



Sunny Europe digitises its 24/7 duty-free services and provides security with Sophos XDR and Managed Threat Response

Sunny Europe is a supplier of duty-free products for the maritime industry. With headquarters in Antwerp, the company sells and delivers goods to ships in all North Sea ports of Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. Like most suppliers, Sunny Europe had started the transition to digital sales and the pandemic accelerated the rollout of a solid 24/7 e-commerce platform. As this makes the company more vulnerable to downtime and incidents caused by cyber attacks, they decided to enhance their Sophos Intercept X protection with XDR and MTR.

CUSTOMER-AT-A-GLANCE



Sunny Europe
Antwerp - Belgium

Industry
Duty-free products

Number of users
120 employees

Sophos Solutions
Sophos Intercept X
Sophos XDR
Sophos MTR

“Security is like an alarm system you install at home. Although it is not guaranteed that burglars will not try to break in, the alarm will significantly reduce the risk and put your mind at ease when you leave the house.”

Bennie Kriekaard, IT Manager Sunny Europe



For nearly four decades, Sunny Europe’s representatives have been doing business by boarding ships that dock in North Sea ports. The company employs about 120 people and sells a wide variety of duty-free products such as alcohol and cigarettes, perfume, jewellery, watches and electronics. The customers are people who work on cargo vessels sailing to international waters and are therefore entitled to buy products duty-free. Sunny Europe takes their orders and delivers the goods to the ships.

The company wanted to be fully digital by the end of 2023. However, due to the COVID-19 safety regulations, their representatives could no longer enter the terminals. As a result, their digital transformation had to be accelerated. “Without our online sales platform, Sunny Europe would have been out of business. Fortunately, we succeeded and today we have an e-commerce solution that allows customers to order products online”, says Bennie Kriekaard, IT Manager at Sunny Europe.

Managing risks to keep the ship afloat

Although the logistics take place during office hours, Sunny Europe’s ICT systems are operational day and night. This means that the company has to be alert to cyber attacks that could potentially interrupt business activities. “Cyber risks today come from almost anywhere, even from within the organisation. People can, for example, click on a malicious link or plug in an unknown USB device. We provide phishing training and work hard to raise awareness among our users, but we also want to prevent these threats from infecting our system if something does go wrong”, says Bennie Kriekaard.

The company already used Sophos for its clients and servers, and decided to build on these licenses with more advanced solutions. Bennie Kriekaard: “The world is changing and we cannot keep up

with the knowledge and pace required to manage threats. We therefore decided to dig deeper by using cutting-edge security software and outsourcing our threat response to Sophos. Now we are more reassured that our systems will not go down due to phishing or a ransomware attack.”

Advanced security to intercept attacks

Cyber attacks are becoming increasingly aggressive, so organisations like Sunny Europe need extra security to make life as difficult as possible for hackers. “At Sophos we analyse thousands of environments every day, so we see a lot of trends”, says Patricia Van Giessel, Channel Account Executive at Sophos. “A few years ago, hackers might head for the neighbour’s house if they noticed that a company had decent security.



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Today, most organisations have a fair degree of security, so hackers will probably continue to look for other ways to get in. Cyber crime has exploded since the beginning of the pandemic and even street criminals are now looking to make a profit from ransomware. That’s why companies need more advanced security services.”

Sunny Europe decided to activate Sophos XDR and MTR on top of their existing Intercept X solution. XDR gives them visibility to carry out security checks and proactively search for potential threats in the system. Or if an incident has occurred, XDR enables the company’s IT staff to find seeds that have yet to develop and could eventually grow into a future attack. While Intercept X detects movements in the system and warns of potential threats, XDR provides the means to intercept these attacks.

Managed Threat Response

With XDR, Sunny Europe had the right tools to scan its environment for security risks, but Bennie Kriekaard decided to add the Sophos MTR [Managed Threat Response] service as well. “With our own team of seven IT experts, we do not have the manpower to be constantly dealing with threat intelligence. So instead of hiring a specialized security engineer who has to stay up-to-date and is hard to find on the job market, we chose to outsource our threat response. While our system administrator is trained for basic security tasks, we rely on the expertise of the Sophos MTR team to tackle more complex threats. It gives us peace of mind to focus on other challenges.”

Sophos customers can decide whether they want the MTR team to only send notifications or intervene if they find a potential threat. “We have given Sophos the authorization to respond and remove a device from the network if it is potentially infected with malware. Since we don’t have time to inspect the Sophos console, we want the MTR team to take care of everything and act before any affected endpoint can cause damage to our system.”

Of course, Sunny Europe’s IT team can still monitor the system at any time and Sophos provides regular security reports. If any new risks in the threat landscape are identified, Sophos also maintains a direct line with Bennie Kriekaard and his colleagues to discuss possible actions or recommended policy modifications.

Building the future with confidence

Adding XDR and MTR to their existing Sophos Intercept X security solution has helped Sunny Europe to step into a new digital future. While Bennie Kriekaard's team manages this project and solves the challenges that come their way in the post-pandemic era, Sophos XDR provides the tools to cope with new security risks and the MTR team ensures that they have nothing to worry about. In the future, Sunny Europe may choose to integrate other Sophos solutions. The more you can analyse with the same technology, the more effective the MTR team can identify changes and deviating patterns.

"We are very satisfied with our Sophos solutions. They give us peace of mind, so we don't have to worry about security all the time. You can compare it to an alarm system you install at home. Although it is not guaranteed that burglars will not try to break in, the alarm will significantly reduce the risk and put your mind at ease when you leave the house", concludes Bennie Kriekaard.