

History & evolution of information security

Information security did not begin with computers.

From the earliest days of organized communication, governments and military leaders recognized the need to protect sensitive information. Early encryption methods, trusted couriers, and controlled storage practices reflected an understanding of confidentiality long before the digital age.

As communication systems expanded, so did the risks. Postal interception, espionage, and wartime intelligence led to formal classification schemes, secrecy laws, and cryptographic advances. The World Wars marked a decisive turning point, transforming information protection into a strategic capability with global consequences.

The late twentieth century introduced a new shift. Mainframe systems gave way to personal computers, client-server models, and global networks. While productivity and connectivity increased, security complexity grew alongside them. Technology no longer operated in isolation; it became embedded in every business process.

Over time, information security evolved beyond technical controls. It matured into an organizational discipline—integrating technology, governance, culture, and executive decision-making. What began as a tactical necessity became a foundational element of business continuity, resilience, and national security.



This topic is explored further in Section 1.4, *History & Evolution of Information Security*, in Chapter 1 of Volume 1 (*Information Security Fundamentals*) of the *Mastering Information Security* series.