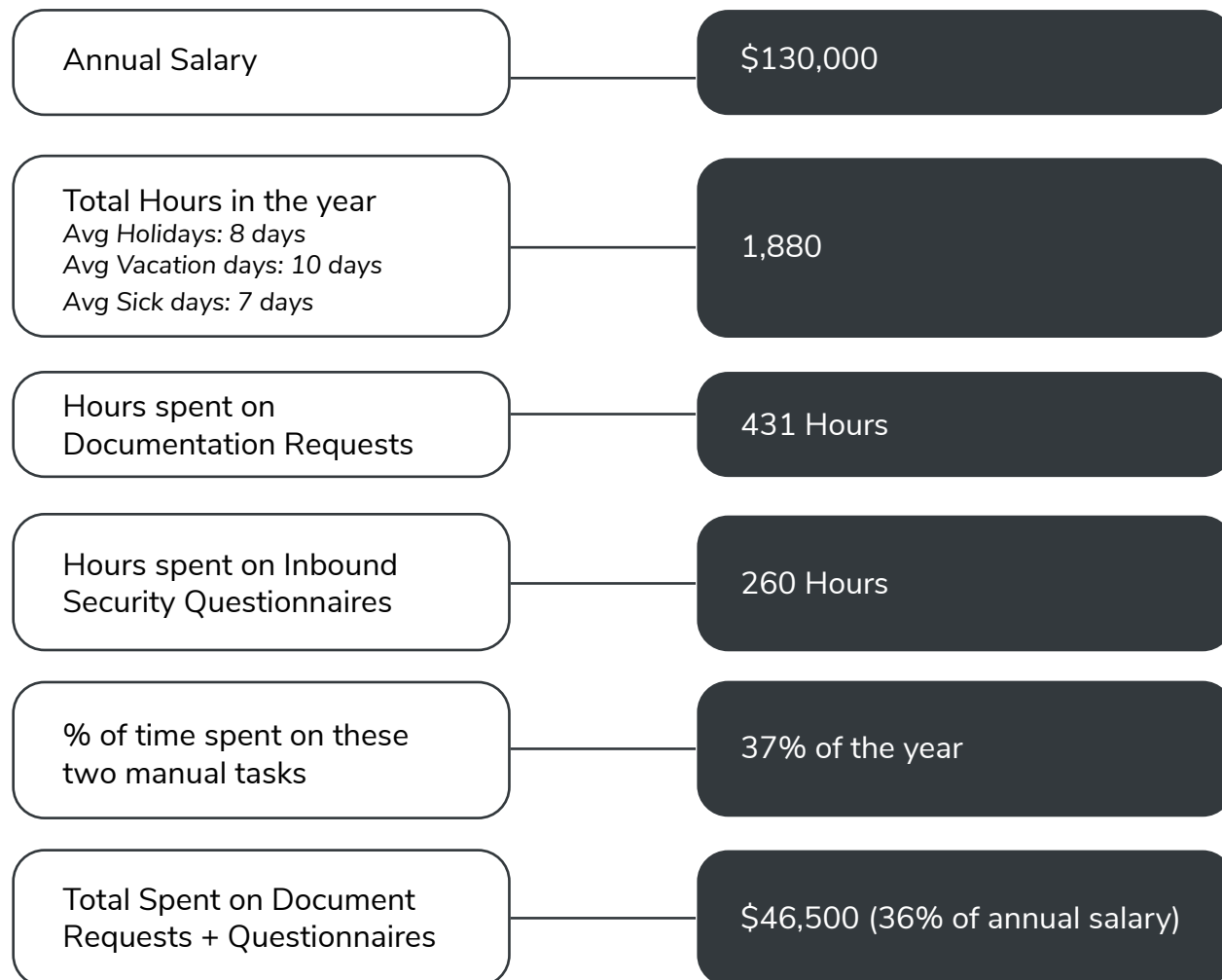
This number can easily escalate as the organization grows and handles more inbound security requests using already burdened teams. High-priority initiatives like risk assessment, compliance, and customer security programs can suffer as can the GTM team's ability to drive revenue forward.

This number gets worse when you add in the time spent responding to **inbound security questionnaires manually**.



Let's add this up.

