



CASE STUDY

Safeguarding Macmillan Cancer Support from financial and reputational damage.

Barracuda email and firewall products help leading UK charity focus on what matters most.

Customer

London-based Macmillan Cancer Support provides vital practical, medical, emotional and financial support to cancer care patients, friends, families, and communities.

Since its founding in 1911, it has become one of Britain's largest charities, operating cancer care units, as well as providing educational programs to train doctors, nurses and students about cancer care.

Challenges

- Financial constraints make value for money essential
- Sophisticated business email compromise attacks
- Preserving the charity's reputation in the face of escalating threats

Solutions



Barracuda

Web Application Firewall™



Barracuda

CloudGen Firewall™

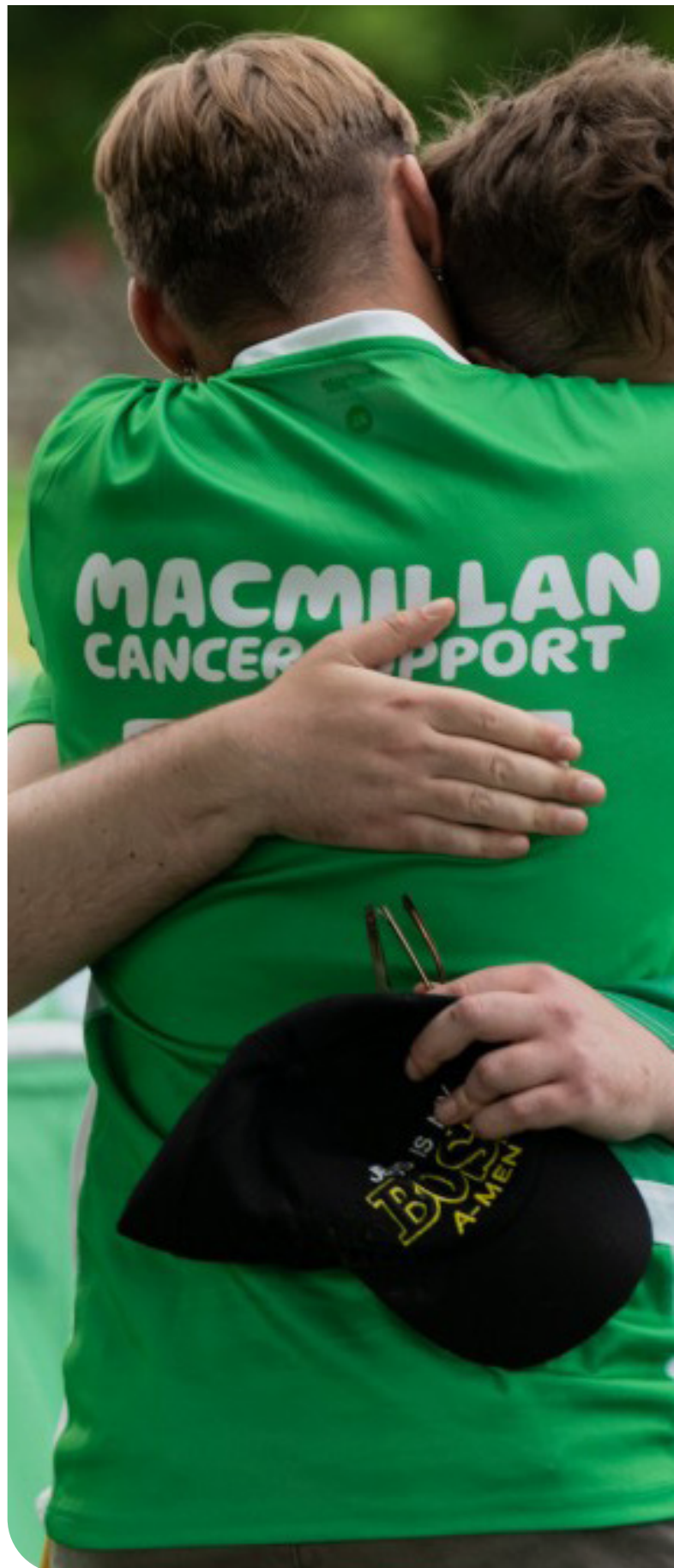


Barracuda

Email Protection™

Benefits

- Financial fraud losses declined from £37,000 (appx. USD45,800) to £0 in a year
- Highly effective security has helped preserve the charity's enviable reputation



Most organizations are cost conscious. But few IT security leaders have to make decisions as stark as Tim O'Neill, Head of Information Security and Technical Operations at Macmillan Cancer Support.

"When you are a charity, your funds are limited in a way that they are not in other organizations," he says. "Every penny that I spend is a penny less that we have to help people affected by cancer. And whenever I look at a product, my question is always, 'how many cancer nurses does this cost us?'"

For Tim, the mission is personal. After losing his father to cancer, he "ended up on Macmillan's doorstep" five years ago, and asked "what can I do to help?" Soon after, he was heading up a new department of information security for the London-headquartered charity. And with the help of Barracuda, he's working tirelessly to safeguard the work it does throughout the United Kingdom.

Complexity and trust

Tim's job is not an easy one. Although the organisation has around 1,500 employees, there are many more individuals whose personal information needs to be protected. And this is vital to protecting the charity's reputation.

"When you are part of Macmillan, you could have one of six identities, and they are transient identities. You could be an employee, a donor, a volunteer, a professional, somebody who is using our service desk, somebody who is affected by cancer, or you could be a fundraiser. And you could be any number of those at any one time," he explains.

"I have a duty of care to make sure that whichever one of those six personas you are, every conversation that you have with Macmillan is utterly confidential. And you know that you can trust us to keep that confidence."

