

# Containing Shadow SaaS and Shadow AI when the Game—and Innovation—is Afoot



## Industry:

Video Games

## Size:

70 employees

## Headquarters:

Los Angeles, CA

## Primary Challenges

- Containing the risks from shadow SaaS & shadow AI
- Managing SaaS sprawl and identifying which apps needed stronger authentication
- SaaS license optimizations

## Grip Impact

- 100% onboarding of critical apps to SSO.
- 100% effective offboarding workflows.
- Enhanced SaaS and AI visibility across the company.

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**Paul Marquissee**

Director of IT and Security

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The Believer Company, a global games and entertainment company, is on a mission to create sweeping, holistic experiences that captivate and immerse players. As an agile start-up filling a unique niche in the game market, Believer values innovation and creativity. The company encourages employees to think differently and empowers them to use SaaS and AI tools to their fullest potential. “We believe in empowering employees in their SaaS choices—we never want to control or inhibit their creativity or productivity. We encourage them to explore and experiment with different tools, including AI,” said Paul Marquissee, Director of IT and Security. However, this freedom also introduced shadow SaaS and shadow AI risks, which Paul knew would be problematic if allowed to continue without any guardrails.

## The Challenges

Empowering employees to spearhead their own SaaS choices unlocks tremendous creative potential but also brings a new dimension of risk. “We try to avoid a ‘command and control’ stance when it comes to SaaS tools, but without clear visibility into what’s being used, I can’t fulfill my primary duty—securing the company,” Paul remarked.

Believer’s primary challenges included:

**Containing the risks from shadow SaaS:** The employee-led SaaS philosophy created blind spots in security, making it difficult to monitor and protect the organization effectively.

**Visibility into shadow AI:** Encouraging employees to leverage AI tools introduced unforeseen risks, including the potential mishandling of proprietary information and the introduction of coding errors. The company needed greater visibility into which employees were adopting these AI tools across the organization.

## The Believer Success Story

**Managing SaaS sprawl:** The rapid expansion of SaaS tools across various teams, coupled with access from diverse home networks, created a complex SaaS landscape. Keeping track of these tools, managing them effectively, and ensuring their security became increasingly challenging, especially when it came to identifying which apps required stronger authentication.

**SaaS license optimization:** The lack of centralized control over SaaS licenses resulted in inefficiencies, with underutilized or redundant licenses contributing to unnecessary costs. Additionally, Paul struggled to prioritize which apps warranted full licenses and whether investing in MFA or SSO was necessary.

"While our innovative culture and belief in experimentation are exciting, as the security guy, the underlying risks can be a bit terrifying," Paul chuckled. With that in mind, he set out to find a solution that would not only safeguard their SaaS environment but also align seamlessly with their corporate philosophies.

### The Solution

While searching for the right SaaS security solution, Paul initially explored CASB and ZTNA tools but found them to be overkill. "The extensive setup required for CASBs was another major drawback," he explained. "I needed a solution that could quickly provide insights without adding a network barrier." After encountering Grip on social media and at industry events, Paul decided to book a demo of the SaaS Security Control Plane. "The demo revealed Grip's potential, uncovering our high-risk SaaS users and identities—I knew immediately this was the right fit for us," he recalled.

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**Paul Marquissee**  
Director of IT and Security

Grip aligns perfectly with Believer's culture, offering the flexibility and freedom to choose SaaS tools while maintaining security.

"My job is to understand our staff's workflows and the tools they use. Grip gives me the visibility I need without creating a 'big brother' perception," Paul noted.

Moreover, Grip's SaaS justification workflows help maintain a continuously safe SaaS environment.

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### Demonstrating Impact

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#### Key outcomes include:

- **100% onboarding of critical apps to SSO** for enhanced control and protection.
- **100% effective offboarding workflows:** With Grip, the offboarding process became fully effective, de-provisioning accounts previously outside the company's control.
- **Enhanced SaaS and AI visibility across the company:** Grip provided comprehensive visibility into the SaaS and AI tools used across the organization, including shadow SaaS. Identities are secure, and employees remain empowered—"Grip gives us visibility without getting in people's way," remarked Paul.

### Looking Ahead

What's next for Paul and Believer? "We'll keep working on our game, both the product and how we operate," Paul shared. "Grip will be a cornerstone of our strategy as we continue to refine our workflows, expand our pipeline, and solidify our tech stack. As a start-up, we must keep a close watch on the SaaS tools we're using, ensuring that we're investing wisely and not overspending on unnecessary resources or features. Grip gives us the confidence to innovate fearlessly, knowing our SaaS foundation is secure."