

FUTABA CASE STUDY

Protecting Automotive Manufacturing from Cyber Threats

Futaba Manufacturing UK Ltd (FMUK), a distinguished Japanese Tier One automotive manufacturer, operates two state-of-the-art facilities in England, employing over 400 skilled professionals throughout the United Kingdom. Renowned for excellence, Futaba specialises in crafting high-quality automotive components that meet the industry's most demanding standards.

FMUK offers a comprehensive range of services, including engineering, press operations, robotic weld assembly, tube forming, fuel system assembly, and more. This diverse expertise enables FMUK to deliver excellence consistently within the automotive industry. As cyber threats continue to grow in complexity, safeguarding operations has become a critical business priority for FMUK. Implementing robust cyber security measures is essential to protect their advanced manufacturing processes and maintain their commitment to quality and efficiency.

The Challenge

Futaba's UK operations faced a significant challenge in managing their cyber security. With Matt Cooper, the IT Manager, overseeing two sites, his expertise and dedication were invaluable. However, without a dedicated cyber security resource, tackling the growing volume of cyber threats required additional support to ensure a robust defence.

Futaba's senior leadership recognised the risks associated with a limited in-house IT team. A security incident could halt production, causing significant

disruption to their supply chain and impacting relationships with key clients. Additionally, the headquarters in Japan had mandated a review of managed services to address these vulnerabilities, highlighting the growing concern about supply chain risks. However, budget constraints posed a challenge. Building in-house capabilities was deemed prohibitively expensive, necessitating an affordable yet effective managed solution to ensure security without compromising operational budgets.





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Futaba

The Solutions

Futaba partnered with CyberLab to craft a comprehensive security strategy tailored to Futaba's unique requirements. To lay the foundation, CyberLab conducted a thorough penetration test, starting with an external infrastructure assessment to uncover vulnerabilities in Futaba's publicly accessible systems. This was followed by an internal assessment simulating real-world attack scenarios within their corporate environment. This multi-layered evaluation allowed CyberLab to identify critical gaps and prioritise actions to fortify their resilience against emerging threats.

Following the initial assessments, CyberLab implemented CyberLab Control, an end-to-end solution designed to address user training and vulnerability testing. Leveraging tools like Vicarius for automated patching ensured that Futaba's systems remained protected against unpatched exploits, a common vector for cyber attacks. This solution also empowered Futaba's workforce through tailored user training, transforming potential vulnerabilities into proactive defenders of their network. The phased approach enabled Futaba to spread out investments, making budget planning predictable while addressing immediate risks.

To enhance Futaba's overall cyber defences, CyberLab introduced a layered security framework with Sophos solutions at its core. Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR) provided 24/7 protection with expert-led threat hunting, acting as an extension of Futaba's IT team. Sophos Network Detection and Response (NDR) offered critical visibility across IoT-heavy manufacturing environments, identifying potential threats within their operational technology. Additionally, CyberLab integrated Sophos MDR with third-party firewall logs through the Sophos MDR Firewall Integration Pack, enhancing network visibility and response times.

To mitigate the impact of potential incidents, the Sophos MDR Backup and Recovery Pack was deployed, ensuring rapid restoration after disruptions like ransomware attacks. Finally, an Incident Response Retainer provided Futaba with on-demand access to Sophos experts for immediate containment and recovery during a crisis.

The Outcome

By implementing these solutions, Futaba achieved a significant transformation in their cyber security posture. Sophos Managed Detection and Response (MDR) provided 24/7 threat detection and response, ensuring continuous protection against evolving cyber threats. This proactive defence minimised the risk of downtime and safeguarded operational continuity, a critical factor in Futaba's manufacturing environment.

The addition of Sophos Network Detection and Response (NDR) significantly enhanced network visibility, particularly in Futaba's IoT- and OT-rich infrastructure. This added layer of security ensured that threats within these specialised environments were identified and mitigated before causing disruption. With these advanced solutions in place, Futaba's IT Manager, Matt, was able to shift focus from daily threat management to more strategic initiatives, driving efficiency and long-term planning for the business.

Moreover, the Incident Response Retainer brought Futaba peace of mind by ensuring they were always ready to respond rapidly and effectively to any cyber incidents. Combined with a phased, cost-effective approach to security implementation, Futaba achieved enterprise-grade protection without the substantial expense of building and maintaining an in-house SOC. The result was a robust and scalable cyber defence strategy that not only addressed immediate threats but also empowered Futaba to stay resilient in the face of future challenges.



“CyberLab’s managed services have been a game-changer for us. They’ve allowed me to focus on the bigger picture while knowing our operations are secure around the clock. Their proactive approach and tailored solutions have provided us with the peace of mind to continue delivering excellence to our customers.”

- Matt Cooper, IT Manager at Futaba

“As a business committed to delivering exceptional quality and reliability to our customers, ensuring the continuity of our operations is paramount. CyberLab’s expertise in safeguarding our organisation against evolving cyber threats has been instrumental in protecting our reputation and maintaining our competitive edge. Their tailored solutions give us the confidence to focus on growth, innovation, and excellence.”

- Phil Ord, Managing Director of Futaba

Conclusion

CyberLab’s tailored solutions have enabled Futaba to safeguard their manufacturing operations and maintain trust within their supply chain. Starting with a thorough penetration test, CyberLab identified critical vulnerabilities and laid the groundwork for a phased, cost-effective security approach. Through CyberLab Control, Futaba addressed user training, vulnerability testing, and patch management, empowering their team to mitigate risks proactively.

By integrating Sophos’s advanced technology, Futaba gained 24/7 threat protection, enhanced network visibility, and incident readiness. This comprehensive strategy has allowed Futaba to confidently navigate the evolving threat landscape while focusing on delivering quality and innovation in the manufacturing industry.

Our People. Our Platform. Protects You.

CyberLab is a specialist cyber security company that provides a wide range of security solutions and services.

Your one-stop cyber security advisor, the CyberLab team is equipped with the right technology, knowledge, and expertise to help businesses of all sizes, including large public sector organisations.

By leveraging world-class technology, decades of experience, and our vendor partnerships, we have helped to secure thousands of organisations across the UK.

Our unique Detect, Protect, Support approach makes us the perfect partner to review and reinforce your cyber security defences.



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