



# New Forcepoint Partner CBI Reaches Platinum Plus in Just Six Months with Commitment to Technical Expertise and Customer Success

A strong partnership with Forcepoint enables Detroit-based cybersecurity solution provider to expand its long-term, trusted relationships with enterprise customers.

CBI is a leading cybersecurity advisor to many of the world's top tier organizations. Founded in 1991, the company provides innovative, flexible and customizable solutions that help ensure data is secure, compliant and available. The CBI and Forcepoint partnership has already seen tremendous success by combining technical knowhow, leadership from IT industry veterans, extreme loyalty to customers, and proven cybersecurity solutions.

**PARTNER PROFILE:**

Privately-owned, services-led cybersecurity advisor.

**INDUSTRY:**

IT Services

**HQ COUNTRY:**

United States

**PRODUCTS:**

- › Forcepoint CASB
- › Forcepoint DDP
- › Forcepoint DEP
- › Forcepoint DLP

Enduring channel partner relationships are typically built up over months and years of fostering trust and achieving a record of mutual success. But sometimes a new channel partnership brings together such like-minded and compatible sales, leadership and engineering organizations that the two teams are able to hit the ground running. This has been the case with Detroit-based CBI and Forcepoint, which in just a few months of partnership have managed to far exceed goals for net new sales and existing CBI client conversions to Forcepoint solutions.

CBI is a privately-owned cybersecurity solution provider led by a top-notch team of technology strategists, former CISOs, and security experts. Serving private and public sector clients across the nation, CBI has built deep relationships with enterprises in Michigan, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois. CBI focuses on providing an advisory-led approach and is dedicated to mitigating risks and elevating corporate security for a multitude of industries and companies of all sizes.

CBI's strategic approach to cybersecurity aligns well with Forcepoint's mission to provide proactive, converged, frictionless solutions that take on evolving cyber threats while serving as a facilitator of collaboration and productivity. CBI senior leadership and Forcepoint's channel team aligned rapidly after just a few meetings according to CBI Senior Director of Partnerships Garrett Slank.

"It's actually been pretty extraordinary how quickly we've come together. Working to get a new partner relationship off the ground can be a struggle as you try to figure each other out. You have to build that first level of trust," Slank said.

"But Forcepoint has been very hands-on from the start. Their channel team is always available for us. The Forcepoint sales leadership team visits our headquarters on a regular basis and we knew each other really well before we went into lockdown mode. Even now, we're still getting together virtually for multiple meetings a week. All of our teams are integrated and working together very well."

## Going from zero to sixty in record time

CBI has been named Partner of the Year for other technology vendors and the goal is to make the same impact with Forcepoint according to CBI CEO & President, Steve Barone. So far so good—in just its first full quarter as a partner, CBI achieved Platinum Plus status based on revenue, the highest level possible in the Forcepoint Partner Program.

CBI's rocket rise was built on a decision to go all-in on training, sales, and services from the start Barone said.

"For us, in 99% of our new relationships with vendors, we don't hyper-train to get certified all at once or invest in resources until we begin to see movement in the market that matches up with what the vendor is promising. But in this particular case, we knew it was a good fit with [Forcepoint Vice President of Global Sales Strategy and Execution] John Sorensen and the Forcepoint channel team," Barone said.

"We wanted to go to market with Forcepoint fully invested and hitting things from multiple angles. We got our people tight with the Forcepoint channel group, trained up on the products, and started going on joint sales calls. We also decided to go all-in on the services side."

Since partnering with Forcepoint, CBI has found the most success with Forcepoint DLP and Forcepoint CASB but is also receiving interest from clients for other Forcepoint solutions, according to Barone.

"In the beginning, the low-hanging fruit for us were the DLP and cloud solutions that our reps and our clients were already pretty well-versed in," he said. "But now we're getting to know the other pieces in Forcepoint's product portfolio, like Next Generation Firewall, we feel like we're just scratching the surface in terms of where this can go."



## How the partnership with Forcepoint works

CBI partners with Forcepoint in all phases of the sales cycle, collaborating on everything from targeted marketing and ad campaigns to sales calls and aftercare services.

The partnership includes:

- Monthly meetings between Forcepoint account executives and CBI executives
- Product and roadmap updates
- Maximum MDF spending under Forcepoint's Partner Program
- Robust marketing plans
- Joint sales calls
- Sales and technical training and certification
- Forcepoint Professional Services support

"We were a services company before we were a product company. Our DNA is in consulting on cybersecurity," Barone said. "We have our integration group on one side of the house doing the installations, and then our security programs group on the other side hyper-focused on assessments. These groups are instrumental to bringing in new clients because we provide them with a roadmap that meets their needs both today and going forward, and when they see that it's time, we're there to make it happen."

CBI is also a valued technical advisor for Forcepoint, serving as a "Lighthouse" partner on cutting-edge products like SASE-based Dynamic Edge Protection (DEP). This means CBI clients can often gain early access to the newest products and solutions from Forcepoint.

In addition, CBI operates its own partner channel—recruiting, training, and partnering with smaller solution providers and managed security service providers (MSSPs) to assist with targeted solution deployment and ongoing service delivery. This helps with solution provisioning for Forcepoint and CBI clients as well as growing and training the Forcepoint partner channel.

## Mutual benefits of a true partnership

A relatively new partner to Forcepoint, CBI hit the ground running, evangelizing the benefits of Forcepoint to many of its existing DLP and CASB customers, while also adding dozens of net new customers. In just a few quarters, CBI has:

- Become a certified supplier of Forcepoint Professional Services
- Become a Platinum Partner with program-leading quarterly revenue generation and net new business logged
- Demonstrated a lead to finish among the top North American partners in annual revenue

A big part of that success is the result of a natural compatibility between the CBI and Forcepoint cultures.

"Our marketing, technical, presale, sales and leadership teams are all lockstep and focused on joint capabilities. We're all moving towards the same goals," Slank said. "Forcepoint's core values are the same core values that we have at CBI—blue-collar work ethic, being authentic. It feels like our counterparts at Forcepoint are cut from the same cloth as CBI, and that makes it easy to see success as partners."



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**GARRETT SLANK**, CBI SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS