CASE STUDY

Mount Wachusett Community College Relies Upon Cygilant for Security Monitoring and Log Management

Mount Wachusett Community College

Industry

Education

Challenge

Boost its security posture

Adopt a highly effective approach to log management and the prevention of data breaches

Solution

Cygilant Managed Incident Detection & Response

Result

Greater visibility into network and security infrastructure

Faster and more effective log management process

Extended IT support from Cygilant's extensive SOC team to proactively monitor the network around the clock for potential cyber attacks

Background

Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) is a lifelong learning community that is dedicated to excellence in education and responsive to the changing needs of the communities it serves. The College is committed to engaging students in rich and challenging learning opportunities within a small-college atmosphere that is known for its personal touch. It serves students throughout North Central Massachusetts from its main campus in Gardner, Massachusetts and three satellite locations.

MWCC lacked efficient security on its server infrastructure and had no centralized system in place where it could gather or review security logs effectively. As a result, MWCC's IT staff was forced to physically review the logs if they suspected there might be an issue. This was no small feat; given the size of the college's IT staff, these investigations would lead to valuable time being wasted.

MWCC knew it needed a solution from an established, trusted cybersecurity provider that would help to quickly make sense of the vast log information produced by its servers, create a more secure environment for both students and administrators and ensure that servers located on all four campuses were free from cyber threats.

Finding the Right Solution

With its main goal to prevent breaches, MWCC knew it required a central repository that would collect all logs for public-facing devices. MWCC's Susan McHugh, CIO, and Jim Miller, Senior Network Engineer, were tasked with finding a budget-friendly, effective solution that would achieve the college's security objectives. McHugh and Miller worked to find the right IT security solution that would fit their tight IT budget and technical criteria, and also support their existing IT staff.

While researching IT security software and services, McHugh heard about Cygilant Security-as-a-Service. After reviewing Cygilant, they discovered Cygilant Managed Incident Detection & Response met their IT security criteria and budget.

"We considered another vendor for a brief moment, but in the end, the pricing and managed security services being offered by Cygilant were the best options for us," said McHugh.

Implementation

Miller was pleased with the implementation process and how quickly they were able to get up and running. "Thanks to Cygilant, the implementation process was pretty much a breeze. We went live with the Cygilant Managed Incident Detection & Response service in about two hours; it was very quick. Cygilant's SOC team was right there the whole time helping us set up the service and SOCVue Portal as well as assisting with configuring our specific security alert needs. We were amazed by how quickly we started seeing real-time actionable data," he said.

Results

MWCC benefits from Cygilant' SOC team that provides expert guidance and assistance in resolving issues. "Cygilant is the perfect IT security partner for our school. Not only does Cygilant help us meet our security assessment goals, it keeps us well-protected at all times," said Miller.

"Keeping in mind the size of our existing IT staff, we knew we needed help with our log monitoring and threat investigation process," said Miller. Cygilant provides MWCC with the deep insight into its network infrastructure and the Cygilant SOCVue Portal offers the centralized log management capabilities that the college didn't have in the past.

"Now there are eyes and ears on our logs and network 24/7/365. Cygilant is always watching our infrastructure. Plus, we're able to remediate issues proactively, which keeps us aware of what is happening in our infrastructure and one step ahead of cybercriminals at all times," said McHugh. "I can't tell you what a relief it is to have this type of peace of mind when it comes to cybersecurity."

McHugh concluded, "Storing our security logs in a central repository while having access to security experts to investigate alerts for us is priceless. Anyone can set up centralized log management, but you still need someone with solid IT security experience to help provide the fastest and safest remediation guidance. My team and I are fortunate enough to have Cygilant provide this type of expert guidance and more."

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