Security / GRC Team Member Time + Cost Breakdown



Why leading companies invest in a Trust Center + AI Automation

This cost and time drain has been a driving force for leading companies adopting a Trust Center and AI automation for questionnaire response. A self-serve Trust Center allows prospects and customers to access security documentation and compliance information in a secure, external portal, without the need for back-and-forth emails and coordination between multiple parties.

This model provides several benefits:

- 1. Efficiency and Time Savings:** A Trust Center eliminates the need for manual handling of requests, as customers can easily find and download the documents they need. This reduces the GRC team's involvement to a minimum, freeing up valuable time for more strategic tasks.
- 2. Transparency and Trust:** A Trust Center provides customers with immediate access to your security posture, policies, certifications, and audits. It serves as a centralized hub of information that demonstrates your commitment to security and compliance.
- 3. Cost Reduction:** Trust Centers can reduce the influx of inbound security questionnaires by up to 98% by proactively answering customer questions. As a result, fewer manual FTE hours are needed, back and forth

friction between internal teams is reduced, and deals can accelerate more quickly.

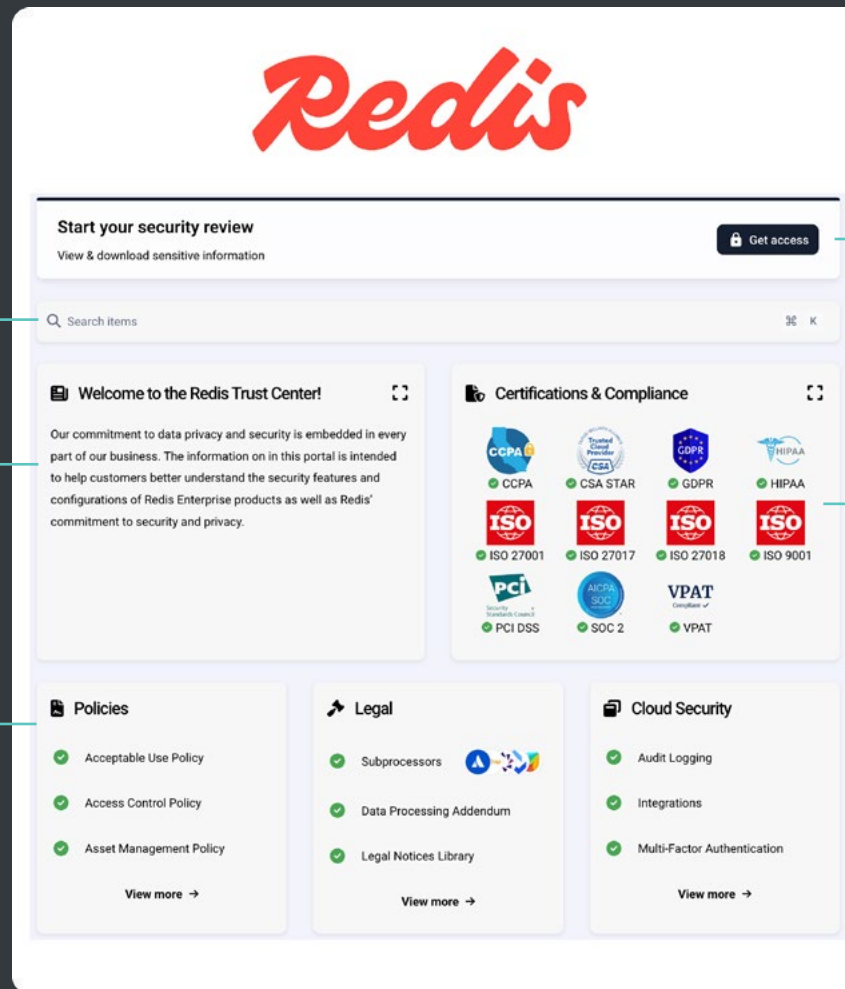
- 4. AI Efficiency:** AI automation can assist with lingering questionnaires not addressed in the Trust Center by generating answers using security artifacts, vetted external websites, and documentation. Answers are cited to the source for quick reference and easy review saving time and driving productivity.
- 5. Scalability:** As your business grows and the volume and complexity of inbound security requests increases, the Trust Center scales with robust permissioning, rules engines, NDA workflows, and access controls without additional overhead.

98% Reduction in Inbound Questionnaires

Offering a Trust Center can reduce inbound questionnaire requests by as much as 98% as it did with [Crossbeam](#).

What's in a Trust Center?

SafeBase Trust Centers are highly customizable, allowing you to tailor security communications to your specific needs with custom branding, URLs, and integrations, all while supporting multiple Trust Centers within a single instance to align with your security team's operations.



Easily search for what you need

Company Overview & Security Posture Context

Customizable cards highlighting key areas

Access Controls

Featured Certifications

Trust Center Impact on Time Savings + Efficiency

How **Palantir** is demonstrating security with confidence using a Trust Center

Challenge:

Like many technology organizations, [Palantir](#) had relied on a manual, ad-hoc approach to buyer security reviews, responding to questionnaires and requests across various communication channels. As the company grew, this reactive method became increasingly inefficient and difficult to scale, prompting security and sales leaders to realize it was time for a more streamlined solution.

Solution:

With its SafeBase Trust Center, Palantir successfully centralized and organized all security documentation and artifacts into a clean, easy-to-navigate hub.

By proactively sharing a single “magic” link with prospective buyers during the sales cycle, buyers can self-serve the information they need at their convenience. Integrated with Salesforce, the Trust Center streamlines the entire buyer security review process, saving time and reducing administrative burden for Palantir’s teams, while providing them with better control and visibility over document access.



John Isgro, Compliance Engineer

“It’s been a huge time saver for us. With SafeBase, instead of having to manually go through each individual answer, you can up-front provide a customer and their due diligence teams with documentation, whether it be our SOC 2 report or CAIQ.

They can review the information and come to their own conclusions [without manual work for Palantir]. The more we can provide a customer with information ahead of time that they’re looking to see, the better.”

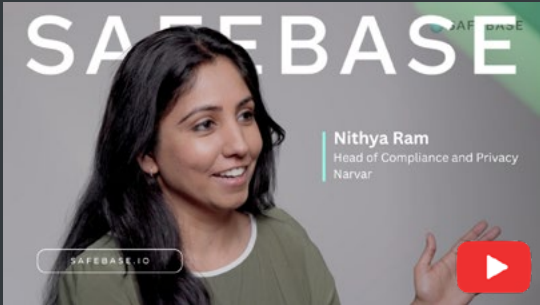


Boosting Impact: Leveraging AI to answer questionnaires in real-time

Although a Trust Center mitigates the bulk of inbound questionnaires, there are still lingering requests with greater complexity that need addressing. That is where AI comes in!

[AI Questionnaire Assistance](#) uses your Trust Center, uploaded security documentation, and Knowledge Base to quickly and accurately respond to inbound security questionnaires, saving you time and effort. It centralizes the process, allowing you to manage, track, and collaborate on large volumes of questionnaires with ease. Whether completing entire questionnaires or addressing one-off questions, responses are automatically sourced from trusted content.


The AI-powered solution supports major third-party risk management (TPRM) portals, as well as common platforms like Google Forms and Google Sheets, ensuring you can answer questionnaires efficiently from anywhere. With real-time visibility into pending tasks and clear tracking of progress, completing questionnaires becomes a smooth, scalable process for all team members.



The video thumbnail shows Nithya Ram, Head of Compliance and Privacy at Narvar, speaking in front of a background with the word 'SAFEBASE' and 'KNOWLEDGE BASE'. A red play button is visible in the bottom right corner of the video frame.

“It’s funny when they say ‘here’s a questionnaire, I know it’s going to take a week’ and then you churn it back in half a day...[they say] how did you do this?”

Nithya Ram | Head of Compliance & Privacy



The Narvar logo consists of a blue circle with a white stylized 'n' inside, followed by the word 'narvar' in a lowercase, sans-serif font.

