

Castons Slashes User Click Rates on Phishing Emails with Egress and Spear Shield

Castons | 🏢 Consultancy industry | 👤 100 employees | 📍 Ipswich, UK | 🛡️ Egress Defend



0%

Click rate of suspicious links after implementing Egress Defend

80%+

decrease in management of email-defense related tasks



Castons is a professional practice providing high quality consultancy advice to clients involved in property and construction. Services include cost management, project management, building surveying, employer's agent, CDM consultant and other specialist expertise. Established in 1895, Castons has a proven track record of providing reliable services to clients and is proud to be an NHS Shared Business Services provider.

The challenge

Founded in 1895, Castons is a professional practice that provides high-quality consultancy to clients in property and construction. From cost and project management to fund monitoring, building surveying, and other specialist expertise, the company works with public and private clients in London and across the UK.

Providing services to charities and government agencies, including universities and the NHS, meant that Castons needed to demonstrate its ongoing evaluation of security controls, addressing any gaps as its top priority. "The nature of the work we do has to be very secure – with high-profile clients, we needed to be able to say, hand-on-heart, that we take security seriously," said George Heath-Collins, IT Manager at Castons.



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George Heath-Collins, IT Manager at Castons

But as a growing company, Castons found itself the target of bad actors trying to exploit them. “We tend to get a lot of people attempting phishing attacks – pretending to be senior management and company owners. Working with large national agencies and charities makes us more of a target,” he explained.

Castons’ existing email security system offered some protection, but malicious emails still reached employees and were regularly forwarded on to the IT team for guidance on how to handle them. “We effectively doubled in size – and during the COVID lockdowns, we were exchanging many emails,” Heath-Collins said. “People in the company would forward an email to me and say, ‘I don’t know if this is a scam or not,’ which was not a foolproof or scalable approach. We knew we needed to change how we handled our email security, taking a proactive approach.”



The solution

To assess potential email security solutions, Castons worked with their cybersecurity risk and mitigation partner Spear Shield. “With Spear Shield’s help we quickly determined that Egress would be a good fit. The proof-of-concept demonstration was fluid, and Egress’ dashboard was very easy to understand,” said Heath-Collins. “I have a fair amount to do every day, so I needed our cybersecurity information to be easily digestible and presentable.”

As part of the proof-of-concept, Spear Shield ran an initial phishing simulation to all users at Castons – and user click rates showed room for improvement. “We scheduled some phishing tests to get a sense of what our situation was, and like many companies, our click rates were higher than we wanted them to be,” Heath-Collins said.

He continued, “Then we implemented Egress Defend, and its straightforward user experience meant it was easy for our staff to get up to speed, quickly learning how to handle emails, attachments, and links if they weren’t sure of them. It changed our emailing culture quite a lot. Our people started using email more defensively, which is amazing for us, as it lightened the load on our small IT team.”

Egress Defend integrates seamlessly with Microsoft 365 making it easy to deploy across the whole organization. Heath-Collins explained, “Egress Defend is easy for our employees to use. The UI makes it very easy to understand, at-a-glance, what’s going on with an email. If employees see an email, they aren’t absolutely sure of, they can quickly report it, and we have the tools available to rapidly investigate, and if it is malicious, remediate it. Having multiple layers of protection is amazing.”



Egress Defend helps us significantly reduce risky clicks and supports the development of our defensive emailing culture – and it’s easy-to-use, easy-to-understand and customizable. It’s non-invasive, which is perfect – it doesn’t take up a huge chunk of people’s email or their day. We’ve had real results with it and would recommend Egress Defend

George Heath-Collins, IT Manager
at Castons



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George Heath-Collins, IT Manager at Castons

The results

Before implementing Egress, Castons' ran a phishing test with Spear Shield. It showed that a high percentage of users were clicking suspicious links. And after? "After implementing Egress Defend, we initiated a second phishing test – and nobody clicked on anything – our click rates were literally zero. It works," said Heath-Collins.

Castons' IT team has also saved time since implementing Egress Defend. According to Heath-Collins, before Egress, he would personally receive several emails every week from employees asking for assistance in determining an email's risk level. "And last week, I had maybe one. And the week before, I had zero. So it's been a massive reduction in the time I need to spend on these tasks."

Egress Defend combines intelligent detection technologies to defend against sophisticated phishing attacks and warn and engage users with contextual, color-coded warning banners. By learning email behaviour patterns, it detects anomalies that are indicative of sophisticated phishing threats that have evaded existing email security. These technologies, combined with the cloud-based architecture, reduce configuration and administrative overhead allowing Heath-Collins to focus on higher-value tasks.

"At one point, I spent almost two-thirds of my day on email defense tasks, trying to change rules and improve our defense scores. With Egress Defend, I've decreased that time by more than 80%. Knowing that Egress Defend has fail safes in place – sanitizing malicious code and intelligently rewriting links – gives me a great sense of confidence. Now, when I get a suspicious email notification, I can look at the Egress dashboard and remediate it in about two seconds if necessary. That means I can focus on doing other things, without having to worry about who's emailing who," he said.

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Egress helps protect unstructured data to meet compliance requirements and drive business productivity. The company's AI-powered platform enables users to control and secure the data they share.

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