Complexity extends to the number of inboxes the charity must maintain, with 3,000 currently set up across various parts of the organization, and new ones dynamically added at various times for fundraising initiatives and other projects.

When BEC strikes

When Tim arrived at Macmillan, it was already running [Barracuda Web Application Firewall \(WAF\)](#) and [Barracuda CloudGen Firewall](#). But he soon realized that the organization needed to replace its incumbent email security provider.

"What we found over time was that the amount of spam and malicious emails getting through was increasing. Trusted third party suppliers had email accounts breached and the [threat actors] were sitting there for months seeing the interactions. So by the time they started taking over that conversation, they were linguistically very similar to the original conversation," Tim explains.

"Mimecast wasn't picking up on these, and we had a couple of occasions where there was financial fraud because of this."

Business email compromise (BEC) attacks are increasingly common, and require an AI-powered response to root out. A Barracuda report from 2024 reveals that one in 10 email threats is now classed as BEC.

After shortlisting six or seven potential suppliers, Macmillan gave Barracuda the nod on price, performance, support and usability.

"What we found was the relationship with the Barracuda tech staff was good. Their knowledge was great. The interface was very simple; very easy to work with. And the migration plan from the old provider was good," Tim says. "And importantly, the price was solid."

The Solutions

Barracuda Web Application Firewall simplifies application security for countless customers. It offers powerful application and API protection from DDoS attacks, zero-day threats, and sophisticated bots designed to mimic legitimate traffic. And it helps prevent data loss by inspecting all outbound traffic.



The next-gen Barracuda CloudGen Firewall delivers real-time network protection against a broad range of threats, vulnerabilities and exploits, including zero-day attacks. It combines multi-layered capabilities including advanced threat signatures, behavioral and heuristic analysis, static code analysis, and comprehensive sandboxing to keep ransomware and other threats at bay.

[Barracuda Email Protection](#) is a full-featured suite of email security solutions designed to enhance threat prevention, detection and response. An AI engine learns what “normal” looks like in a customer environment, in order to better spot the anomalies that signify advanced impersonation, account takeover and other attacks. [Domain Fraud Protection](#) helps to minimize spoofing attacks and streamline DMARC reporting. While [Incident Response](#) automates and accelerates remediation for any email threats that do sneak through.

Slashing fraud costs to zero

Macmillan saw an almost immediate improvement in email security following the switchover to Barracuda Email Protection, thanks to the suite’s [Impersonation Protection](#) and Incident Response features.

“Within about a month of putting it in we found examples where it had stopped compromised emails from getting through, which Mimecast allowed through, and protected against people impersonating our directors,” Tim says. “The speed of deleting a malicious email from everybody

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Tim O’Neill
Head of Information Security

Learn more:



[Barracuda Email Protection](#) is for organizations that want to protect their businesses, brands, and people against the most advanced email-borne threats. It’s a comprehensive, easy-to-use solution that delivers gateway defense, API-based impersonation and phishing protection, incident response, data protection, and compliance support.



else's inbox was very impressive as well. Those features were incredibly strong."

Since Q1 2024, the charity has seen its losses to financial fraud drop from £37,000 to zero, as a result.

The other two Barracuda products also continue to be "fit for purpose", under Tim's close scrutiny.

"When it comes to the WAF, I've tested other products, and I'm constantly looking at the market, evaluating what is the right choice for us. Every time I've had those conversations we've ended up back with Barracuda," he says.

Another big benefit of Barracuda is its support, Tim adds.

"Every time we engage with Barracuda they have been incredibly helpful. If there is any sort of incident we can call Barracuda, and they are on it and investigating. They are part of my extended team," he says. "That is invaluable. They have a depth of knowledge in their products which is really solid, and the same goes for the next-gen firewall."

The usability of the products also gives Tim and his team confidence.

"We have walked away from products where the interface has not been intuitive, even though the product was good," he says. "In security, the time between something happening and taking action

Learn more:



Barracuda

Web Application Firewall™

Barracuda Web Application Firewall detects a wide variety of application security attacks, including all OWASP Top 10 vulnerabilities and countless zero-hour and advanced threats, as well as protection from malicious bots and DDoS attacks. It's a non-invasive, cloud-based tool, with no impact on your operations.



Barracuda

CloudGen Firewall™

Barracuda CloudGen Firewall provides a comprehensive set of next-generation firewall technologies to ensure real-time network protection against a broad range of network threats, vulnerabilities, and exploits, including SQL injections, cross-site scripting, denial of service attacks, trojans, viruses, worms, spyware, and many more. Secure SD-WAN functionality integrated in Barracuda CloudGen Firewall lets you ensure that there is always enough bandwidth for business-critical applications

matters critically. And with Barracuda the team find it incredibly intuitive and easy to use.”

A Zero Trust future

Going forward, Tim is constantly evaluating new Barracuda capabilities to help shut down new attack paths and manage new cyber risks. The latest is Barracuda’s Zero Trust offering.

“I quite like the fact that it’s point and click. It’s a very simple interface. We just need to actually get on with the work of doing the trust, the configuration, and testing on it,” he says.

Ultimately, it’s shocking that cancer charities are even considered by threat actors to be a legitimate target for attack, but Tim is sanguine.

“That’s the world we live in,” he concludes.

In the meantime, Barracuda will continue to do its utmost to support the vital work that Macmillan does, for as long as they need us.

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Tim O’Neill
Head of Information Security



About Barracuda

Barracuda is a leading cybersecurity company providing complete protection against complex threats. Our platform protects email, data, applications and networks with innovative solutions, and a managed XDR service, to strengthen cyber resilience. Hundreds of thousands of IT professionals and managed service providers worldwide trust us to protect and support them with solutions that are easy to buy, deploy and use. For more information, visit barracuda.com.