



Security Is a Team Sport: How IT and Marketing Collaborate to Build a Stronger Nonprofit Security Culture

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Session Roadmap

- Why security matters
- Why staff behavior is central
- What IT brings
- What marketing brings
- What Propel has tried
- What you can do



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Meet Your Presenters!



Andrea Sanow
she/her
Marketing & Communications Director



Dave Nozal
he/him
Director of Information Technology



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About Propel Nonprofits

Propel Nonprofits is a 501(c)3 and Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) that exclusively serves nonprofit organizations.

Our Mission
Propel Nonprofits' mission is to fuel the impact and effectiveness of nonprofits with guidance, expertise, and capital. This mission is in service to a vision of a diverse network of mission-driven nonprofits building a healthy, vibrant, and more just community.

Our Org

- 30 people
- Hybrid environment

Accounting & Finance Services

Lending

Strategic Consulting

Trainings

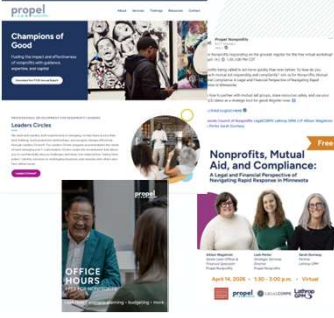




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Propel's Brand

- Propel Nonprofits is:
 - Authentic
 - Approachable
 - Dependable
 - Trustworthy
 - Passionate about nonprofits
- Our Brand is
 - Shaped by our team
 - Shaped by the client experience
 - Responsive to the sector




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Why We Care About Cybersecurity

- Credibility
- Mission Impact & Delivery
- Operations
- Finances
- Capacity
- Increased scrutiny & requirements from funders/regulators
- When staff understand their role in security, the organization is better positioned to serve clients and partners consistently.

Handout question: Why does your organization care about cybersecurity?



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From IT Compliance to Behavior Change

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Risks are increasing

From **data breaches** to **ransomware** and **phishing scams** nonprofit leaders need to develop:

- Strong systems
- Comprehensive policies
- Robust training and detection processes
- Information Security Cultures

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Why are we talking about this?

Nonprofits were the second-most targeted sector among Okta customers, behind the energy, mining, oil, and gas sector.

Nonprofits represent low risk and high reward for attackers because nonprofits often lack full resourcing to monitor and remediate attacks.

Attackers know nonprofits are critical infrastructure to society and are backed by \$557 billion in charitable donations.

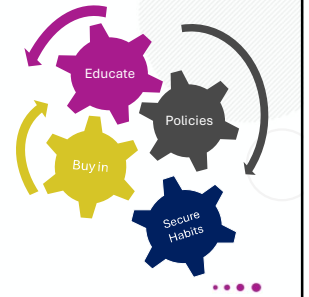
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- Okta: Nonprofits at Work 2025

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Cybersecurity is not just an IT problem

- NIST Cyber Security Framework 2.0 – This is an enterprise risk
- Move from “IT owns security” to “everyone has a role.”
- Re-framing security as a “life skill”



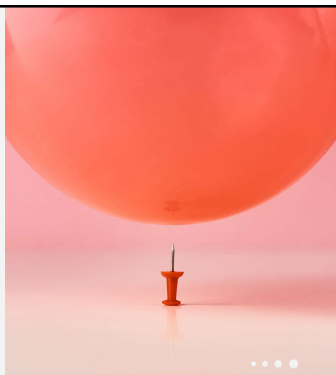
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The Human Challenge

- Various risk tolerance
- Policies are great, but they don't immediately change behavior
- Adoption requires:
 - Clarity
 - Repetition
 - Relevance
 - **Trust**
 - Staff-centered communications

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Build the IT-Marketing Partnership

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Half the Job Is Change Management

- Technical controls only work when people adopt them.
- Adoption relies on how well people understand what is being asked, and what the opportunities and risks are
- This is where our partnership thrives!
 - Marketing helps decipher: **audience, relevance, repetition, channels, and trust.**

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Two Disciplines + Shared Goal

IT

- Defines risks, guardrails, tools, and required behaviors

Marketing

- Translates risks into accessible language and motivating messages

Shared Goal

- Listen, test, reinforce, and improve

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What We Tried at Propel

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Shared Goal: Reduce Risk Without Fear

- No Shame!
- Provide trainings
- Reward positive behaviors
- Celebrate wins
- Discuss mistakes
- Practice
- How MARCOMM supports communicating about cybersecurity
 - Asks clarifying questions about audience, timeline, content
 - Partners in branding and delivery

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Creating an Internal Security Brand:

- Find ways for staff to participate
- 'Human Firewall'
- Reporting systems
- Advisory group
- Rewards positive behaviors

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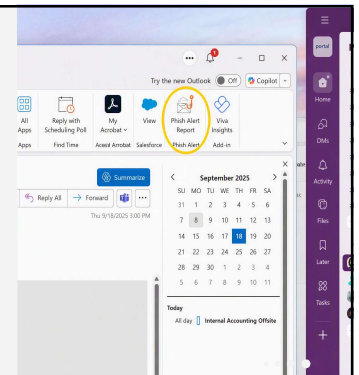
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Example: KnowBe4

- Choosing Relevant Trainings
- Using the Phish Report button
- Monthly Meetings IT rewards are given for 'no clicks'
- Ice Cream Parties for everyone being caught up w/ trainings

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Example: Communication

- Leverage monthly newsletters to communicate changes well in advance
- Slack channels
 - IT announcements/training
 - Copilot wins/losses
- Monthly meetings with MarComm to discuss communication strategies
- 1:1s

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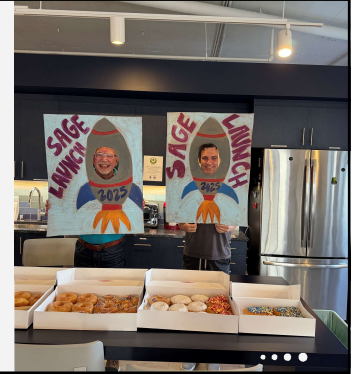


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Example: Change Management

- Software/Procedures/Policies
- Identify the stakeholders
 - Champions
 - Primary
 - Secondary
 - Whole Org
- How and when do we need to communicate with each group?
- Kickoff/celebration

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Example: Tabletop exercises

- Annual Event
- Identify a business interruption/disaster (not just IT)
- Leadership and staff walk through a scenario together
 - What ifs
 - Identify strengths/gaps
 - Compile questions
 - Assess our readiness

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Structures That Support Culture

- Super users
- Monthly MARCOMM + IT check ins
- Tabletop exercises
- Staff testimonials
- Regular touch points that keep security visible beyond once-a-year trainings
- External: insurance, auditors (financial, security, other)

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How You Can Start

- Befriend your IT or MARCOMM counterpart
- Assess your inventory: hardware, data, software
- Articulate a goal
- Implement training and detection
- Develop deliberate systems to reinforce the goals
- Communicate Communicate Communicate
- Schedule a meeting for Marketing & IT monthly
- Include staff in training and policy development
- Celebrate wins often

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Thank you!



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