



CASE STUDY

Protecting the Community from Ransomware Attacks



C1 had been working with a school district for six months to develop a multi-phased roadmap for the district's cyber security posture, including its data center security. At the time, the district lacked any way of recovering its data in the event of a ransomware attack. C1 emphasized the importance of prioritizing cyber recovery so that the district could ensure the continuity of its services if and when an attack occurred. If the school district were to suffer a ransomware attack in its current state, it would be forced to rebuild systems from scratch as part of a process that could take years. Considering the school district's main priority was to meet the needs of the children and parents that depended on its services, this was not an acceptable outcome, as the entire community would be brought to a standstill.

The school district realized that it needed to act quickly to develop a clean data repository of last resort when a very large neighboring district became compromised, experiencing system outages and permanent data loss.

The challenge: Full protection from ransomware attacks

The school district needed to implement a comprehensive cyber recovery solution that would protect its data from the ransomware attacks that plagued neighboring districts.

The solution: Cyber recovery

Following the attacks on neighboring districts, the school district's IT team understood the need to develop a cyber recovery solution but required the executive leadership team's approval to move forward. C1 conducted several workshops and assessments to not only determine the areas of vulnerability within the school district's environment, but also to help the IT team convey the sense of urgency to its executive leadership team. This included:

- A Ransomware Readiness Workshop to identify the gap's in the school district's environment
- A damage assessment of potential lost data in the event of a total cyber-encryption of all data and systems
- An analysis of a Day-Zero attack scenario
- A cost comparison of a complete district-wide system rebuild with or without a cyber recovery system

Key results

- Full functionality restored in under four weeks
- Strengthened defenses with strict access controls
- Established resilient framework against future attacks



These assessments and workshops provided C1 with a holistic view of the customer's environment, all while arming the IT team with the data it needed to get executive buy-in. C1 developed a comprehensive Cyber Recovery Vault consisting of Dell EMC Data Protection Systems, VxRail, Networking, PowerEdge Servers, and Index Engines CyberSense for Dell EMC Cyber Recovery.

A fully isolated on-premises data center would serve as a safe-room environment and as the repository and recovery platform for the data of last resort. C1 also created a runbook and provided staff training for a simulated real-time cyber recovery event, outlined governance procedures for managing the Cyber Recovery Vault, and deployed an immutable backup replica repository in the system.

The result: Services can be quickly and confidently restored

With ransomware attacks running rampant in the area, C1's customer was one of the few school districts not to be adversely affected by ransomware. The executive leadership team was delighted that it could communicate the school district's preparedness back to the community, and it thanked the IT team for recognizing the importance of cyber recovery and requesting the budget for it. With school districts facing unprecedented challenges, C1 is helping the customer adapt to distance learning and solving obstacles and threats that continue to arise in these uncertain times.



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