

The Nexus of Business and Security

An Interview with Noah Kroloff,
Co-Founder, GSIS (Global Security & Intelligence Strategies)

EDITORS' NOTE *Noah Kroloff is a Co-Founder of GSIS. Prior to founding GSIS, he was the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Before being appointed Chief of Staff, Kroloff served on the Obama-Biden transition team advising the DHS nominee on national and homeland security policy. From 2006 to 2008, Kroloff was the Deputy Chief of Staff and from 2003 to 2006, the Chief Assistant for Policy in the Office of the Arizona Governor. Kroloff left his government role to manage Governor Janet Napolitano's successful reelection effort in 2006 that established new historical benchmarks by becoming the first gubernatorial campaign in Arizona to win every county and legislative district in the state. Kroloff was the Policy Director on her first campaign for Governor in 2002. He also served as a speechwriter and Assistant to the Attorney General in the office of the Arizona Attorney General. Prior to his work in Washington and Arizona, Kroloff was an Aide to New York State Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and taught junior-high school in the Bronx as a Teach for America Corps member. Kroloff is a Senior Fellow at Yale's Jackson Institute for Global Affairs and serves on the Board of Advisors for the Truman National Security Project. He holds a B.A. from St. John's College and a J.D. from Arizona State University College of Law.*

COMPANY BRIEF *GSIS's (Global Security & Intelligence Strategies; gsis360.com) founders and partners blend unique knowledge and experience in national and homeland security, intelligence, jurisprudence, and investigative capability with business acumen to provide strategic insight and solutions. With management who led the United States Government's premier law enforcement, border, and national security agencies, GSIS provides offerings tailored to address real-time requirements and facilitate business-oriented solutions.*

What made you feel the timing was right and there was an opportunity in the market for a company like GSIS?

We had a unique opportunity to form the business at a time when several of us left government service jobs. For Jerry (Reinsdorf, Partner), I think it was an opportunity to give something back to the community in a different

way than he had before. He has a great record of philanthropy, and this was about being able to merge people who had been in the national security field and served the country in government with a prominent business leader like Jerry to create a firm to support the national effort to enhance security while facilitating smart business solutions for corporate clients and others. We view it as another way to give back while helping to change the game for our clients from a security perspective.

Are there key areas you're most focused on or is there a broad offering around security needs?

We have a fairly broad set of offerings that have already been used by our clients, which is in part because of the breadth of experience of the people we have in the firm. Our central focus is on security management, prevention, and planning, which has a number of sub-categories: due diligence and investigative services; venue and physical infrastructure protection; cybersecurity; trade; travel; and customs facilitation and compliance, as well as aviation and border security; and what I would broadly define as market penetration and entry.

Is the diversity of talent your key differentiator or is it the services?

It's a bit of both. One of the unique things about GSIS is that we stand at the nexus of business and security capabilities, and you can't separate one from the other.

Big data and data analytics are an effective security tool. It is increasingly important to leverage data in novel ways so that businesses can stay ahead of trends, discern patterns, and detect anomalies to avert crises, and to reach customers in a different and new way.

One of the biggest differentiators for us is that we bring lessons learned from our national security experience and are able to apply them to the requirements and commercial interests of business.

How broad is your market?

We are a great fit for a medium-large, multinational corporation that operates in different corners of the globe.

Whether a client is trying to secure infrastructure, utilize data to reach customers, or enhance advance decision-making to avert a crisis, we're a great fit. At the same time, GSIS

is helping a number of small technology firms that are looking to enter the marketplace in the U.S. or abroad. We're even dealing with some companies that are pre-revenue. We view this as part of our social mission, insuring that innovative solutions are brought to the forefront, and helping more mature concerns take the appropriate steps to ensure their own security practices and procedures.

How big of a challenge is cybersecurity?

Cyber is one of the fastest evolving and most significant threats to business today – threats are asymmetrical and technology underpinning the digital domain is constantly shifting.

There is no silver-bullet approach to cyber-hygiene and cybersecurity. However, there are solutions available that, when combined with the right applied intellectual capital, can ensure a higher standard of cybersecurity than simple password protections and a firewall.

Businesses, governments, and individuals are at risk from digital incursions and at risk from an infrastructure standpoint from cyber threats. As more business goes digital, staying in front of this is the most important thing a business, a person, or government can do.

Ensuring you're ahead of that threat requires strategic partnerships and often a number of different technological solutions. It's a constant challenge and something you must always focus on as a leader because online threats are constantly shifting, and will continue to evolve in the future.

You have been involved with customs and border protection. Is it tough to remain optimistic when you look at the challenges around securing the U.S.?

Since 9/11, the U.S. government has taken effective steps to prevent terrorism. Can we ensure with 100 percent certainty there will not be another incident? No.

The national security structure of the U.S., however, has evolved dramatically. It's more knowledgeable about how to prevent threats and it is better equipped to stay in front of them. A great deal of progress has been made but, like anything, you never rest. As threats change, the responses to those threats have to change; and as technology changes, you have to stay ahead of the curve to ensure that you are applying the most relevant and effective tools to prevent another adverse national security incident. ●