



CASE STUDY

The Y NSW



Overview

Industry

- Non-Profit

Challenge

- Capability of existing security tools
- Understanding full breadth
- Small IT team in charge of securing entire dynamic workforce
- A need to protect reputation as an international organization

Results

- Proactive detection of emerging threats
- Achieved 100% visibility into data flow across digital estate
- Augmented human abilities with Darktrace AI so that its small team can tackle big problems
- Cyber AI alerts to threats as they occur, allowing efficient risk mitigation

Business Background

With a rich history stretching back 175 years and a global reach of over 58 million members, The Y is one of the oldest and largest youth organizations in the world. Formally known as YMCA in New South Wales, Australia (YMCA NSW), the not-for-profit (NFP) youth organization has an annual turnover of A\$70m, serves more than 100 communities, and employs more than 2,000 people. With a diverse range of services including gymnastics classes, swimming lessons, out-of-school-hours centers, and youth and community services, The Y welcomes more than 50,000 people at its facilities each year.



The Enterprise Immune System transformed our cyber defense strategy. Having a tool that provides us with a real-time view of our enterprise activity allows for early defensive action.

Paul Berryman
Head of Information Technology, The Y



Challenge

“Cyber-criminals don’t discriminate when it comes to your organization’s size or sector - because ultimately, your data is invaluable,” commented Paul Berryman, Head of Information Technology at The Y. Having seen the effects of ransomware, The Y was concerned with its disaster recovery and business continuity plans. With a security stack that relied on rules and signatures, The Y recognized the need to improve its cyber security posture in the face of new threats that are increasingly silent, sophisticated, and stealthy – yet move at machine speeds.

The Y also felt that its existing security tools were inadequate in providing the level of network visibility the charity required. Given the large number of employees and volunteers constantly connecting to its network, the charity needed a better overall understanding of its behaviors and activities. With a small IT team managing the entire digital infrastructure of The Y in NSW, this was of particular concern.

Thus, The Y was in search of a tool that could not only provide internal visibility across the business, but also alert its security team of attacks in real time, empowering them to mitigate threats before they escalate to a crisis.

Solution

To meet these challenges, The Y deployed Darktrace Cyber AI for a 30-day Proof-of-Value (POV) trial. After a one-hour installation, Darktrace established a 'pattern of life' by learning the activity of the entire dynamic workforce – every user and device no matter where they sat within the business. "We were instantly amazed by the sheer amount of data Darktrace's Enterprise Immune System analyzed, and how the technology could pick up on a range of subtle anomalies," affirms Berryman.

Powered by unsupervised machine learning, the Cyber AI Platform identifies threats at their nascent stages, in real time, without the use of rules, signatures, or prior assumptions.

Darktrace further demonstrated its value by providing comprehensive visibility through its 3D graphical interface, the Threat Visualizer, which presents a unified and interactive account of all network activity. Within a single screen, the IT team can observe and engage with every corner of the network. Berryman added, "we could easily see everything that was on our network, including emerging threats in real time.

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We could immediately understand how Darktrace would improve our security posture from day one, and how valuable the technology would be. No other tool can detect threats as fast.

Paul Berryman
Head of Information Technology, The Y

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Benefits

One of the major benefits of Darktrace's technology is its ability to notify The Y of incidents at their early stages—before they become damaging attacks. One of the more common, but potentially insidious threat arose when a file containing passwords was accessed by an unauthorized user on the network. Having deployed Darktrace, the charity's IT team was instantly alerted, allowing the team to identify the user and remediate the threat immediately. "Darktrace's unique alerting system is something that no other tool has been able to provide," points out Berryman.

In recent times, another key benefit of Darktrace's Cyber AI Platform is the ability for organizations to remotely secure their business. As Australia shut its borders under the COVID-19 health pandemic, the charity's IT team were removed from its main data center, tasked with working remotely. Fortunately, with the Darktrace Mobile App, the team remains connected with its IT infrastructure at all times. Darktrace's Mobile App enables access to the Threat Visualizer and allows the team to benefit from the unparalleled threat detection, investigation, and response that Darktrace's Enterprise Immune System offers.

"We're a small team that manages the entire digital infrastructure of The Y across NSW. The Enterprise Immune System acts as a force multiplier and instantly brings what we need to see to our attention, allowing us to take action in real time," Berryman concludes. "Once we saw its unique capability of identifying and responding to potentially malicious anomalies within minutes – all while providing comprehensive network visibility – Darktrace's AI became a crucial component of our security stack."

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