UK service org. gets complete O365 security with single-vendor simplicity.

Charitable trust for learning-disabled clients chooses Barracuda Total Email Protection.

Confronting vulnerabilities

When Jon Whattam joined Linkage Community Trust in 2014 as its new Information Communications Technology Technical Services Manager, the company had recently migrated from an on-premises Exchange system to Office 365—and security was a pressing concern. "For our on-prem email, we used Symantec for security," says Whattam, "but it was very expensive and didn't work very well, so the migration was an opportunity to explore other options. When I came on, we were only using the native security provided by Microsoft, but we were getting hammered with a lot of phishing attacks. Several years earlier, a number of user credentials had been exposed somehow, and those accounts were being heavily targeted."

A serendipitous cold-call

Just as Whattam was embarking on his search for better email security, he got a call from a Barracuda reseller. "I hadn't heard much about Barracuda before, and I knew nothing about their Total Email Protection solution," he says. "But it sounded like it might be a strong contender, so I requested a demo. In particular I liked the idea of multiple security functions—gateway, inbox defense, user training, and automated remediation—bundled together from a single vendor."

The demo went well, says Whattam. "The Barracuda sales engineer was very helpful, installing the solution on a trial basis went smoothly. Everything worked as advertised, and it was quite easy to use. We did have one issue that caused PhishLine to run very slowly, but a single call got that resolved immediately. My team were impressed with how responsive Barracuda support was."

Profile

- Founded in 1976 in Lincolnshire, UK

- ~650 employees

- Delivers a mix of educational, support, and residential services to young people with learning disabilities

Challenges

- Following switch to Office 365, required new email security solutions

- Flood of phishing attacks created urgency

- Staff and highly vulnerable clients require protection and security awareness training

- As a charitable organization, was very cost-sensitive

Solution

- Barracuda Total Email Protection (combines Barracuda Essentials, Sentinel, PhishLine, and Forensics and Incident Response)

Results

- Achieved comprehensive, multilayered security against email-borne threats

- Barracuda worked to achieve affordable pricing for premium solution

- Staff and clients demonstrating improved security awareness

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EMAIL PROTECTION

Following the demo, Whattam did more research. "Most of what you hear from your peers are horror stories," he says. "So I'd heard about pricing problems with Mimecast, for example. But when I asked around about Barracuda, it turned out lots of other people really like the company and its products. That's likely why I hadn't heard much about them before."

In the end, says Whattam, he and his team chose Barracuda Total Email Protection for three reasons: "First, it has all the functions and capabilities we need combined in a single-vendor solution. Second, the demo went smoothly and showed that the products are easy to use and effective. And third, we found that Barracuda has a good reputation among our peers."

There was one more piece to figure out before the deal could be closed: pricing. "Off the shelf, the pricing was just a bit out of reach for a non-profit service organization of our size. But our Barracuda account manager moved heaven and earth to make it possible. In the end, we were able to remove features that would have duplicated existing solutions already in place, and that made it possible for us to proceed."

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Jon Whattam
ICT Technical Services Manager
Linkage Community Trust

Results so far—and next steps

"I'm very pleased so far with Total Email Protection," says Whattam. "Sentinel is catching a LOT of phishing emails. That's especially important with our staff working from home, which just makes people more vulnerable. And of course our clients—to whom we give network accounts on a separate domain—can be especially vulnerable to certain types of phishing. Sadly, criminals seem to target both our staff and our clients with a lot of sextortion schemes, it's very upsetting for them. So this is a huge improvement. The next step of implementation will be deploying the 'report phishing' button."

Whattam is also making use of the PhishLine security-awareness training system. "At this point we've only run a few basic simulations. In our benchmark test, forty out of about 650 users clicked, and a dozen actually entered their credentials, so the next step will be to integrate simulations with some of the included training programs. I think they'll make a big difference."

As for Forensics and Incident Response, the automated-remediation part of Total Email Protection, Whattam says they haven't yet needed to use it to remove malicious emails. "However, there was an unwise, unencrypted email that was sent internally, and it was very easy for us to purge it from all the mailboxes," he says.

"The bottom line," says Whattam, "is that these solutions just work, they hum along in the background doing just what they should. I'm sure that we are considerably more secure now than we were before migrating to Office 365."

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Learn more about Barracuda Total Email Protection

barracuda.com/products/totalemailprotection

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