



SC AWARDS ENTRY GUIDE

Key Questions, Resources, and Tips for Successful Submission

To enter the SC Awards, please [click here](#) ➔



2026 SC AWARDS

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SC Awards Entry Guide

This guide is designed to help you complete your SC Awards nominations by providing key questions to answer, along with the required and optional supporting documentation for each award category. It also includes helpful tips and resources to ensure a smooth, successful nomination process.

Here are some tips to help ensure you submit the best entry possible:

- ① **Keep it concise:** Clearly present your product, company or how the individual delivered results.
- ② **Testimonials:** When collecting testimonials for your submission, gather your best supporting materials, images and videos. Ensure supporters are specific in detailing why your product, company, or individual should be selected.
- ③ **Increase your odds:** If there are multiple relevant categories, consider submitting entries for more than one.
- ④ **Be specific:** If submitting multiple entries, ensure each one is distinct and specific to its respective category, highlighting what sets your product, company, or leader apart.
- ⑤ **Showcase achievements:** Highlight recent accomplishments, notable accolades or other recognitions that demonstrate success.
- ⑥ **Focus on quality:** Judges will evaluate your submission based on its quality, not your market reputation. Be sure to include all relevant details that showcase your strengths.

While judges appreciate mentions of awards or recognitions, it should not replace detailed information about the functionality of a product, service or program. The entry tips are not a guarantee for a winning entry. Our judges are always looking at what is notable, distinctive, and innovative about the individual, solution or the company.

A Note on Judging: Each year, as we announce finalists and winners, we receive inquiries about feedback from judges on non-winning award entries. Unfortunately, as a policy, we do not disclose scores or judges' reasoning or specific comments related to award entries. It's also worth noting that the increase in award entries over the past few years has made the program even more competitive.



Trust Award Categories

Entry questions and required supporting documentation are the same across all Trust categories regardless of product or solution. For a complete list of the Trust categories, download the [SC Awards Entry Kit](#).



TRUST AWARD

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Entry Questions (150-word maximum on each answer)

- What segment of the market does this new product/service address? What threats does this product/service deal with and why do you consider this to be critical in today's environment?
- How do the features and capabilities of this product/service tackle organizations' newest information security needs?
- How strong is the customer base and continued customer growth for this product/service?
- Does the company offer strong customer service and support for this product/service? How?
- What is the total cost of ownership of this product/service? Is it possible that some of your customers find that scalability issues, management of updates/configurations, and more, increase costs associated with deployment of your solution/service?
- If applicable, what is the frequency of updates to the product/service?
- Are efforts underway to continue developing and strengthening this product/service? What do these efforts entail?
- Overall, how well is this product/service meeting the needs of its customers?



Additional Supporting Materials

IMAGE (mandatory)

The image should be a visual representation of the entry. If you are a finalist, SC Media will use this image digitally to complement your entry. Keep in mind, images submitted will be the ones used to represent your product, service or individual. Please consider visual appeal when submitting any images. Logos alone are not acceptable images.

Acceptable image format:

- JPG or PNG
- At least 300 ppi
- Horizontal landscape orientation preferred

TESTIMONIALS (optional)

Up to three testimonials from clients (along with client details) can be submitted to explain why the entrant is best qualified to win the category. Please note that these will remain in strictest confidence and will be shared with the judges only. These will not be published or publicly shared.

VIDEO (optional)

A video can be submitted to explain why the entrant is best qualified to win the category you are entering. Videos might detail what the solution does, what makes it stand out from competitors, number or type of customers, target markets, etc.

- MP4 or MOV format
- No larger than 350 MB
- Maximum 2 minutes in length



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Additional Supporting Materials (continued)

PDF (optional)

- No larger than 15 MB

WEBSITES/MICROSITES (optional – up to 3 may be included)

Please enter the URL of each website/microsite in the appropriate field on the online entry form. There will be space for you to add a login/password if necessary.

The URL must remain active until March 15, 2026 or the material may not be viewed.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Any confidential information that cannot be viewed by the general public or published anywhere should be included in the 'Confidential Information' area **ONLY** on the submission form.



Excellence Award Categories

Organizations or Solutions

Please note that entry questions do vary across the categories on the following pages, however the additional supporting material requirement is the same. Unless otherwise noted, questions have a 150-word maximum for each answer.



Best Customer Service



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- Do you offer installation documentation, online manuals, user-oriented manuals and/or any supplemental documentation needed for your customers to implement and manage the product/service successfully? (Which ones do you offer?)
- Are the various forms of documentation associated with the product/service understandable and effective?
- What customer service and support is standard with product/service purchase?
- Do you offer customers telephone support? Do customers pay additional fees for this? How much more?
- Do you offer customers web-based downloads? Do customers pay additional fees for this? How much more?
- Do you offer customers online forums or FAQs sections? Do customers pay additional fees for this? How much more?
- Can customers get additional on-site help whenever needed? Do they pay additional fees for this? How much more?
- Do customers get on-site help in deploying the solution/service?
- How long is this available to them? Do they pay additional fees for this? How much more?
- Is there anything unique or special you'd like to call out about your customer service and support offerings? Would you say this help to differentiate you from competitors?

