

Bitdefender blocks malware at 500-year-old university

Italian university uses advanced computer security software to keep faculty and students safe



Founded in 1506, Italy's Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo (University of Urbino) is today renowned for its humanities, sciences, and social degree programs. Serving 15,000 students – 5,000 of whom are enrolled in science courses – the University of Urbino has produced several patents in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical fields. The University occupies historical and architecturally significant buildings spread across the Renaissance city of Urbino and surrounding areas.

THE CHALLENGE

Even though the University of Urbino's origins extend back hundreds of years, the academic institution has an advanced IT infrastructure with modern-day requirements similar to a large enterprise. When it came to computer security, university faculty and administration were increasingly frustrated by the performance of two former antivirus solutions, ESET Nod Antivirus and Trend Micro. Users complained about system slowdowns and, more seriously, attempts to eliminate viruses were not always successful.

"As the European ransomware threat loomed, our security shortcomings put our internal users and students at risk," says Mauro Raimondi, Chief Information Officer, University of Urbino. "The widespread feeling that there must be better answers available led us to look for alternatives."

The IT department determined that a solution with a lighter footprint would serve their needs better. Cloud deployment would keep users secure while freeing staff from server maintenance.

THE SOLUTION

The University IT team evaluated security solutions from Kaspersky Labs, McAfee, Sophos and Bitdefender. Only Bitdefender offered services delivered exclusively through the cloud. IT also was impressed with the simplicity of management and technical support provided by the Bitdefender team.

Bitdefender GravityZone Business Security now defends more than 2,000 desktops, laptops, tablets and smartphones. The endpoint computing environment is primarily Windows, but also includes Linux and Macintosh. All users in the main faculty domain are protected, as are administrative and other staff who request the solution. The client software automatically installs for Active Directory users. All systems are managed through GravityZone's Cloud Console.

THE RESULTS

The GravityZone solution immediately started resolving the persistent malware infections. "There was certainly a sharp drop in demand for interventions due to security breaches," Raimondi reports. "In fact, our security-related trouble calls to the IT department dropped by 35 percent

Industry

Education

Headquarters

Urbino, Italy

Employees

500 (IT staff, 17)

Results

- Decreased trouble calls due to security breaches by 50 percent
- Expanded infrastructure 25 percent without increasing IT staff
- Reduced security breaches by 40 percent
- Deployed security software with no detectable performance impact on users

within four weeks after installing Bitdefender. We've also seen a 25 percent reduction in security breaches."

When the Wannacry ransomware attacked Europe, the University was not affected. The staff also was able to fine-tune GravityZone settings to target and eliminate a few lingering Cryptolocker infections.

The combination of GravityZone's thin client footprint and efficient cloud delivery has eliminated system slowdowns for users. The client software scans and updates without interrupting user activity. The IT team uses Cloud Console reports to ensure that all users are secure.

The University has achieved its goal of greater efficiency using GravityZone's cloud delivery. "Our decision to rely solely on the cloud has proven to be an effective choice in terms of security and elimination of server maintenance," Raimondi says. "We've been able to grow our infrastructure 25 percent without adding security staff resources."

Based on the success of the initial deployment, the University now provides the GravityZone solution to all students. Last month, the University IT department offered a GravityZone seminar to all students. Today, students simply follow a link on the student Intranet to download and install the software at no cost. Based on the enthusiastic response, the University plans to create awareness of GravityZone even more broadly to better protect its entire community.

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– Mauro Raimondi, Chief Information Officer, Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo, Urbino, Italy

Bitdefender Footprint

GravityZone Business Security

IT Environment

- Apple (Macs)
- Microsoft Active Directory
- Microsoft Windows