

MSSP augments security service offering through synergistic partnership with Barracuda



Vancord's journey to comprehensive cybersecurity with Barracuda

Bolstering their managed detection and response (MDR) offering by integrating Barracuda's cybersecurity and backup solutions was pivotal to protecting their clients.

Vancord is a leading provider of managed IT services in Milford, CT, dedicated to building and protecting the futures of its clients since its establishment in 2005. One trait the managed security service provider (MSSP) touts as distinguishing it from competitors is its commitment to customer experience, which Lou Ardolino, the company's VP of Client Success, says is his primary role.

"One way we accomplish this is by assigning a dedicated team to each customer," he says. "Each team comprises of a team lead (e.g., systems engineer), three network technicians, and a dedicated security engineer, who get to know the customer and their IT environment very well."

While this approach may seem excessive to some IT solution providers preferring outsourced helpdesks and other cost-cutting approaches, Ardolino believes the numbers speak for themselves.

"About 40% of our new customers come from displacing another MSP," he explains. "The primary reason a customer starts looking for a new IT solution provider isn't a price decision; it's a value decision. Either the provider is too slow to respond to a customer's needs, or the technology they purchased isn't working as expected."

Profile

- Website: www.vancord.com
- Location: Milford, Connecticut
- Specializations: Managed IT services, security strategy and oversight, cybersecurity readiness and compliance, cybersecurity incident response

Challenge

Need to stay ahead of evolving cyberthreat landscape for a diverse clientele composing of SLED (State, Local, and Education), manufacturing, Higher Education and private institution

Solution

- Barracuda Email Protection integrated with its security operations center (SOC)
- Barracuda Backup, Cloud-to-Cloud Backup, and Cloud Archive Service for clients' data protection and regulatory compliance needs

Results

The collaboration between Vancord and Barracuda yielded significant benefits, enabling the MSSP to adapt effortlessly to its clients' evolving requirements. Barracuda's offerings played a pivotal role in mitigating cyber incidents, including one instance where Vancord thwarted a cyberattack on a school district. By leveraging Barracuda's backup solutions, it minimized downtime with zero data loss. This incident underscored the effectiveness of Vancord's proactive approach to cybersecurity, supported by Barracuda's robust technologies.

Evolving cybersecurity challenges require a fresh approach

One of the biggest challenges IT solution providers faces is protecting customers from cyberthreats, which are constantly growing in number and severity. This has become a primary focus for Vancord who serves a diverse range of clients in the SLED (State, Local, and Education), manufacturing, Higher Education, and private institutions. As Vancord saw cyberthreats becoming more sophisticated, it realized the need to enhance its security offerings beyond traditional solutions.

Taking a hybrid approach to security

To better address its clients' challenges, Vancord transitioned from leveraging outsourced SOC to building its own MDR offering, Vantage MDR. This transition allowed the MSSP to provide comprehensive security services, including endpoint, email, and server security.

Additionally, Vancord complements its internal resources with a suite of cybersecurity and backup and disaster recovery (BDR) solutions from Barracuda, its trusted provider for over a decade.

"As our customers move from on-premises email to Microsoft 365, we bundle it with Barracuda's products, including email gateway defense, Microsoft 365 data protection, and cloud security," says Ardolino. "Barracuda MSP's offerings also support a monthly billable model, which makes it easier to sell and scale because customers only pay for the licenses they use."

Besides safeguarding Microsoft 365 environments from phishing attacks and other email-borne threats, Barracuda's email archiving solution fulfills Vancord's customers' compliance requirements. "Many of our SLED customers have to retain emails for a certain period for legal purposes, and Barracuda keeps them compliant," he adds.

A school district ransomware attack tests Vancord's capabilities

According to Ardolino, Vancord's cybersecurity offerings are regularly put to the test. "An end user will inadvertently delete an important file or folder that we must restore from backup. Sometimes users click on links or attachments they shouldn't and unleash a virus or ransomware attack," he explains.

Earlier this year, one of Vancord's school district customers was hit by a ransomware attack. "Our team had 'air-gapped' the network, which minimized the ransomware's effect, but it still required restoring a subset of their files," Ardolino says. "Barracuda Backup allowed us to remediate, eliminate, and restore their data successfully, minimizing downtime with zero data loss."

Succeeding through co-marketing and collaboration

Looking ahead, Vancord envisions a continued partnership with Barracuda as it expands its presence in the cybersecurity market. "Barracuda's been a great partner, helping drive new business and leads," states Ardolino. "We've leveraged MDF every year and put on successful events, such as a 'Beers with Engineers' event they sponsored that allowed us to talk to prospects about SaaS protection and backup. We've also done several webinars that Barracuda co-branded and helped facilitate."

Vancord's collaboration with Barracuda exemplifies a synergistic partnership to deliver comprehensive cybersecurity solutions to clients. By combining MSSP's domain expertise with Barracuda's innovative technologies, the two entities have successfully navigated the complexities of the cybersecurity landscape, empowering clients to thrive in an ever-evolving digital ecosystem.

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