Helping Gloucestershire College protect staff and students with proactive cybersecurity.

Barracuda firewall, email security, and cloud backup are a powerful trio for mitigating cyber risk.
Customer

- **Gloucestershire College** is a further and higher education institution in the eponymous south-west England county
- It offers vocational and university-level courses from three campuses to around 6000 students

Challenges

- Thousands of phishing emails per day, attempting ransomware, data theft and more
- A requirement for SD-WAN support for new firewalls
- A need for third-party backup for Microsoft without knowing data capacity, number of accounts or retention period

Solutions

- **Email Protection™**
- **Cloud-to-Cloud Backup™**
- **CloudGen Firewall™**

Benefits

- Time savings spent on administration and incident response
- Protection against threats to mitigate the risk of downtime, and reputation and financial damage
- SD-WAN support will enable the college to save money otherwise spent on expensive leased lines
- Barracuda Cloud-to-Cloud Backup offers peace of mind backup for data in 18,000 student accounts and around 900 staff
The historic county of Gloucestershire doesn’t at first glance seem like the kind of place associated with 21st century cyber-threats. But in reality it is home to the headquarters of UK intelligence service GCHQ, roughly equivalent to the US National Security Agency (NSA). It’s also home to Gloucestershire College; a fact not lost on Head of IT, Kevin Agnew.

“Every organization in the world is a target for cyber-attacks,” he says. “But we are a target both in terms of being in the education sector, and our geographical location.”

Fortunately, Kevin and his team have invested with Barracuda to build formidable cyber-defenses across the college’s network and Microsoft 365 accounts.

**Flexibility was key**

When Kevin arrived in his role two years ago, he realized that there was no third-party backup in place for the college’s Microsoft 365 deployments. His search for a vendor was complicated by a lack of certainty over how much capacity, how many accounts and what retention period was required.

“Our student numbers fluctuate beyond my control. If the college decides to put a course on and enrol 500 students tomorrow, that could happen and all of a sudden we have 500 more accounts to backup and secure,” he explained. “Also, when a student’s course finishes, it doesn’t mean their account can be deleted, as they may be waiting for their exam results or for coursework to be returned. That makes it difficult to specify a retention period.”

It was Barracuda’s all-inclusive approach that caught Kevin’s eye. Barracuda bases costs on staff accounts which are more predictable in number. Storage and retention is unlimited. Soon after, the college’s firewalls reached their end of life, which necessitated a search for a new provider. Barracuda CloudGen Firewall was released “head and shoulders above the rest price-wise, for the functionality we were getting,” explains Kevin. They also supported the college’s plans to leverage SD-WAN infrastructure across its sites.

Previously the college used its firewalls to handle email security, but Kevin didn’t need much persuading to extend his partnership with Barracuda via the Barracuda Email Protection suite. He was particularly keen to mitigate the threat of data theft and ransomware carried by thousands of phishing emails the college receives daily.

**All bases covered**

Barracuda Cloud-to-Cloud Backup was the first to get deployed. It’s designed to offer simple and highly granular backup and recovery of Microsoft 365 Teams, Exchange, SharePoint and OneDrive data. It offers point-in-time retrieval, and scheduled and on-demand backup. Customer data is deduplicated and compressed to maximize storage efficiency and minimize the backup window.

The Barracuda CloudGen Firewall offers protection against advanced and zero-day threats for on-premises and cloud environments. Alongside advanced SD-WAN capabilities there’s layered protection including behavioral and heuristic analysis, static code analysis, and comprehensive sandboxing. Gloucestershire College deployed one per site.

Finally, Barracuda Email Protection is a comprehensive suite of offerings that include cloud backup, as well as threat prevention, detection and response. Kevin chose to focus on three modules: Email Gateway Defense, Impersonation Protection which uses AI to spot more advanced threats, and Automatic Remediation for rapid incident response.

“I was pleasantly surprised at how easy it was. Backup was quick and the Barracuda guys answered all of our questions. It just worked from day one.”

---

Kevin Agnew, Head of IT Gloucestershire College
"I was pleasantly surprised at how easy it was. Backup was quick and the Barracuda guys answered all of our questions. It just worked from day one," says Kevin. "Email security was similar: it required more planning but went very smoothly. And although the firewalls were the biggest project, we had a really positive experience."

Kevin was particularly impressed with Barracuda's flexibility in deployment of the firewalls. Because one site did not have its own connection for several months, the college wanted to postpone paying support costs for six months.

“Our sales rep was really accommodating with timings. It made things a lot easier for us,” Kevin says.

Driving proactive security

The solutions have empowered Kevin and his team both with extra time savings and granularity of reporting to get more proactive about threat protection. All three firewalls can be managed from a single control panel known as Barracuda Firewall Control Center. And Cloud-to-Cloud Backup and email security solutions can also be operated from a single portal.

The Automatic Remediation feature also saves administrative time by automatically scanning all user-reported content for threats. If one is detected, all matching emails are moved from users’ mailboxes into their junk folders, and security admins receive an alert. The firewalls have saved the college time and resource in a slightly different way, Kevin adds.

“It’s allowed us to be more proactive in investigating potential threats. I’m in the email security tool regularly, digging into notifications. In fact, the gateway does a lot for us [in filtering out threats] because every incoming email goes through it before it even gets to the 365 tenant.”

Kevin Agnew, Head of IT
Gloucestershire College

Learn more:

For organizations that want to protect their businesses, brands, and people against the most advanced email-borne threats, Barracuda Email Protection is a comprehensive, easy-to-use solution that delivers gateway defense, API-based impersonation and phishing protection, incident response, data protection, and compliance capabilities.
“It’s much quicker to analyze usage logs, so we spend less time crawling through lines of logs digging out the bits we want,” he explains.

Barracuda’s attention to detail also makes investigation and reporting easier.

“It’s allowed us to be more proactive in investigating potential threats. I’m in the email security tool regularly, digging into notifications,” says Kevin. “In fact, the gateway does a lot for us [in filtering out threats] because every incoming email goes through it before it even gets to the 365 tenant.”

**Barracuda Firewall Insights** supports advanced granular reporting for the college IT team, which has also configured its three CloudGen Firewall deployments based on intelligence about specific threat groups targeting the education sector.

Having come so far in a short space of time, Gloucestershire College is already thinking about the future.

“We’ve looked at the Barracuda Web Application Firewall ... and we’re planning on extending our current contracts with Barracuda,” says Kevin.
About Barracuda

At Barracuda we strive to make the world a safer place. We believe every business deserves access to cloud-first, enterprise-grade security solutions that are easy to buy, deploy, and use. We protect email, networks, data, and applications with innovative solutions that grow and adapt with our customers’ journey. More than 200,000 organizations worldwide trust Barracuda to protect them — in ways they may not even know they are at risk — so they can focus on taking their business to the next level. For more information, visit barracuda.com.