A Trust Center plus AI Questionnaire Assistance drives meaningful **time and cost savings** for Security + GRC teams

 Current State:
Sending Security Documentation **Manually**

25 Document requests × 20 minutes each
= **500 minutes per week (or 8.3 hours)**


Annual Salary GRC / Security Analyst: **\$130,000**

Hourly Rate: **\$62.50 / hour**

Hours per week spent on
Document Requests: **8.3 Hours**

Weekly Cost for Manual Requests: **\$518.75**

Annual Cost: **\$26,975 per year**

 Future State: Proactively Sharing Security Documentation with a SafeBase Trust Center

Average Time Savings using
Trust Center = **80%**

GRC / Security Team's Hourly Rate: **\$62.50/hour**

Weekly Cost for Security Reviews:
80% of 8.3 hours = 1.66 Hours / week
1.66x \$62.50 = \$103.75

Hours per week spent on
Document Requests: **8.3 Hours**

Annual Cost: **\$103.75 x 52 weeks = \$5,395**

TOTAL SAVINGS: \$21,580 per year

X Current State:
Answering Inbound Security
Questionnaires **Manually**

Average Inbound Questionnaires per year:
100 // roughly 2 per week

Average time spent per Questionnaire:
3 hours // 180 minutes

GRC / Security Team's Hourly Rate:
\$62.50 (or \$130,000 annually)

Weekly Cost for Security Reviews:
(3 x \$62.50) x 2 reviews = \$375 per week

Annual Cost: **\$375 x 52 weeks = \$19,500**

✓ Future State: Automate answering inbound
questionnaires with SafeBase AI Questionnaire
Assistance

Average time savings using AI:
80% (144 minutes per questionnaire)

GRC / Security Team's Hourly Rate:
\$62.50 (or \$130,000 annually)

Weekly Cost for Security Reviews:
(.6 x \$62.50) x 2 reviews = \$37.50 per week

Annual Cost:
\$37.50 x 52 weeks = \$1,950

TOTAL SAVINGS: \$17,550 per year

Automation to Build Trust and Meet Growing Demand

How Jamf is automating customer trust to meet accelerated demand

Challenge:

As [Jamf's](#) sales team grew rapidly, the security team struggled to keep up with the increased demand for support during the sales process. Additionally, there was a lack of clear reporting on how the security team's efforts were impacting the company's bottom line.

Solution:

By implementing SafeBase, Jamf's security team saved significant time, contributing to an annual revenue lift of over \$10M.

Transparency gained through the Trust Center allowed Jamf to enforce a policy requiring the sales team to use the Trust Center before submitting security tickets or questionnaires, while also introducing deal desk approval for questionnaire intake.

Additionally, Jamf replaced over \$20,000 in spending on other software tools, further optimizing their process.



Jamie Pine, Information Security Engineer

“SafeBase’s AI Questionnaire Assistant has transformed how we handle vendor security assessments. **As an Information Security Engineer, I’ve seen our completion time drop from 2-3 hours to just 15-20 minutes**, and the accuracy of the answers is impressive.”



Embracing the Future of Trust and Efficiency

The cost of manual handling of security documentation requests is far higher than most organizations realize. By implementing a self-serve Trust Center, companies can reduce operational costs, improve efficiency, and scale their security practices as they grow. Trust Centers provide a solution that is both cost-effective and scalable, allowing businesses to provide customers with the transparency and security they expect, while freeing up valuable time and resources for more strategic work.



Built by trust-obsessed people for trust-minded organizations

The SafeBase Trust Center Platform streamlines the security review process by providing centralized, real-time access to up to date security and trust posture, compliance, and related documentation. Self-serve reviews are enabled with unified questionnaire management, and any remaining inbound questionnaires are answered by AI Questionnaire Assistance which cites Trust Center and Knowledge Base content — synced daily to ensure accuracy.

Robust permissioning helps teams confidently control access, and CRM integrations bring security reviews into go-to-market workflows driving quicker deals and higher win rates.

SafeBase collaboration features assigns questions to subject matter experts, specifies answer due dates, and notifies designated question owners to deliver a frictionless review process.

Analytics dashboards highlight security influenced revenue and share engagement data to inform your team on areas of focus for maximum impact.

Most importantly, your data never leaves your own private data store, and we never use it to train the AI. AI Questionnaire Assistance only pulls information to answer questionnaires with accuracy and speed.

Learn more at safebase.io

Ready to build customer trust, gain actionable insights, and prove security ROI with a SafeBase Trust Center Platform?

[Book a Demo](#)