CASE STUDY

Dean Trust looks to 9ine to identify cloud vulnerabilities

and provide best practice data protection guidance

About Dean Trust, UK

Dean Trust is a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) in the UK. Through their work, they aim to sustain improvements by developing character, values and beliefs alongside sound systems and processes. They also ensure that academies adopt the Dean Trust model for success, high aspirations, high standards and continuous improvement throughout the Trust.

Situation

The Trust approached 9ine with significant challenges. Mike Ward highlighted the Trust's need to identify gaps in their cloud infrastructure and address the lack of staffing resources to maintain their high

standards. Communicating these needs to senior leadership, especially in terms of required attention, resourcing, and funding, proved challenging. Despite adhering to a "secure by design" approach, the Trust needed an independent evaluation to ensure best practices in protecting their community.

Additionally, Dean Trust had a specific goal to develop an in-house IT consultancy service for other organisations at cost while ensuring robust Disaster Recovery (DR) and Business As Usual (BAU) services.

Solution

Dean Trust sought 9ine's expertise for an independent review of their cybersecurity measures to identify infrastructure gaps. This assessment would support their case to the Board of Directors for necessary investments or changes in project approaches. Visualising cybersecurity risks and their potential consequences is crucial for persuading senior leadership about the importance of addressing these issues.

Ward's team also aimed to highlight their strengths. Their primary objective was to demonstrate to the board that their systems, processes, and procedures were secure, robust, and scalable. Achieving this would reassure senior leadership and ensure transparency across departments.

9ine's Systems & Services Essentials provided a visual representation of major pain points and risks within Dean Trust's IT systems. This clarity allowed the IT team to communicate effectively with senior leadership about what needed attention and why. The audit provided independent verification of their good practices and identified known risks.

Results

The audit revealed no major risks in Dean Trust's systems, affirming their sound practices like "security by design." Ward noted that while a continual annual review might enhance productivity, governance, and time savings, the current audit sufficed as a one-time security review. The positive outcome assured the team they were on the right track, providing confidence and structure to continue protecting the Trust's members.

Ward praised 9ine's thoroughness and integration with the IT support team, emphasising their non-judgmental approach and understanding of the Trust's needs. This collaboration helped Dean Trust achieve their goal of demonstrating the robustness of their processes to the board, which facilitated seeking investment opportunities and adopting new project approaches. This progress not only mitigates system risks for Dean Trust but also benefits other schools through their consultancy services.

Ward says "The team at 9ine were a breath of fresh air. They went through (with a fine tooth comb!) all our policies, procedures and security measures, spent considerable time to understand our needs, how we work and what our known concerns are. They felt like an extension of our IT support team for the time they were with us and were never judgemental on the approach we take with our systems and security. I'd have no concerns about recommending them (and using their services) again in the future."

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