



Boosting Cybersecurity for a Vital Non-Profit Community Resource

CASE STUDY

Ceeva and the Jewish Community
Center of Greater Pittsburgh





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How do you help steady an organization reeling from one of the most traumatic hate crimes in American history – one that occurred only a few blocks from its headquarters – while also dealing with digital issues and attacks by hackers?

That describes the situation faced by the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Greater Pittsburgh in 2018, in the aftermath of the Tree of Life Synagogue shootings. The JCC had recently brought on Ceeva to handle its IT and other online networking issues, and the task quickly became even more challenging.



Immediate *Challenges Arose*

“The companies we had been using kept getting gobbled up, to the point that we were nothing to them,” recalled Diane Newland, Chief Financial Officer of the JCC.

“We didn’t have a partner anymore. We are a human connection community organization. We thrive on people and in serving our community. That’s no different, including in the IT world. In the IT world, not only is it customer facing, but the customers of the IT world are also our staff. Taking care of our staff and allowing them to do their job is really important for us. We don’t want them mired in technology challenges.

“Rick and almost every human being from Ceeva came to our building and helped us clean it up.”

Diane Newland, Chief Financial Officer of the JCC.

After Newland and Ceeva Vice President Rick Topping had been referred to each other independently, they met at a trade show and started the dialogue that soon brought Ceeva onboard as the JCC’s IT servicer of record. And it didn’t take long for events to test that relationship.

“We’re a target. Whether you want to say it out loud or not, we’re a Jewish organization, we’re a target. We’re a target physically. We’re a target cyberly. We’re a target,” Newland said. “The story of October 27, 2018, and The Tree of Life Synagogue murders all happened shortly after we started with Ceeva. Then right on the tails of that, in November, we got hit with a massive virus.

“Rick and almost every human being from Ceeva came to our building and helped us clean it up. If you think about that, that’s within the first year of our relationship. And we have never looked back,” she said.

Add a global pandemic a couple of years later, when the entire nature of work and the IT foundation to support it had to change on a dime, plus a systemwide migration to a new operating platform for the JCC, and you get at least some of the picture. But through it all, at every turn, and with every new twist in the process, Ceeva answered the call and kept the JCC team up and running. Its initial installations and training had held fast, offering cyber protection to this vital community resource.

And then something forced Ceeva to do even better.

Hackers Force *New Idea*

Ceeva had equipped JCC users with multi-factor authorization protocols to safeguard privacy and confidential communications, which had performed as expected. But when one of the organization's officers got a new smartphone, hackers broke into the old phone's codes, and the trouble started.

"It was awful. That man, he felt so violated. He didn't know what he did wrong. This can't keep happening. There was an email that went out supposedly from him to every contact in our network, not just in his contacts, in our network. It was evil. It had a virus in it. All Rick kept saying is, 'Guys, they're getting better and better at this.' Someone hacked into our MailChimp account and sent out bad emails, too."

The solution came in the form of Ceeva Shield, a cyber tool-set that tracks improbable sources of contact, and shuts them down. Working with the JCC, Ceeva adapted the most appropriate elements of Ceeva Shield to fit the non-profit's budget and security needs. Just one more example of the partnership and collaboration that has marked this relationship from the start.

"Within weeks, Ceeva would call us and ask if one of our staff was in Bulgaria, and when we'd say no, that attempted hack would be shut down," explained Newland. "We've been able to stop the bad actors often since we went live with that. Those dollars spent in that particular situation have proven to be worth the money for us."

People are the *Real Story*

For all of the technical expertise and continuous monitoring that Ceeva provides the JCC, the real success behind this story comes down to people, as Newland attests.

"That's the environment we have with them at Ceeva. It's a partnership and a real support team and relationship with them, which is wonderful. It's all throughout their organization. It's not one person. It's not just Rick. It's everybody there. We have a relationship with them. That's what we want here. It's the human connection side of things. If you ever step foot in our agency, as soon as you walk in the door, you're going to know what I'm talking about, because you're going to see it everywhere here. It's also why Ceeva is the right fit, because they approach their business that same way."

Newland has shared the JCC's Ceeva experience with multiple non-profits, both across the Pittsburgh region and with fellow JCC's across the nation.



Ceeva technicians at work, protecting their customers

"I love to tell the story, it's wonderful," she said. "Anybody that works here will say the same thing. You'll hear a lot of people talk about Ceeva. They're also supporters of our community and our annual fundraising events. They're a sponsor, which is wonderful and we need that. They also bring their staff here to celebrate with us.

"Tomorrow is always a new day in a way to become better. We need a partner to walk beside us. That's Ceeva."

Diane Newland, Chief Financial Officer of the JCC.

"In Pittsburgh, if you think about anything that's ever happened in the city, anything tragic or anything big, you know that the city comes together, no matter what it is. It's just who we are, whether it's the Steelers winning, or somebody getting hurt, or the Tree of Life, or a storm that went through, or flooding, it doesn't matter. People come together.

"If you think about technology, yesterday and tomorrow could be two completely different things. Whether it's you personally, or a business, or a non-profit, you need a partner to walk that path with you. Technology is ever evolving. Our relationship is ever evolving. Tomorrow is always a new day in a way to become better. We need a partner to walk beside us. That's Ceeva."

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