



Connected
Bringing knowledge to business

Working with the Met

Cyber Security

Through the Connected programme businesses can access expertise, skills and facilities on Cyber Security. With an increased use of information technology comes a rise in Cyber Crime. Fraud is now the most common criminal offence according to new figures released in January 2017 by the UK Office for National Statistics. The statistics reveal that levels of crime have nearly doubled from the previous official total, and that there were 11.8 million crime reports in 2016. The increase is believed to be due to the escalation of Fraud and Cyber Crime during 2016, which accounted for 5.8 million crimes. Almost one in 10 adults have been victims of cybercrime in the past year. We continue to hear about Cyber Crime on a regular basis; from the theft of banking details to the publishing of customer data. Not only is this a serious breach of data protection and a publicity nightmare for the company, it can come with a huge financial cost; for SMEs the average cost of the worst breaches are between £75,000 and £311,000.

What is Cyber Security?

Cyber Security is a sub-area of the Information Security Sector, which is still evolving due to the ever changing nature of how organisations, businesses and the public are now using new Information and Communications Technologies, and particularly the internet and networked devices. Cyber Security helps businesses to protect themselves against the ever growing threat of online Cyber Attacks. Good practice in Cyber Security is now an imperative if organisations wish to conduct online business operations in a safe and more secure manner.

Global Best Practice

Cyber security is not limited to one particular industry or country and as a result work is ongoing across the globe to help prevent cybercrime from happening. Belfast Met has attended a number of global events to utilise global knowledge and best practice that can be disseminated to local industry.

The Workshop on the Economics of Information Security at Delft University, Netherlands provided key insights into the threat of Cyber Crime from an economic and security perspective.

Dutch MP, Merieje Schaate highlighted the need for a "Collaborative Security Eco-System" through an open internet with collaboration from both the business sector and public organisations.



The DEFCON conference in Las Vegas is attended by computer security professionals, public organisations, businesses and I.T. hackers. Together discussions take place around the development of hacking technology and the security used to prevent this.



Industry Workshops

Through the Connected programme, Belfast Met is working alongside Ulster University to develop course content and bespoke workshops for local businesses. Cyber Security affects every industry at a range of different levels, the College provide knowledge workshops at all levels to upskill employees and provide them with new processes for reviewing their cyber security.

Upskilling

The College can deliver bespoke training in Information Security which includes system implementation, cyber threats, vulnerability and security controls. We also work with companies to complete internal audits into the effectiveness of company IT security systems, upskilling employees on how to complete and monitor these audits in future.

Belfast Metropolitan College recognise Cyber Security as a critical issue for companies and through the Connected Programme is completing detailed market analysis to develop specialised support for businesses across Northern Ireland.

Information Technology crosses all business sectors and is continually changing; especially in regard to mobile and cloud computing; and smart technology. As this technology develops further, there will be new threats and vulnerabilities emerge, and as the threat of cyber-attack grows, many corporations are already struggling to keep pace with the tactics of the hackers and criminal gangs. Research by the National Crime Agency states that Cyber Security Awareness training “is a long-term education and training challenge” and “sustained efforts will be required to deliver the required change”. Belfast Met has delivered Cyber Security workshops to businesses in regard to awareness of the current threats and vulnerabilities.

Belfast Met has engaged with specific companies in Northern Ireland to assist them in areas such as: Innovation Vouchers; Cyber Security Awareness staff training, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and product development.

Outsource Solutions NI

Outsource Solutions NI (Outsource) provides a full range of services including; IT support and solutions and integrated Telecoms systems to some of Northern Ireland’s most successful businesses. Their customer base ranges from small scale consultancies to major employers, across a diverse spectrum of sectors.



During 2015 Outsource became aware of an ever increasing stream of enquiries from their Northern Ireland customer base with regard to Cyber Crime. The company decided to research and review the potential for a new IT product for customers around cyber security. It was at this stage that the company were introduced to Belfast Met’s Cyber Security Specialist, Stephen Black. Stephen met with the company and reviewed their current products and services. They were then able to discuss in depth the potential and logistics of a new cyber security product for the company.

As a result of the collaboration it was agreed that there was a business need for Cyber Security products to meet the needs of SME’s in Northern Ireland. Indeed, Kieran Moore, Account Manager at Outsource, has stated that the “engagement and collaboration with Stephen and the Connected Programme has been very timely and opportunistic for Outsource”.

Stephen worked with Outsource to upskill key staff on Cyber Threats and Vulnerabilities, as part of an ongoing process leading to the development new Cyber Security products to enable their clients to conduct business activities in a more secure environment. Anthony Quinn, Technical Manager at Outsource, stated that “Belfast Met and Stephen Black have been beneficial in mentoring in cyber security and availing of grants and funding aid in developing of our products and services”. Outsource have expressed an intention to continue collaborating with Belfast Met on a long term basis, and are exploring the feasibility of engaging in a Knowledge Transfer Partnership.

Connected Health Ltd

Connected Health Ltd is an independent private domiciliary healthcare provider working in collaboration with the public Health and Social care sector. Connected Health deliver a portfolio of services that allow people choice and access to the most appropriate care, whilst enabling them to remain in their own homes longer. The services that they provide can be delivered either on a discreet stand-alone basis or as a package, thereby creating a continuum of care for their clients.



Connected Health worked closely with Belfast Met around the development of a Connected Care model. After discussions with the company, it became apparent that the amount of data and the confidential nature of this data would require staff to have a higher level of cyber security knowledge and be aware of any threats and vulnerabilities. As a result, Stephen Black met with the company to discuss key areas of concerns. It was highlighted that Connected Health were developing a new system that would transfer sensitive patient information via digital networks to an application the company planned to deploy.

Under the Connected programme Stephen mentored the project manager, Samantha Windrum, in Cyber Security Awareness tailored to the Health sector, as well as discussing future development opportunities that the company had been considering in relation to transferring confidential information. Stephen identified issues in relation to internal threats and vulnerabilities to digital information and how the company could overcome these to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident happening.

As a result of the training, guidance and knowledge provided by Stephen, Connected Health has developed new processes and procedures, from password policies to security procedures. Samantha was able to provide on the job training to additional staff within the company to increase their awareness of cyber threats and update them on the new policies to reduce threats to patient data. The overall impact of the Connected programme for Connected Health Ltd has been its increased security and efficiency of the company.



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