

Organization

Customer: *The Economist*

Site: www.economist.com

Industry: Media and entertainment

Headquarters: London, United Kingdom

Employees: 2,000+

Challenge

The Economist needed to protect journalists from cyber attack, wherever they work in the world.

Solution

Symantec Endpoint Protection 14

Benefits

- 60 percent drop in malware events
- 80 percent less time dealing with malware events, translating into more time to focus on high-value projects

 The Economist

The Economist

Technology and the Human Firewall

For more than 170 years, *The Economist* has delivered news and analysis that exposes the “unworthy, timid ignorance obstructing our progress.” Many of the world’s leaders and thinkers turn to it for thoughtful, in-depth weekly analysis of world affairs.

Operating such a high-profile media organization, with hundreds of journalists working around the globe, isn’t easy, particularly when you draw the ire of those opposed to your mission, such as activists who want to hijack your website and social media channels to get their own messages out.

Using the traditional method of security—locking down all systems and devices—isn’t possible when the very nature of news gathering requires open access to all information and all types of people. The task becomes even more difficult because the journalists at *The Economist* are often on the road, working on unsecured hotel networks and public Wi-Fi, where it’s easier for hackers to target them. They also work in war-torn areas where the public infrastructure might be in ruins and forces are actively working against them.

For Vicki Gavin, compliance director and head of business continuity, cyber security, and data privacy at *The Economist*, the approach to security is a fine balancing act between deploying a strong technology solution and relying on what she calls her “human firewall.”

People plus technology

Gavin, who has a postgraduate degree in adult education, works by the motto that cyber security starts with people. “I consider people our most important defense, but we also need Symantec there as a critical backup to protect all of our endpoints,” she says.

With 1,500 people working around the globe in six major offices and 10 smaller ones, *The Economist* upgraded to [Symantec™ Endpoint Protection 14](#) from Symantec Endpoint Protection 12 and Malwarebytes. “It drove me nuts that we had two solutions,” says Gavin.

Because *The Economist* already had the Symantec solution installed on its endpoints, it could quickly upgrade with very little effort. “A proof of concept in Hong Kong went live over a weekend with no issues,” says Gavin. “New York practically rolled it out overnight. The IT team said how easy it was—the software just installed itself. It’s the combination of signature-based and AI that produces such a good product.”

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Head of Business Continuity,
Cyber Security, and Data Privacy
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With the right technology in place, Gavin can focus on keeping her human firewall strong, which includes teaching the independent-minded journalists at *The Economist* how to identify and respond to cyber attacks. Her trainings follow her five-point blueprint (see “Right way to educate” on page 3), and she sometimes organizes them around a theme. A recent training, all about fraud, included in-person classroom instruction (“because people respond better to people, not machines”) and educational messages direct from the chief information security officer at *The Economist*.

With Symantec Endpoint Protection 14, *The Economist* saw a 60 percent drop in malware events.

To raise general awareness about the importance of security, Gavin launched a story-writing contest, where journalists and other staff members sent her stories on how data breaches impacted them, or would impact them, and then she published some of them in a special internal edition of *The Economist*.

A few years ago, a Syrian terrorist group tried to hijack *The Economist* website through a phishing attack. Gavin had trained the staff on what to look for in suspicious email, such as an incorrect return address, uncommon words, and the “funny feeling in your tummy” when an email doesn’t seem right. She even ran a contest. She asked her colleagues to immediately send her such email and entered them into a raffle. The winner won a beautiful handmade quilt, or what she calls a “security blanket.”

Terrorists and malware

As soon as *The Economist* launched Symantec Endpoint Protection 14, Gavin began to see some stunning results. Last year, the organization had 350 security events, 55 percent of which were malware. “We have seen a 60 percent drop in malware events after rolling out in the United States and Asia and are anticipating a further reduction once the rollout in Europe is complete. As malware makes up two-thirds of the events we deal with, this is a huge win, saving time and reducing risk,” she says. The IT department has reduced its efforts by 80 percent in this area, enabling them to focus on higher value work.

Her human firewall is also doing its job. When the Syrian terrorist group launched the phishing attack, *The Economist* responded quickly and effectively. “Within minutes of the first email sent to a journalist, it was sent to me, and we immediately shut down the attack,” says Gavin.

Last year, in another example, an employee fell victim to a hacker attack. He entered his user ID and password on a fake web page, which hackers then captured and were poised to use. “We shut them down in three minutes,” says Gavin.



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When its human firewall and endpoint protection solution help stop attacks like these, *The Economist* can focus on what's really important: understanding a complex, quickly changing world and exposing the ignorance obstructing human progress.

Right way to educate

Because of the nature of news gathering, Vicki Gavin of *The Economist* can't just rely on technology to protect her organization from cyber attacks. She must educate her staff to be the front line of defense, and she uses these five tenets to do it:

1. **Make education desirable:** Ensure there is something for everyone.
2. **Be focused:** Don't expect even the smartest staff to learn 300 things at once.
3. **Vary the message:** Don't keep saying the same thing.
4. **Be engaging:** Lean forward; get everyone actively involved.
5. **Be compelling:** Add a little theater and drama. People like to be entertained.

For more information, contact your local Symantec sales representative or business partner, or visit www.symantec.com/products/threat-protection.

About Symantec

Symantec Corporation (NASDAQ: SYMC), the world's leading cyber security company, helps businesses, governments and people secure their most important data wherever it lives. Organizations across the world look to Symantec for strategic, integrated solutions to defend against sophisticated attacks across endpoints, cloud and infrastructure. Likewise, a global community of more than 50 million people and families rely on Symantec's Norton suite of products for protection at home and across all of their devices. Symantec operates one of the world's largest civilian cyber intelligence networks, allowing it to see and protect against the most advanced threats. For additional information, please visit www.symantec.com or connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



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