Security Mentor®
Great Training. Great Results.™

Livingston County Reversed Negative Security Awareness Training Trend into a Security Win with Security Mentor

Interactive, Brief, and Current Lessons Strongly Enhanced Participation and Behavior for Increased Cybersecurity Awareness

THE CHALLENGE

Upon taking the role as Livingston County's Chief Information Officer in 2013, Richard Malewicz immediately started to make changes to enhance the County's cyber defense. At the helm of the County's security awareness program, he was committed to applying his military cybersecurity background to require regular cybersecurity training of employees. "I knew firsthand the positive impact an effective security awareness program has on the workforce," Malewicz said.

"Unfortunately, when we launched our initial security awareness training program, you could see after a few months a negative participation trend developing," says Malewicz. "The program was failing. Several users told me, 'You know what I do? I turn on the training, go grab a cup of coffee, go chat with someone, hit a few buttons and I'm done.' The root cause for the low stats and negative feedback was attributed to the lack of engaging training content.

The users called for a change.

THE SOLUTION

To combat this dilemma, Malewicz created a committee composed of the security program's harshest critics and a few department directors, and together set out to find a better training solution.

"The selection process took about six months. I vet technology software purchases quite heavily, and this project was no exception. We conducted proof of concepts with three vendors and talked to references; I was determined that the solution selected was going to be the right one for the County," says Malewicz. "The project was between Security Mentor and several other providers."

"We chose Security Mentor due to a successful proof of concept that our team members found engaging and fun, and on recommendations from several counties. The State of Michigan and a major law enforcement branch also used Security Mentor's training so that held a lot of weight in our decision," adds Malewicz. "Livingston County even passed on one vendor that offered a deeply discounted price but their training had the same problems. I know free or discounted does not necessarily equate to effective, the users would have rejected it like our first program."

> "Before launching Security Mentor, our employees lacked the knowledge about the cyber threats affecting them. Now they are acquiring the skills to effectively mitigate the threats, not just at work, but at home as well."

Livingston County

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Livingston County is located in the state of Michigan. In addition to County employees, the Information Technology Department supports local law enforcement and several local governments.

BENEFITS

- Provides tips and interactive lessons for spotting the newest cyberattacks and techniques

- Creates positive engagements and increased participation across Livingston County through taking of security awareness training

- Positive shifts in employee behavior confirmed by reduced number of IT tickets related to cybersecurity incidents

Livingston County, Michigan
Organized in 1836

THE SOLUTION CONTINUED

"One of the main appeals of Security Mentor's training program was the interactivity of the lessons and the brief length of each session. Livingston County wanted a training program that would lead to actual behavioral shifts. The County couldn't afford another year of no change, lack of participation in the trainings and the toll it was taking on the IT staff for every new ticket of an infected computer."

"Like other organizations, we strive to achieve zero cybersecurity incidents. We have a good cyber defensive posture in place, but if we don't train the workforce then we are limiting the efficacy in protecting the County."

Participation in the new security training program was at an all-time high on the first month of its release and has maintained that high range ever since. Malewicz saw that his choice to pick Security Mentor made an immediate, positive change in the employees' behavior.

BENEFITS

Security Mentor's awareness training has been extremely well-received and is helping Malewicz's team reach its goal of making the Livingston County a model for other counties with its proactive approach against even the newest cyber attacks.

Understanding New Cyber Threats

"Before launching Security Mentor, our employees lacked the knowledge about the cyber threats affecting them. Now they are acquiring the skills to effectively mitigate the threats, not just at work, but at home as well. The threat landscape changes continuously, and Security Mentor adjusts the training content to keep us educated and prepared for what awaits us."

Cost and Time Savings with Less Incidents

"There's been a significant decrease in help desk tickets that can be correlated to training completion rates. An effective security awareness training program such as Security Mentor, acts as a force multiplier when coupled with a sound defensive posture and policy adherence. Tickets related to user behavior used to be almost a daily occurrence," said Malewicz. "So we're definitely saving time and tax payers dollars because of Security Mentor's training. In a way, it almost pays for itself if you factor in opportunity costs."

Original Content

"It's back by popular demand. The next round there are new courses and I don't have to buy the same thing over and over again."

To learn more about how Security Mentor's security awareness training can help your business, contact 831.656.0133 or sales@securitymentor.com, or visit www.securitymentor.com

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>
> Richard Malewicz,
> Chief Information Officer
> at Livingston County

ABOUT SECURITY MENTOR

Security Mentor is a visionary and global leader in the security awareness training and education industry that enables organizations to reduce risk by creating cyber-savvy employees. The Security Mentor Training Platform provides a single portal for integrated security services including training, phishing simulation, policy management, lesson quizzes, pre/post training assessments, and gamification. Our flagship product is our Security Awareness Training. Brief, interactive, highly engaging lessons teach critical security skills in an easy-to-understand, memorable, and fun format that drives real behavior change. Our PhishDefense phishing simulation service provides continual awareness training enabling organizations to safely phish their own staff, directing vulnerable employees to real-time, targeted training sessions. Incorporated in 2008, Security Mentor's innovative products and services are used by enterprises worldwide, the military, government, nonprofit and educational organizations.

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