

CASE STUDY

Technical College Expands IT Team with BitLyft Cybersecurity



ORGANIZATION

Technical College in
Wisconsin

INDUSTRY

Higher Education

SIZE

- 20,000+ total student enrollment
- 1,000+ staff members
- 170+ programs and certificates

LOG SOURCES

17 with 420+ individual sources from: ExtremeXOS, Palo Alto Firewall, Microsoft Exchange 2016, Office 365 Management and Message Tracking, IIS, Apache Tomcat, MySQL, and Oracle WebLogic

KEY IMPACTS

- Reduced number of phishing and spam emails
- Illuminated gaps in the college's network security
- Set up real-time alarm notifications
- Provided instruction to fix vulnerabilities

“With BitLyft on board, my staff is now more cybersecurity aware—and I feel better too. I now have go-to security people that can help when issues come up.”

—Chief Information Officer



“It’s a great partnership. I feel like BitLyft is part of my staff and we are working together in our cybersecurity efforts.”

— Chief Information Officer

THE CHALLENGE

In an age where cyber attacks abound, many colleges and universities find themselves inadequately prepared to deal with the ever increasing threat vectors. One of the most common challenges faced in the higher education industry is a lack of cybersecurity training. The school, a public university located in Wisconsin, found itself in a similar situation. The college had a decent-sized IT staff of nearly 20 employees, but it (like many other institutions) lacked the necessary focus and training in cybersecurity. The college had existing security practices in place, like firewalls, but they knew they lacked the overall knowledge needed to properly protect the university's network.

In addition, many of the college's students and staff were receiving phishing emails and spam through their Office 365 system. To make matters worse, recipients were clicking on the malicious links. “Some of our students were starting to lose \$2,500 to \$3,500 from these scams,” the CIO of the school said “This problem cascaded until it even began to affect our Exchange Server.”

The school knew it needed help, but hiring an entire internal security team was not a practical solution. Like many other colleges, they had a limited budget and knew it needed to spend its resources wisely. The college could go through the process of onboarding additional staff members and pay the generally high salary range for these employees, or it could funnel its resources into a more cost-effective solution like a third-party vendor.

“I thought bringing in someone that already had an established security relationship would benefit the college more than trying to put together an entire security team,” said the CIO. With this knowledge in hand, the college began its search for a partner.

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BitLyft
Cybersecurity



THE SOLUTION

In 2019, the school began its search for cybersecurity help by researching online, vetting out vendors and attending conferences. Later that year, The schools staff met BitLyft at a higher education industry leadership conference and was impressed with the team's experience and fresh approach to delivering a custom solution.

"We felt very comfortable with BitLyft," the CIO said, "They didn't just want to come in and be a vendor to make money. They actually wanted to listen to and understand our goals and not just tell us all of their services."

BitLyft began its work by first implementing a Security Incident and Event Management (SIEM) system. Installation of the SIEM allowed the college to capture every network log which illuminated what was happening on their network at any given time. Next, BitLyft helped set up real-time alarm notifications to notify the university of potential threats. BitLyft's SOC team continues to work in tandem with the college to monitor, address, report and collaborate about upcoming projects and impending issues. BitLyft hosts weekly meetings with to discuss challenges, investigate notifications or remediate threats.

"Our staff continues to learn with BitLyft," said the CIO "We have great synergy working together."

The partnership between BitLyft and the school has significantly reduced the number of phishing and spam emails that users are exposed to. BitLyft also illuminated the gaps in the college's network security and provided instruction on how to fix those vulnerabilities. BitLyft continues to collaborate with the college and provides ongoing support and additional resources to make their network more secure.

As the partnership progresses, BitLyft continues to monitor and implement proactive measures to immunize the college's network from future threats.

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Reduced Phishing emails



Real-time alerts



Illuminated security gaps