

Karlstad University protects mobile endpoints from cyberattacks

Blocks advanced threats before they cause trouble



Karlstad University offers about 80 broad-based, multidisciplinary programs and 700 courses in over 60 subjects. The Sweden-based University has 16,000 undergraduate students and 260 Ph.D. students. It is also a leading research institution in fields ranging from service management and value creation to advanced computer security and privacy.

Industry
Education

Headquarters
Karlstad, Värmland, Sweden

Employees
1,235 (IT staff, 38)

Results

- Reduced endpoint security administration time more than 60 percent
- Cut time to get a user system up and running by 50 percent

THE CHALLENGES

Karlstad University has shifted quickly to mobile computing. In only four years, the percentage of laptops versus desktops increased from 50 to 99 percent. Security management time increased and an on premise security server made updating an endless process. As a result, the University's IT staff endeavored to find a solution able to monitor and protect endpoints on and off campus. They wanted to shorten the time required to maintain the solution – in terms of both infrastructure and security policies – and reduce the time spent updating endpoints with the latest versions.

In addition, they sought a solution with low performance impact on the clients and minimal user interaction with the endpoint protection.

THE SOLUTION

After evaluating solutions from Bitdefender, Sophos, Symantec and F-Secure, Karlstad University chose Bitdefender GravityZone Advanced Business Security. Now, the University has a cloud-based virtual environment, with easy security management of all endpoints from a single console. The solution supports about 1,800 endpoints, including laptops, PCs, Macs and servers used by faculty and administration, and students when they are on campus.

"Bitdefender and its strategic partner in Sweden, Infront IT-Partner AB, give us very professional service and support," says Niklas Nikitin, Karlstad University's IT Security Coordinator. "They respond quickly to questions as we refine the environment. Bitdefender clearly was the right choice."

THE RESULTS

GravityZone Advanced Business Security provides comprehensive virtual security that easily supports mobile computing. Now, users are protected no matter where they are. The solution features an award-winning antimalware engine, known for its accuracy and high performance.

"Bitdefender's security protection goes beyond typical signature-based malware running from .EXE files," Nikitin says. "It also blocks advanced threats, such as viruses hidden in PDFs. Before, those would have slipped through, but Bitdefender deals with them automatically."

Security staff now spends on average 5-6 hours on administration vs. 15-18 hours—a 60 percent reduction. By running updates in the background, Bitdefender cut the time to get a client up and running by 50 percent.

"Now we can focus on our core infrastructure systems that support education and research," says Magnus Olsson, Karlstad University's Systems Developer. "We're developing new solutions, enhancing quality assurance, rolling out upgrades—so many things we simply didn't have time to do before."

AUTO UPDATES AND EASY FIXES

The University wanted a high level of automation so it could readily protect endpoints from the latest threats, regardless of the endpoints' location. Previously, when a new version of the endpoint was released, staff were forced to manually download the solution, create a package to deploy to the computers and wait until a computer is on University grounds to upgrade the endpoint.

By comparison, Bitdefender automatically updates, seamlessly in the background, with no need for rebooting. It doesn't consume system resources when updating or scanning, eliminating performance problems that can affect productivity.

"I tell my users that if they're concerned, double click the Bitdefender icon and it will display a green notice saying, 'You are protected.' But if there's a problem, click the 'fix it' button and Bitdefender will take care of everything," Nikitin says. "Once our users see how easy it makes computer security, they stop worrying."

COMPLYING WITH EUROPEAN UNION GDPR REGULATIONS

GravityZone Advanced Business Security is the only solution the University reviewed that complies with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules for user data security and privacy.

"Bitdefender guarantees that personal information stored in the cloud located inside the European Union and will be used only to provide services for us, not for anything else. Violating those rules triggers fines up to 20 million euros (24 million US dollars), or 4 percent of total annual worldwide turnover, so compliance is essential," Nikitin says.

"GravityZone Advanced Business Security significantly reduces risk while improving productivity for our students and faculty," reflects Nikitin. "The Bitdefender solution simply works like a charm."

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—Niklas Nikitin, IT Security Coordinator, Karlstad University

Bitdefender Footprint

GravityZone Advanced Business Security

IT Environment

- EMC Data Storage
- VMware vSphere

Operating Systems

- Linux
- Microsoft Windows