Best Emerging Technology



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- What segment of the market does this new product/service address? What threats does this product/service deal with and why do you consider this to be critical in today's environment?
- How do the features and capabilities of this product/service tackle organizations' newest information security needs?
- How strong is the customer base and continued customer growth for this product/service?
- Does the company offer strong customer service and support for this product/service? How?
- What is the total cost of ownership of this product/service? Is it possible that some of your customers find that scalability issues, management of updates/configurations, and more, increase costs associated with deployment of your solution/service?
- If applicable, what is the frequency of updates to the product/service?
- Are efforts underway to continue developing and strengthening this product/service? What do these efforts entail?
- Overall, how well is this product/service meeting the needs of its customers?

Best Enterprise Security Solution, Best SME Security Solution, Best Compliance Solution



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- How strong is the customer base and continued customer growth for this product/service?
- Does the company offer strong customer service and support for this product/service? How?
- What is this product's/service's total cost of ownership? Is it possible that some of your customers find that scalability issues, management of updates/configurations, and more, increase costs associated with deployment of your solution/service?
- If applicable, what is the frequency of updates to the product/ service?
- Are efforts underway to continue developing and strengthening this product/service? What do these efforts entail?
- Overall, how well is this product/service meeting the needs of its customers?
- What is the market share for the sales of this product/service?
- How is the company using its products and services to help enable/strengthen its customers' business?
- Are customers seeing a benefit in using this product/service to differentiate themselves from the competition? That is, are customers finding market value in touting the use of the company's product/service?



Best IT-Related Training Program



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- How is the professional training organization helping to educate and strengthen the knowledge of the IT security professional and/or corporate end-user?
- How does the training program differentiate itself from other offerings?
- How well is the professional training program meeting the needs of the IT security professional or the corporation and its end-users in honing security skills or enhancing security-related knowledge and awareness? Explain.
- How are offerings enhancing end-user awareness and training or enabling end-user companies' IT security professionals to strengthen various facets of their overall risk management plans and practices, as well as subsets of it that may address areas such as business continuity, incident response, secure coding or other IT- and data security-related areas?



Best Professional Certification Program



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- How is the certification organization helping to educate and strengthen the knowledge of the IT security professional?
- How does the certification program differentiate itself from other offerings?
- How well is the certification program meeting the needs of the IT security professional? Explain.



Best Security Company



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- How strong is the company's customer base and continued customer growth?
- Does the company have a strong product/service portfolio? Explain.
- Does the company offer strong customer service and support for the products/services it supplies? How?
- Is the company engaged in compelling research and development efforts that will lead to continued innovation? How?
- How well is the company meeting its overall mission and vision? In what ways?
- How is the company using its products and services to help enable/strengthen its customers' business?
- Are customers seeing a benefit in using your products/services to differentiate from the competition? That is, are customers finding market value in touting the use of your company's product/service?



Investor of the Year



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- What are the specific businesses that you supported in the cybersecurity space through investment?
- Provide a brief synopsis of their offering and how far along they were in development at the time of your investment.
- In aggregate, how much investment filtered to security startups? Have you invested in cybersecurity companies in the past?
- Detail how your investments are being used by the startups and how this will support their growth plans.
- Beyond dollars, what are you providing to support the startups?
- Detail your interest in the cybersecurity market and any professional background related to the market.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Portfolio Testimonials (optional)

Up to three testimonials from portfolio businesses, along with contact details, can be submitted to explain why the nominee is best qualified to win this category. The testimonials should be uploaded in one document. Please note that these will remain in strictest confidence and will be shared with judges only. These will not be published or publicly shared.

PDF (optional)

No larger than 15MB

Website/Microsites (optional)

Please enter the URL of each website/microsite in the appropriate field on the online entry form. There will be space for you to add a login/password if necessary.



Most Promising Early-Stage Startup



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- What security challenge does your flagship offering address? Explain.
- How can your flagship offering address this challenge?
- How strong is the company's current customer base and continued customer growth?
- Have you accepted investments? If so, how many rounds of funding, and how much funding been raised?
- Is the company engaged in compelling research and development efforts that will lead to continued innovation? How?
- How well is the company meeting its overall mission and vision? In what ways?
- Are customers seeing a benefit in using your products/services to differentiate from the competition?
- Please provide a brief case study of its application to a solution (500 word maximum)



Additional Supporting Materials

IMAGE (mandatory)

The image should be a visual representation of the entry. If you are a finalist, SC Media will use this image digitally and in print to support your entry. Keep in mind, images submitted will be the ones used to represent your product, service or individual. Please consider visual appeal when submitting any images. Logos alone are not acceptable images.

