Agora Cyber Charter School thwarts cyberattacks with a layered security approach from Microsoft Gold Partner, Forsyte I.T. Solutions

OVERVIEW

Agora Cyber Charter School (Agora) has been a front-runner in its focus on information protection, cybersecurity, and privacy for its faculty, staff, and students since 2017. With cyber threats and breaches rising, Agora continues to keep cybersecurity top of mind for the safety of its organization.

By adopting the Microsoft solutions and collaborative cloud services recommended by Forsyte I.T. Solutions (Forsyte), they established a digital environment with richly layered security features that provide comprehensive protection. Agora has managed to place a high priority on providing strong security throughout its digital environment with the implementation of Forsyte -- while staying within budget to create a productive and trustworthy learning environment.

In addition to maintaining compliance and defining margins of risk, Michael Rublesky III and his team work diligently to mitigate phishing attacks and protect the accounts of students, staff, and faculty. By working together to create an iron-clad platform, both on-premise and in the Azure cloud, Agora has not experienced a successful cyber threat in years.

ORGANIZATION

Agora Cyber Charter School

Website:
https://agora.org/

Location:
King of Prussia, PA

Industry:
K-12 Education

Implementation:
Managed Security Services

Size:
- 6,500 students
- 700 teachers

"Agora is committed 100% to its security posture with Microsoft and has seen a drop from over 200 security related support cases to near zero."

-Michael Rublesky III
CTO, Agora Cyber Charter School

PROJECT GOALS

1 Create a more trusted Microsoft environment to protect Agora's people, data, applications, and devices.

2 Protect Agora's IT environment through the implementation of security-focused solutions.

3 Track forensic behavioral data, maintain known attack policies, and log signs of compromise.

Agora Cyber Charter School thwarts cyberattacks with a layered security approach from Microsoft Gold Partner, Forsyte I.T. Solutions

Established in 2005, Agora provides a traditional K-12 public school education model in an environment that supports a wide array of learning styles and accommodations. Agora is committed to the success of its students, staff, and faculty, with 75 percent of students engaging in live online classrooms everyday.

CHALLENGE

Under the guidance of CEO, Dr. Michael J. Conti, Agora continues to lead with vigor and determination to not only support its students in classroom learning but also protect them online with a secure digital environment. Agora's IT environment remains focused on protecting and implementing the best solutions available, updating systems, and consistently monitoring to achieve the top level of security the school demands. Agora already owned a majority of the tools within the Microsoft Office 365 security stack and was anxious to flip the switch from Google to Microsoft, discontinuing the 3rd party AV Webroot, and move exclusively to Microsoft 365 Defender and Defender for Office 365.

When the project began, Agora had Defender for Office 365 implemented in its environment and wanted to add more layers of security. Microsoft Defender for Office 365 was used to prevent malicious threats posed by email messages, links (URLs), and collaboration tools at the time.

Forsyte was selected as Agora's trusted managed security partner based on its shared vision for a strong security posture, Microsoft solutions expertise, and unwavering determination to remain future-focused.

SOLUTION

Forsyte architected a cloud environment using Microsoft technology and managed security, to protect, detect, and remediate cyber-attacks in the Agora environment. With advanced security features built into and integrated across Microsoft 365, Forsyte incorporates managed services to complete the cybersecurity circle. The managed security service is designed to detect user accounts that have been compromised by using a customizable threat detection engine to monitor user logins and identify anomalies, including risky logins and risky actions. Built on Microsoft technology and hosted in Azure, Forsyte leverages Cloud App Security, Azure Automation, and machine learning to stop attacks before they spread.

Agora currently uses Microsoft 365 and Forsyte's Guardian 365 managed security services together, which incorporates Office 365, Windows 10, Enterprise Mobility + Security, and Microsoft Cloud App Security, to promote a secure collaborative learning environment. It is the perfect multi-layered digital infrastructure for learning and searching with confidence. Agora was the first to pilot Microsoft Cloud App security for the state of PA in K-12 to enrich its security with Forsyte's managed security and deploy an advanced phishing defense.

Increase security posture & reduce operating costs.

Reduce attack discovery & response time.

Institute a layered approach to cybersecurity.

BENEFITS

As Agora focuses on the future, it continues to evaluate, reevaluate, and make changes to continue moving forward, ensuring the level of security behind the scenes is paramount with Forsyte's Guardian 365 security managed services. Teachers and students are free to learn and explore the digital world with confidence, as they solidify their K-12 educations for a brighter tomorrow.