

How Sebrae protects 21 million small businesses — and never goes dark again

A ransomware attack once took Sebrae dark for nine days at R\$19 million a day. Today, real-time visibility across 27 states means Brazil's small-business institution can contain a threat instead of stopping the country's entrepreneurs.



ORGANIZATION

Sebrae

INDUSTRY

Nonprofit — small business development and public interest

SIZE

About 8,000 employees and 30,000+ partners; 21 million small businesses served

HEADQUARTERS

Brasília, Brazil

TANIUM SOLUTIONS

Asset Discovery & Inventory, Endpoint Management, Patch, Risk & Compliance, Tanium Atlas



Brazil's economy runs on 21 million small businesses

Founded in 1972 and headquartered in Brasília, Sebrae is a private, public-interest institution created to make Brazil's micro and small businesses competitive and sustainable. Those businesses are 98% of all Brazilian companies, more than 60% of the jobs created in the country today, and the reason Sebrae exists.

"Sebrae looks after what is most important in Brazil," says Margarete de Castro Coelho, Director of Administration and Finance. "The importance of small businesses to the Brazilian economy is immeasurable." In 2025 alone, Sebrae served nearly four million small businesses through more than 3,000 products — training, mentoring, credit guarantees, market access and digital enablement — delivered from 500 service points across 27 state units and more than 3,000 municipalities.

That reach is also an expansive attack surface. Sebrae's estate spans more than 3,000 systems, on-premises and cloud data centers, roughly 8,000 employees and over 30,000 third-party contractors, distributed across a continent-sized country. And it holds what Margarete calls the institution's greatest asset: data on 21 million Brazilian entrepreneurs.

"Investing in cybersecurity is not an expense. It is protecting what is most precious — our data and our intelligence."

Margarete de Castro Coelho

Director of Administration and Finance
Sebrae Nacional

The industry reality: Brazil is Latin America's most-attacked country

Public-interest institutions sit high on the target list in Brazil. Lapsus\$ took down Brazil's Ministry of Health twice in December 2021, deleting national immunization records¹. REvil encrypted the Rio Grande do Sul court system and forced the courts offline². Brazilian organizations now absorb roughly 3,830 cyberattacks a week, up 34% year over year, and the country accounts for the largest share of ransomware in the region³.

Sebrae learned this directly. Before Tanium, a ransomware attack halted the institution for nearly nine days — three days completely dark, six more spent restoring service. Full recovery took close to six months.

"Every day Sebrae is down costs R\$19 million that we cannot deliver to our clients," says Diego Almeida, CIO and IT Manager for Sebrae Nacional. The financial hit was only part of it. "The entrepreneur cannot wait until tomorrow. They are here now. They cannot stop selling."

The reason for the shutdown was lack of total visibility. "Sebrae Piauí had no encrypted machine and was not directly affected, yet we had to shut down our entire environment," says Juliana Lira Fonseca, IT Manager at Sebrae Piauí. "We did not have a tool that gave us the visibility Tanium provides today."

A single, real-time view of a continent-sized estate

Sebrae ran an extensive market evaluation before committing. "We conducted broad, in-depth market research and concluded that Tanium was the right solution for Sebrae's challenge — for today and for the future," Margarete says. The board treated the investment as a matter of stewardship: "Investing in cybersecurity is not an expense. It is protecting what is most precious — our data and our intelligence."

The first thing Tanium returned was the truth about the estate. "We had more than 3,000 systems and we could not manage our assets, because we did not know what we had," Diego says. "There was a lot of shadow IT." With every endpoint discoverable and queryable in seconds — across all 27 states, from headquarters to a single service point in the interior — Sebrae stopped managing by assumption.

That changed what risk acceptance meant. Previously, Sebrae applied global vulnerability guidance uniformly across the whole environment at high operational cost, then tolerated the exposure it could not afford to close. "After Tanium, we could pinpoint exactly which areas, states or regional branches required updates," Diego says, "without the excessive effort of holding the entire estate at one level."

Crucially, the same platform that finds the problem also fixes it — in one console, with one set of controls, on live data rather than a stale inventory. "With Tanium we realized we could have recovered much faster by isolating the specific areas that were affected and restoring access to the units that were not, instead of shutting down the entire operation," Diego says. "If it happens again, we can act without stopping our environment," Juliana adds.

