

IB Südwest gGmbH

Diversity is our strength

Services in social work, vocational training, arts, and culture



Source: IB Südwest gGmbH



Company:

IB Südwest gGmbH

Employees:

2.700

Location:

Darmstadt

Industry:

Non-profit organization

Website:

www.ib-suedwest.de

Image brochure:

www.ib-suedwest.de/image-broschuere

Creating employee awareness for greater IT security

A phishing campaign, personal training sessions, and an e-learning platform to raise awareness among employees of a non-profit organization

Introduction

IB Südwest gGmbH is a non-profit organization under the umbrella of the Internationaler Bund e.V. (IB). With its association and companies, the IB is one of the largest providers of youth, social, and educational services in Germany. The honorary executive committee includes representatives from public life, political parties, business, science, and administration. Founded in 1949, the IB Group has many years of experience working with people in difficult life situations. Whether it's modern education and training, teaching professional skills, or managing social services, the goal is to take on social responsibility through social engagement.

Manufacturers involved:

Network Box

Products used:

Medialine Awareness-Konzept,
Network Box Managed Phishing
Kampagne und E-Learning-Portal

Project period:

02/2022 - 05/2022

In Hesse, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Saarland, IB Südwest gGmbH offers a network of educational opportunities, housing, counseling, and support services. Around 2,700 employees are involved in 170 cities and municipalities. IB Südwest gGmbH's clients include private individuals, institutions, municipalities, counties, federal states, the State Welfare Association in Hesse, the Employment Agency, and federal ministries. The range of modern services in vocational training and social work focuses on the individual. One of the main areas of focus is on children and young people, as well as people with disabilities. In addition, there are services in the field of refugee and migration work and the qualification and placement of skilled workers.

The challenge

For the majority of IB Südwest employees, their work focuses on social work with people. Since many IB Südwest employees are not daily IT users, it was important to raise employee awareness of everyday IT risks. Security incidents and the inexperienced handling of phishing emails were the trigger for further measures to raise awareness in dealing with emails.

Precisely because of its special position as a social organization, the company network stores a lot of personal and highly sensitive data, such as medical reports on clients. Martin Treu, IT manager at IB Südwest, says: "It was and is important to me to raise awareness of this responsibility among employees. Because this data is a very valuable asset that we must protect."

If people don't play along, technology remains ineffective.

Despite a six-month IT security campaign for end users carried out in 2020, the hoped-for increase in employee awareness failed to materialize. It also became clear that, given the size of the company, communication after a known phishing incident posed a further hurdle. In many cases, those affected did not report incidents to the IT department out of shame or fear of consequences. An awareness solution was needed to increase employees' knowledge and awareness of IT security. A newsletter article by Medialine on the topic of IT security gave Mr. Treu an idea: "After the very limited success of the previous campaign, I wanted to take a more individual approach to the topic. Among other things, I envisioned an e-learning platform, training slots, and a phishing campaign. Medialine's security awareness concept immediately fit my ideas very well – and could also be implemented in accordance with the works council!"

The solution

The aim of Medialine's awareness workshops is to train users, who remain the biggest risk factor in any IT security strategy, and thus minimize risks as much as possible. With this in mind, IT-ON.NET, as a member company of the Medialine Group, worked closely with IB Südwest IT manager Mr. Treu



Source: IB Südwest gGmbH

Martin Treu, IT manager, IB
Südwest gGmbH, Darmstadt

»I can highly recommend Medialine and Network Box as a partner of Medialine. You can sense that they have the expertise in this security environment and that they also respond to the individual needs of their customers. I would definitely turn to Medialine again in the future.«

to develop a multi-stage training concept consisting of in-person training sessions, an e-learning platform, and a phishing campaign. „Originally, we had envisaged a different sequence in our preliminary discussions. But as the project progressed, we realized that it would make more sense to conduct a training block first and make the e-learning offering available before sending out a phishing email. A second training block will then follow after the phishing campaign. I really appreciate how IT.ON-NET responds flexibly to our needs as a customer,“ says Martin Treu, reflecting on the content of the project.

Since email security was a priority topic, an IT expert from the Medialine Group first conducted five 40-minute training sessions via Microsoft Teams. These sessions highlighted examples of phishing email attacks (including SMS), explained the attackers’ objectives, and outlined protective measures and the consequences of a successful attack. Participants were also given a brief introduction to the Network Box e-learning platform, which uses video clips to convey learning topics effectively. Online exams and certifications are also available via the platform. The e-learning module “IT Security Basics” is available to up to 250 participants and covers the topics of clean desk, password management, safe surfing, phishing, and two-factor authentication.

According to Martin Treu, the phishing campaign originated from an email address that was intended to portray him credibly. By setting up the Network Box Managed Phishing Campaign, IT.ON-Net was able to simulate phishing attacks within a predefined framework. The details of user behavior were then used by the managing director of IT.ON-NET and Mr. Treu to evaluate the campaign results. The IT manager at IB Südwest shares his thoughts with us: „Even before I’ve seen the report, I can already guess one thing: the number of people who clicked on the email and didn’t report the incident will be alarmingly high. Depending on the results of the evaluation, I would like to take the necessary step of revisiting the topic of email security instead of starting a new topic area around password security and social engineering.“ Martin Treu also reflects on the project process: “Here, too, I find it very positive that the Medialine Group leaves room to dynamically adapt the project process and responds individually to our wishes and new ideas.”

The result

The awareness training concept for IB Southwest was successfully implemented. The phishing campaign in particular raised lasting awareness among the training participants. A second important effect of the campaign, according to the IT manager at IB Südwest, was the optimization of communication channels following a phishing incident. This was because employees used a wide variety of channels to report the incident, including Medialine, the IT department of the IB Group, and a regional IT service provider of IB

Südwest. According to Martin Treu, this is definitely a positive development, because „now I know how employees react and can not only work with our data protection coordinator to guide them and show them the intended communication channel, but also give them the all-clear when it comes to the issue: Will there be consequences for me if I click on a phishing email? Of course not! The only important thing is that the incident is reported so that we can act quickly.“

In addition to smooth communication between Mr. Treu and the Medialine experts, there was also room for mutual learning. The response from employees after the successful campaign was intense and numerous for the IT manager at IB Südwest. For subsequent projects, it was recognized that preparing final information for employees and proactive communication from a contact person at Medialine would have been helpful in relieving the IT manager. Although the IT.ON-NET training manager answered all the open questions from employees that reached him after the workshop, a clear regulation and better channeling of questions would have simplified the processes and minimized effort.

In line with our claim, “We are trusted advisors to our customers,” we can use the open feedback culture and the valuable basis of trust with our customers to continuously optimize our own processes and solutions. Martin Treu also appreciates this for future co-operation: “I would turn to Medialine again in the future. I always feel well advised at Medialine, no matter what the issues are.”

Medialine AG

As a full-service system house, we stand for customised solutions for medium-sized businesses and corporate groups. We fully support your company along the way - from requirements analysis, idea collecting and concept development to the development and implementation of the appropriate IT strategy as well as regular technical support and workshops for your employees. Thanks to our nationwide orientation, customers benefit from a close-knit network of sales and technical resources, which enables optimal service support on site.

Contact

Medialine EuroTrade AG
Breitlerstraße 43
55566 Bad Sobernheim

Tel.: +49 6751 85378 0
welcome@medialine.ag