

U.K. hospital boosts cloud strategy with advanced cybersecurity

Bitdefender accelerates virtual desktop rollout, blocks threats, and streamlines security administration and patch management



THE CHALLENGE

When the WannaCry ransomware attack swept the globe, IT staff at the Luton and Dunstable University Hospital (L&D) worked throughout the weekend manually shutting down external links, deploying patches, and running intensive scans.

While the L&D dodged disaster with WannaCry, IT wanted to respond more efficiently and quickly to potential attacks. IT also was looking for ways to simplify and speed the patching process. Further, IT faced a security-related challenge with the hospital's virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) that needed to be resolved. When the incumbent security solution triggered updates, users experienced slower virtual desktop performance.

The L&D IT team evaluated several security vendors, including Sophos, Microsoft, Kaspersky, and Bitdefender.

James Slaven, the L&D's head of IT, explains, "We chose Bitdefender GravityZone because it incorporates machine learning and AI capabilities to thwart the most advanced attacks. Simultaneously, it significantly lightens the resource load on our PCs and virtual desktops. Our prior security solutions slowed desktop performance, so we had to add memory across 3,500 machines. With GravityZone, we eliminated resource constraints and improved our users' experience."

THE SOLUTION

Today, the L&D depends on Bitdefender GravityZone Enterprise to protect its entire infrastructure, including more than 8,200 virtual desktops, virtual and physical servers, and physical workstations. GravityZone safeguards workloads spanning the hospital's diverse infrastructure featuring, Citrix XenDesktop, Microsoft Hyper-V, Microsoft Azure, and VMware environments.

The hospital's applications protected by Bitdefender are DXC patient management administration, Carestream PACS (Picture Archiving Communication System) radiology, Evolve document management, and Agresso finance, among others.



Founded in 1939, The Luton and Dunstable (L&D) University Hospital is an acute medical and surgical hospital serving 350,000 people in the U.K. The L&D is recognized as one of the U.K.'s 16 Global Digital Exemplars by the National Health Services (NHS).

Industry

Healthcare

Headquarters

Luton, England

Employees

3,618 (IT staff, 60)

Results

- Blocked threats with a 100 percent success rate
- Slashed time spent on security administration by 50 percent
- Reduced time to distribute patches from 4-8 hours to 2-4 hours

THE RESULTS

Not only has Bitdefender improved desktop performance, but the solution has paved the path toward accelerating the L&D’s cloud strategy.

“GravityZone runs in the background without stripping local resources; this has stabilized our virtual desktops and improved our users’ experience when using the Trusts systems. We now have the confidence to roll out additional virtual desktops and move our VDI environment to Citrix Cloud.”

Slaven continues, “We’re also planning to use GravityZone to protect our new infrastructure-as-a-service-based offering and help us expand our Microsoft Azure deployment,” Slaven says. “GravityZone’s native management integration with Azure will ensure efficient, automated security administration in the cloud, which will be instrumental for our IT team’s productivity and agility. There is no better cloud-workload protection solution than GravityZone, so it will continue to be a key element in our cloud strategy.”

Previously, distributing patch updates across the infrastructure was time-intensive and often unreliable. With GravityZone, IT now has a centralized view of patch management.

Mark Geary, IT service operations manager, the L&D, recalls, “Before, we had to manually determine which servers were missing patches and update them. Now, GravityZone automatically issues patches across the entire environment with a single reboot and reports on any patches that were missed. GravityZone has reduced the time to issue patches across the environment from 4-8 hours to 2-4 hours.”

One of the stand-out features of GravityZone has been ease of use, explains Slaven. “GravityZone is so straightforward, and simple to deploy and use. We get a full view of the environment via the console or the Web. We’re more proactive and we’ve reduced the time our team spends on security management by 50 percent.”

Geary adds, “Almost immediately after installing GravityZone, we began receiving alerts for infections that had gone undetected for months and even years. That speaks volumes about the value of GravityZone’s multi-layered approach. In fact, GravityZone has prevented any malware or other threats from infecting our systems.”

Advanced technology is only part of the value that Bitdefender provides.

Slaven says, “GravityZone has been an excellent fit for our hospital. Bitdefender treats us as a partner and has been incredibly responsive and supportive. In a hospital environment, such a strong commitment to maintaining availability of our systems and our organization is vitally important.”

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James Slaven, Head of IT,
The Luton and Dunstable (L&D)
University Hospital

Bitdefender Footprint

- GravityZone Enterprise Security
- Full-Disk Encryption

IT Environment

- Citrix Cloud
- Citrix XenDesktop
- Microsoft Azure
- Microsoft Hyper-V
- VMware ESXi

Operating Systems

- Microsoft Windows
- Linux