MORENO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT PROTECTS AGAINST THREATS WITH A ROBUST CYBER RECOVERY SOLUTION

MORENO VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
EXCELLENCE ON PURPOSE
SHINING BRIGHTER

> "With CyberSense, we're no longer the low-hanging fruit that can be easily picked off by bad actors. We can actually monitor what's being backed up instead of just hoping and trusting that what we're storing is good and free from malware or ransomware."
>
> — Glenn Alegre
> **Executive Director of Technology, Innovation and Assessment, Moreno Valley Unified School District**

Customer Challenge

When neighboring school districts were hit with cyberattacks, Moreno Valley Unified School District knew they needed to upgrade their data protection. "That kept me up at night," said Glenn Alegre, Executive Director of Technology, Innovation and Assessment, Moreno Valley Unified School District. "I would say, 'I don't want to be in the front page of the newspaper because our district is not prepared.' I was frightened by what I was seeing. … We always believed in making sure that we were protected through different layers, and so we had our firewall in place, which was great. And then we had our backups. But we did not have a solution that put it all together."

Complicating matters, the school district had a great deal of personally identifiable information to protect. "We have our student information system on-premises, as well as our financial and employee system. So right there you're dealing with a lot of personally identifiable information (PII), for both kids and staff and adults. We're talking all financials, everything from W-2s, paychecks, all that information we need to keep secure, as well as student demographics, phone numbers," said Alegre.

Solution

The technology leaders at Moreno Valley worked with ConvergeOne's experts and advisors to implement Dell EMC PowerProtect DD series appliances and the PowerProtect Cyber Recovery solution with CyberSense analytics in order to gain peace of mind that student, employee, and financial data would remain safe and recoverable.

"This goes back to the relationship that we have with ConvergeOne, a partner that we've had since 2013," said Alegre. "I can't tell you how much we rely on them for their expertise, their knowledge, and the mutual trust we have with them. We know that the solution that they'll provide us is going to be top-notch, research-based, and cutting-edge, and it's always going to have a Dell solution at the back end, providing us the safety, the security, and the peace of mind we need for whatever situation we have moving forward."

"When we introduced the architecture of Cyber Recovery, the biggest value proposition of that architecture was the vaulted isolation and protection that the PowerProtect Cyber Recovery vault provides," said Tony Ocampo, National Technical Lead for Data Protection and Senior Solutions Architect, ConvergeOne. "There's no other solution out there with that isolated vaulting capability, that extra layer of security and isolation when sending a replicated copy that can be inspected by CyberSense inside the vault. That's the biggest reason that Moreno Valley went with this solution."

Results

The PowerProtect DD's compression ratio is currently averaging at least 100x daily, allowing more data to be stored and protected. Over time, this will improve and give the school district an even greater ability to store additional backups and protect themselves from ransomware.

The air-gapped vault with CyberSense analytics provides Moreno Valley with peace of mind that PII data is recoverable in event of a cyberattack. "With CyberSense, we're no longer the low-hanging fruit that can be easily picked off by bad actors," said Alegre. "We can actually monitor what's being backed up instead of just hoping and trusting that what we're storing is good and free from malware or ransomware. We have more layers in place that, [even] if anything were to happen, we'll be back up and running and we won't have to give in to the demands of the ransomware attacker. That totally puts me at ease and lets me sleep at night.

"[When a cyberattack] does happen, you want to make sure you're in the best position to not only protect the data of the people who are in your care, but also to be back up quickly, up and running, so that the educational environment is not lost. You may not think that it's much, but people can't take attendance, people can't look up demographics, people can't look up this information or that information, just to run a school. And it's so crippling. My advice to other school districts is this: 'If you don't have a good Cyber Recovery solution in place, you're setting yourself up for a lot of heartache, for a lot of work in the future, ultimately hurting the kids.'"