



Endpoint security solution delivers holistic protection for Lancaster University

Lancaster University is an award-winning university ranked in the top ten in three UK league tables. It has a growing international reputation, a fact recognised by its high rating in the QS World Rankings, and offers more than 280 undergraduate degree programmes, alongside a wide range of postgraduate courses.

Lancaster is one of the few UK universities to use a collegiate system and around 12,000 UK and international students have access to high-quality, innovative teaching and facilities through its nine individual colleges. In 2017, Lancaster University achieved the highest possible score en dash x2 in the UK Government's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). More recently, it was named International University of the Year 2020 in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide.

CUSTOMER AT A GLANCE



Industry
Education/Higher Ed/Tertiary

Size of Company
4,500

Sophos Solutions
Central Intercept X Endpoint Advanced; Central Intercept X Advanced for Server; Endpoint; Server

“We chose Sophos Intercept X for Server and Sophos Central Intercept X Endpoint security solutions, as they provided the value for money and functionality we needed.”

Matt Storey, Systems Technical Coordinator, Lancaster University



Key facts

- › 12,000 students attending nine colleges
- › 280 undergraduate degree programmes
- › Gold-accredited – Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

The Challenge

Lancaster University's existing Endpoint security solution had been in place for a few years. Matt Storey, the university's Systems Technical Coordinator, wanted to explore alternative solutions that could enhance functionality and performance. "We were curious about advances in Endpoint security and anti-virus solutions," says Matt. We began to investigate the marketplace and discover

if alternative providers could deliver a better solution within the budget available.

We had tight timelines and needed to quickly identify potential solutions, and more importantly, what would be best for us. When we approached Sophos, they highlighted what has worked well in similar universities, and critically, proposed solutions that would be suitable for our diverse hardware and operating system estate, including Windows 10, Mac OS and Linux.

"We chose the Sophos Intercept X for Server and Sophos Central Intercept X Endpoint security solutions, as they provided the value for money and functionality we needed," explains Matt.

Critical Success Factors

- › Assess specific client requirements
- › Identify highly functional Endpoint security solution
- › Demonstrate suitability for mixed-device estate



The Solution

“Sophos came out top in all of the areas we examined,” continues Matt. “Once we’d made our decision, a productive relationship was quickly established between ourselves and Sophos. That collaboration gave us confidence that we had not only sourced the right product but also gained access to an extensive knowledge community of support and information to help squeeze maximum value out of the solution.”

The solution was implemented by the in-house IT team with support from technical teams at Sophos. Keen to avoid any disruption to ongoing business activities, the team completed the migration without any disruption to core systems or suspension of services.

“The technical implementation and migration of services ran smoothly, with Sophos helping to ensure the solution’s configuration exactly matched our specific needs,” says Matt. We managed to migrate

data from around 1,000 servers, alongside more than 6,000 users, in a single month. Migrating remote users – which can be problematic when dealing with individual devices – ran smoothly too. We were able to combine and deploy multiple upgrades that could be initiated when it was most convenient for the users themselves to do it – even if it was outside of normal working hours.

“Throughout the implementation, the support provided by Sophos was superb. They couldn’t have been more helpful, quickly identified what would and wouldn’t work and backed up those findings with hard evidence. All in all, were great to work with and responded quickly to any queries or support requests,” said Matt.

Solution Highlights

- Workshops to demonstrate solution capabilities
- Extensive technical support during migration to new solution
- Minimal downtime and disruption to ongoing services

The Benefits

“Any transition of this size is going to be hard work, and one of the joys of working with the Sophos team was their clear advice,” says Matt. “They provided easy-to-understand guidance about how existing resources could be migrated, and just as importantly, how it could be achieved with the minimum fuss. We also knew that the mix of operating systems in our device estate could have caused issues, yet the Sophos team managed all of the mixed environment requirements simply and quickly.”

The Sophos Intercept X solution provides a wide range of operational benefits. It simplifies management and the Endpoint cloud capacity enables Lancaster University to add functionality if required in the future. Network security has been significantly enhanced with a robust web, blocking endpoint solution for homeworkers minimising the risk from potentially malicious sites, phishing and command-and-control attacks.

The dedicated Sophos GitHub gives access to up-to-the-minute information and developments that will enable wider capabilities in the future. Also, Lancaster University now has access to the real-time information it needs to gain a clear understanding of all network activity.

“We’re picking up incidents we were never aware of before and the ransomware product is brilliant at identifying and rectifying any attacks on the network. And when it comes to the day-to-day management of the solution, there’s little for us to do,” concludes Matt. “The majority of the

management functions are easily accessible through the comms system management, but if we need to, we can still drill down to granular information. The root cause analysis function, in particular, is extremely useful and has made troubleshooting a much simpler task. Sophos also provided free licences for students and staff to use – helping to ensure that everybody has access to the same robust security solution. It’s helping to embed a holistic approach to security across the organisation.”

Benefits at a glance

- The framework offers ease of procurement
- Comprehensive implementation guidance and support
- Enhanced functionality and security

