

Kimbolton School installs Intercept X following a time-consuming ransomware attack

Kimbolton School is an independent co-educational day and boarding school in Cambridgeshire, educating approximately 950 boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 18.

Customer-at-a-Glance

Industry

Education

Number of Users

150 staff and 946 pupils

Sophos Solutions

Sophos Central Advanced

Sophos Intercept X

Sophos PureMessage

Sophos Customer

Since 2009





Kimbolton School has been a Sophos customer since 2009, with PureMessage and Sophos Central Advanced forming the backbone of its IT security set-up. With so many pupils owning laptops, iPhones and iPads, or even all three, and ransomware viruses becoming more prevalent, IT Technician Alex Bradshaw began looking for new ways to protect the school. However, the solution that was chosen, Intercept X, which is now proving highly successful, was installed just 12 hours too late.

'The day before we installed Intercept X we were hit by a ransomware virus. We didn't pay the ransom but it took us days to clean up each and every desktop and server and roll all our files back by 48 hours.'

Alex Bradshaw,
IT Technician

Business Challenge

With 200 desktops, 500 virtual desktops, 900 iPads and 100 laptops in school to take care of, not to mention increasing numbers of pupils bringing in multiple devices, Alex was concerned about unsecured hardware connecting to the school network. In addition, the school had recently moved 500 desktops to the cloud, leaving these more vulnerable, having moved away from desktop-based antivirus protection.

He realised he needed a solution quickly and started to investigate his options. Sophos was his first port of call. Alex had been happy with the Sophos solutions already in school, including PureMessage and Sophos Central Advanced, and decided to contact the Sophos team.

'Installing Intercept X was just a case of clicking on a file so it was very easy. It then took less than five minutes to install onto a desktop and the scan took around ten minutes depending on the age of the device.'

Alex Bradshaw, IT Technician

The technical solution

Further to a free trial, the school decided on Intercept X for protection against ransomware attacks. The install key arrived quickly, yet before the install could be carried out, an attack hit the school, encrypting all domain controllers, prohibiting logins, access to files and any communication on the network. Alex was able to cut the power in the server room before the attack was able to spread further, and thankfully all confidential school data on the school management information system was kept safe.

Rather than pay for the ransomware key, the team decided to work around the attack, and roll back every file by 48 hours. This meant working through each of the desktops and servers, taking a time-consuming three days in total.

Subsequently, Intercept X was installed using a simple migration tool which took less than five minutes per desktop. Scanning each device then took between 10 minutes to two hours depending on the age of the device.

Business benefits

Intercept X has been in action at Kimbolton School for around seven weeks. The school now experiences the following benefits:

- ▶ Intercept X functions as part of Sophos Central Advanced. This is the overall package of security solutions from Sophos, meaning there are no challenges with integration or trying to get multiple products from different vendors to work together. There were no servers to build - the school just logged in to download the agent and configured all policies from one place.
- ▶ Intercept X CryptoGuard technology picks up around 200 attempted ransomware attacks each day and stops them in their tracks.
- ▶ It traces the IP address associated with the virus and informs Sophos HQ, enabling the Sophos team to block any future attacks from this address using root-cause analysis.
- ▶ Intercept X provides good value for money, with education specific pricing and discounting available.
- ▶ According to Alex, "Sophos provides excellent support with a ticketing system, meaning there's no need to wait on hold on the telephone," and "the sales team never try to up-sell or hard-sell to you."

Alex now believes the school is well protected against viruses and any ransomware incidents, thanks to the suite of Sophos security products the school has invested in. These products simply work in the background and alert Alex whenever necessary, giving him peace of mind, as well as the time he needs to just be able to get on with his day job.



'I would definitely recommend Intercept X. It gives you peace of mind and makes your life a lot easier.'

Alex Bradshaw, IT Technician

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