Acceptable image format:

- JPG or PNG
- At least 300 ppi
- Horizontal landscape orientation preferred

TESTIMONIALS (optional)

Up to three testimonials from clients (along with client details) can be submitted to explain why the entrant is best qualified to win the category. Please note that these will remain in strictest confidence and will be shared with the judges only. These will not be published or publicly shared.

Note for Investor of the Year category, testimonials from portfolio companies are requested.

VIDEO (optional)

A video can be submitted to explain why the entrant is best qualified to win the category you are entering. Videos might detail things like what the solution does, what makes it stand out from competitors, how many customers and what types of customers currently use it and why, etc.

- MP4 or MOV format
- No larger than 350 MB
- Maximum 2 minutes in length



Additional Supporting Materials (continued)

PDF (optional)

- No larger than 15 MB

WEBSITES/MICROSITES (optional – up to 3 may be included)

Please enter the URL of each website/microsite in the appropriate field on the online entry form. There will be space for you to add a login/password if necessary.

The URL must remain active until March 15, 2026 or the material may not be viewed.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

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Excellence Award Categories

Professionals

These awards recognize leaders in the vendor, reseller and consultant communities. Nominees can be self-nominated or nominated by a peer as well as employed by any global organization.

Please note that entry questions do vary across the following categories below, however the additional supporting material requirement is the same. Unless otherwise noted, questions have a 150-word maximum for each answer.



Security Executive of the Year



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- How has the executive developed and managed a strong IT development team?
- By what means has the security executive gained the support of leadership peers and colleagues?
- How has the executive helped to propel his/her position to a footing of influence throughout the cybersecurity community at large?
- How has the executive helped to empower colleagues to meet or exceed business initiatives and goals?
- How has the executive strengthened end-user and customer awareness of IT security threats and safeguards?
- In what ways does the executive continue to better the expertise of internal IT security?
- What steps is the executive taking to enlighten the cybersecurity community about the risks driving the product and solution development?



Innovator (Executive or Practitioner) of the Year



ENTRY QUESTIONS

- How has the executive or security team practitioner developed and managed or led a strong and innovative IT development team?
- What types of innovative solutions, problem solving or skills has this individual demonstrated to help propel the organization and enable new growth, technologies or streamline internal process?
- How has this executive or practitioner helped to educate team members to understand how adopting an innovative technology or approach can contribute to business initiatives and goals?
- How has this executive or practitioner's efforts strengthened end-user and customer awareness of IT security threats and safeguards and the need to evolve approaches to cybersecurity?
- In what ways does this individual continue to better the expertise of internal IT security?
- How has this executive or practitioner engaged with the larger cybersecurity community to share his/her insights on how their approach has improved product and solution development and cybersecurity outcomes?



Additional Supporting Materials

NOMINEE HEADSHOT (mandatory)

Please provide a headshot with the following specs:

- Color, and preferably a professional headshot
- At least 300 ppi
- JPG or PNG file type
- Images should be no smaller than 900x900px at 300ppi; horizontal orientation preferred
- File size should not be less than 300KB

REFERENCES (optional but highly encouraged)

Two professional and/or academic references to support why the nominee is best qualified to win the category. Please note that these references will remain in strictest confidence and will be shared with the judges only. These will not be published or publicly shared. Judges will not be contacting these references directly; only reviewing materials submitted as part of the entry.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Any confidential information that cannot be viewed by the general public or published anywhere should be included in the 'Confidential Information' area **ONLY** on the submission form.

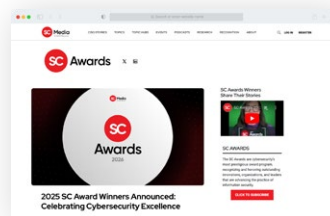


Additional Supporting Materials

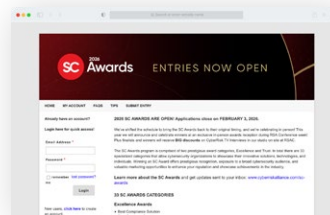
KEY DATES

DECEMBER 2	Early Bird Rate Deadline
JANUARY 26	Final Entry Deadline
FEBRUARY 9 THROUGH FEBRUARY 27	Judging Process
MARCH 2	Finalist Announcements
MARCH 24	Winners Announced During the Week of RSA 2026 <i>Stay tuned for details!</i>

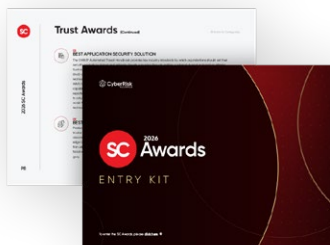
KEY LINKS



SC AWARDS WEBSITE
scworld.com/sc-awards



SC AWARDS ENTRY WEBSITE
scawards.secure-platform.com



SC AWARDS ENTRY KIT
scworld.com/2026-sc-awards-entry-kit



SC

2026 SC Awards



2026 Awards

We wish you the best of luck and look forward to reviewing your entries!
- The SC Media Editorial Team and CyberRisk Alliance