1. Lapsus\$ — Brazilian Ministry of Health attacks, December 2021 — [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lapsus\\$](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lapsus$)

2. REvil ransomware — Rio Grande do Sul court system, BleepingComputer — <https://www.bleepingcomputer.com/news/security/brazils-rio-grande-do-sul-court-system-hit-by-revil-ransomware/>

3. Brazil averaged 3,830 weekly cyberattacks, up 34% year over year — <https://brasilinovador.com.br/brasil-sofre-alta-de-34-nos-ciberataques-enquanto-ransomware-global-registra-maior-avanco-de-2026/>



What a converged platform makes possible

- **One platform, one dataset.** IT operations and security work from the same live endpoint data — no reconciling an inventory tool against a patch tool against a security console.
- **Answers in seconds, at national scale.** Questions that once took weeks of manual audit across 27 states are asked and answered against the live estate.
- **Find and fix in the same motion.** Targeting and remediation happen where the data lives, which is what makes surgical containment possible.
- **A governed path to autonomy.** Tanium Atlas extends the same platform with agentic AI, so teams delegate as much routine execution as they choose while policy guardrails keep a human in the loop for critical decisions.

Evidence on demand — for the board, and for the regulator

Brazil's LGPD obliges Sebrae to implement and demonstrate technical and administrative safeguards. Demonstration was the harder half. "It used to take a long time to put a report together, investigate and provide evidence," Diego says. "Now, the moment a regulatory body asks, we generate the report immediately and show our level of LGPD compliance."

The same shift reached the boardroom. Answering a single executive question on cyber posture once meant months of analysis and manual consolidation across disconnected tools — and every answer produced new questions that restarted the cycle. "Now the reports are generated instantly," Diego says. "When the board asks for more, we answer the same day. We shortened the time between thinking and acting."

For Margarete, that is what protects a brand valued at more than R\$40 billion and ranked among Brazil's four most respected. "What we invest in cybersecurity is less than 0.5% of that value," she says. And because Sebrae is funded by private contributions rather than public money, the stewardship argument is direct: the resources it protects belong to the small businesses it serves.



From reactive to proactive — including in the interior

At the state level, the change was structural. “Before Tanium, technology management at Sebrae Piauí was fragmented and manual, prone to failure, reactive, with no defined standard,” Juliana says. “We lost agility in our services.” Her unit covers an entire state with limited resources, serving artisans, agribusiness and regional tourism far from major urban centers.

“After deploying Tanium, my work became proactive,” she says. “I have better governance of my whole technology environment, and I know it is standardized with the rest of the Sebrae system. I no longer manage in isolation — we created an IT governance ecosystem. Tanium puts my mind at ease.” Faster, more assertive decisions translate directly into uptime for entrepreneurs who reach Sebrae only through technology.

Diego points to the leadership problem this solves for any IT executive: “Have you ever needed to update your estate and not pulled the trigger, afraid of stopping finance, or payroll, or a director’s operations? Tanium takes that decision off your shoulders and puts it in a dashboard. If downtime happens at all, it is minimal and isolated.” Adoption followed accordingly — deployment was fast, no state unit rejected it, and states now request additional modules.

Results

9 days

of national downtime in the pre-Tanium attack — now containable to the affected units

R\$19M

of undelivered investment at stake for every day Sebrae is dark

Minutes

to produce LGPD and board-level compliance evidence, once months of work

27 States

managed to a single real-time standard, headquarters to interior

What comes next: Tanium Atlas

Sebrae's next step is autonomy. "As soon as Tanium made Atlas available to us, we understood it would be our next step in endpoint management," Diego says — "not only managing the entire estate, but automating that management."

Tanium Atlas is an autonomous operating system that puts the full depth of the Tanium platform behind a single operator, human or agentic, through a natural language conversation. An operator can move from intent to outcome in one experience with real-time endpoint intelligence at the foundation⁴. For Sebrae, the appeal is explicit: fewer manual tasks inside the console, insights and alerts generated by the platform itself, and consolidation of observability spending that is today spread across other tools. "It gives us more technical capability and requires fewer operational resources," Diego says.

Juliana frames the same step in terms of the people Sebrae exists for: "I see a future with Tanium where the adoption of artificial intelligence brings more innovation to Sebrae and to small business owners."

For Margarete, the partnership is already settled. Among all the solutions in Sebrae's digital shield, she says, "I would like to highlight Tanium, which has been a partner for now and for the future."

4. Tanium Atlas, autonomous operating system — Tanium — <https://www.tanium.com/platform/tanium-atlas>



"Tanium transforms visibility into trust. That trust carries straight through to the business side that serves our customer."

Diego Almeida

CIO and IT Manager
Sebrae Nacional

About Tanium

Tanium is the Autonomous IT company. As AI accelerates both innovation and risk, Tanium Atlas, the company's autonomous operating system, puts the full depth of the Tanium Autonomous IT Platform behind every IT and security operator — human and agentic. Tanium provides the real-time intelligence, agentic decision-making, and autonomous execution operators need to detect, decide, and remediate at machine speed across their endpoint estate, with real-time visibility and control across more than 36 million endpoints worldwide. To learn how Tanium delivers Autonomous IT for Unstoppable Business, visit www.tanium.com and LinkedIn.



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