Sophos Managed Detection and Response provides round-the-clock peace of mind for **Coventry School Foundation**

Coventry School Foundation is an outstanding provider of education for around 2,500 pupils aged 3-18, with history stretching back over 670 years. It comprises five schools, including the historic Bablake School, founded in 1344 and King Henry VIII School, founded in 1545.

CUSTOMER-AT-A-GLANCE

Coventry School Foundation

Industry
Education

Number of users
2,500

Sophos Customer
Since 2020

Sophos Solutions
Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR)
Sophos Email Advanced

"The malware attack took almost a month of our team working round the clock to recover our servers and networks, and during that time every user was incapable of connecting to our network following the attack. We never want this to happen again, so it was clear we needed to step up our approach to cybersecurity."

Tim Lees, Network Manager, Coventry School Foundation

Coventry School Foundation recently merged its networks from across all of its five sites. After the merger, the IT team became responsible for managing around 3,000 computers as well as all printing, mobile phones, Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Teams. The team also faced cybersecurity challenges and had experienced a previous ransomware attack which encrypted the Foundation's entire network including backups, resulting in the network being unusable for almost a month.

The team at the Foundation decided to take a far more robust approach to cybersecurity. After reviewing a number of solutions, they opted for Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR) to provide a comprehensive managed cybersecurity service with full protection 24/7/365.

Business challenges

The ransomware attack the Foundation experienced occurred just before Christmas and the IT team worked 24/7 to get the network rebuilt and the Foundation back online. As they did so, they found that all backups had been encrypted and cloud backups were not available. Fortunately, there were snapshots available on the storage area network, which enabled the team to rebuild the network.

In light of the impact of the attack, Tim Lees, Network Manager at the Foundation became acutely aware of the need to scale up cybersecurity protection. The IT team joined a webinar with the Sophos technical team to find out about the cybersecurity product, Sophos Extended Detection and Response (XDR) for increased cybersecurity cover. While Sophos XDR would detect cyber threats and security weaknesses, it would still require an in-house cybersecurity

expert to manage and respond to any issues, but the Foundation didn't have this resource available. Tim also reviewed the cybersecurity insurance they had in place but found this only provided cover for mop-up after an attack and advice on the best course of action to take, but did not provide any additional protection.

The Foundation therefore needed to either employ a full-time cybersecurity expert or upgrade to Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR) for a comprehensive managed cybersecurity as a service (CaaS).

The Technical Solution

The team at the Foundation considered their options and found that the cost of employing a full-time cybersecurity expert was comparable with opting for Sophos MDR but that with MDR, the team would get constant protection, 24/7, 365 days per year.

Sophos MDR now provides the Foundation with a fully managed service delivered by a dedicated team of experts and threat hunters who provide round-the-clock monitoring, threat-hunting and response. The team detects, investigates and responds to threats in minutes and also provides cybersecurity advice.

Business Benefits

For a small IT team comprising two Network Managers and six technicians with responsibility for thousands of endpoints, Sophos MDR provides peace of mind that the Foundation's cybersecurity is taken care of, even outside working hours.

Tim reports that the transition to Sophos MDR couldn't have been easier. The Sophos engineers conducted a preliminary health check and made a few minor changes to the network. Following this, it was all up and running very quickly. Tim particularly values the weekly reports, together with any reports triggered by abnormal activity on the network.

Tim is also satisfied that the service is working as it should be, following the recent detection of a new software installation which was flagged up. Even though there was no follow up action required, Tim says he sees this as proof that the service is doing exactly what it should be.

The benefits Tim highlights are:

‣ Confidence around cybersecurity and ransomware protection for all five schools

‣ More time for IT staff to work on other projects instead of monitoring threats

‣ A fully managed solution that meets the Foundation's budget

‣ Assurance that sensitive school data is secure

‣ Excellent 24/7 support and regular contact with Sophos

‣ An easy, successful, and fast transition to the service

‣ Peace of mind, day and night

"We live in a world today where hackers are getting more and more sophisticated and targeting establishments like ours. We just don't have the resources in-house to be able to combat threats ourselves."

Tim Lees, Network Manager, Coventry School Foundation

To find out more about Sophos solutions, call (0)8447 671131 or email sales@sophos.com

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