

Case Study

BNBuilders and KnowBe4 Make Security Part of Daily Business Operations

**Industry**

Construction

LocationSeattle,
Washington, USA**Challenge**

Securing critical email and digital communications across a dispersed environment with a diverse workforce

BNBuilders is a U.S.-based general contracting company specializing in complex commercial construction projects across healthcare, education, life sciences and technology sectors. With a growing workforce that spans offices, job sites and field operations, the company operates in a fast-paced, dispersed environment where email and digital communication are critical to daily work.

As the business expanded, so did its exposure to cyber threats. Rather than wait for an incident, BNBuilders made an early decision to invest in security awareness as a core part of its operational strategy.

“We had security controls like filters and monitoring, but what was missing was something that touched our employees directly,” says Anthony Albano, IT Director at BNBuilders. “Security awareness communication at the time was more like reactive emails and reminders, or conversations in the hall. There was no formal way to train people on cybersecurity threats.”

That was seven years ago when BNBuilders was much smaller. As the company scaled from a few hundred employees to more than 1,000, that informal security awareness approach no longer worked. Albano understood that a fast-growing company could not rely on one-off communication for something as important as preventing cyber threats. He knew that he needed to build a security awareness program

At a Glance

- ▶ Reduced Phish-prone™ Percentage from 7.9% to 4.9%
- ▶ Lowered overall risk score from 36 to 25
- ▶ 130 reported emails per week (nearly 7,000 per year) via Phish Alert Button
- ▶ Zero compromises during a large-scale phishing campaign due to user training and awareness



that could keep pace with company growth, resonate with a non-technical workforce, drive real behavior change, and, ultimately, be part of the day-to-day company culture.

A Multi-Pronged Approach

After researching the competitive field, Albano found KnowBe4. “I liked that we could not only train our employees, but test their knowledge with simulated phishing tests,” Albano says.

As Albano pitched the idea to the executive team, not everyone was on board. One executive understood the need for training, but was concerned about the simulated phishing tests. “Our CFO worried that we were tricking people,” Albano says. “He was not an immediate yes, but after walking him through the process, the value of the KnowBe4 simulated phishing testing registered for him and he agreed to proceed.”

“Our CFO worried that we were tricking people...but after walking him through the process, the value of the KnowBe4 simulated phishing testing registered for him and he agreed to proceed.”

–Anthony Albano, IT Director, BNBuilders

Albano introduced KnowBe4’s AI-Native Security Awareness Training as the foundation of BNBuilders’ awareness program. Over time, as the SAT program matured and he came to value KnowBe4 more, he expanded Builders’ use to include PhishER Plus, SecurityCoach and AI Defense Agents (AIDA), building a layered, integrated program.

“KnowBe4 was very organized from the start,” Albano says. “The onboarding, campaigns and materials to help build policies and communicate internally were really strong and easy to use. It helped us not just implement the system, but understand how to run it well.”

As the program matured, responsibility for the day-to-day operations of KnowBe4 transitioned to Morgan Tickner, Information Security Specialist.

“If there’s one thing that’s core to what I do here, it’s KnowBe4,” Tickner says. “It’s something we use every single day. We’ve embedded it across the organization from onboarding to ongoing training to executive reporting.”

Building a Program That Scales

Albano and Tickner have worked with KnowBe4 to design BNBuilders' SAT program so that it starts on day one. Every new employee completes foundational training and learns how to report suspicious emails using the **Phish Alert Button** by simply clicking a small hook icon in the email client.

Phishing simulations run year-round, with a tiered model that adjusts difficulty based on user performance. Beginners are tested weekly, while more advanced users receive increasingly sophisticated simulations on a fortnightly basis.

"We've expanded from a handful of categories to around 20 different scenarios," Tickner says.

"We're using real-world examples that our users see in their everyday work. Things like shipping notices, subcontractor emails or internal requests. The specificity KnowBe4 allows makes the phishing simulations seem real, which makes them more effective."

Training is reinforced in multiple ways. Quarterly campaigns offer short-form content and incentives, including raffles and prizes. Participation has continued to grow, with webinar attendance increasing from under 100 employees to more than 250.

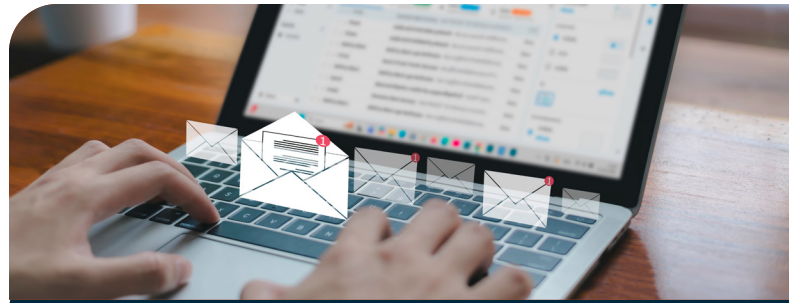
At the same time, BNBuilders maintains a mandatory annual training requirement to ensure all employees stay current as threats evolve.

Driving Measurable Improvement

The results reflect both consistency and increasing sophistication. Over time, BNBuilders reduced its overall Phish-prone™ Percentage — the likelihood that a user will click a phishing email — from 7.9% in 2023 to 4.9% today, even as testing has become significantly tougher.

"We expected that our Phish-prone™ Percentage would go up as we made the simulated tests harder, but they haven't," Tickner says. "The tests are 10 times more difficult than they used to be and we've still seen an impressive reduction in how often a user clicks. That speaks to how effective KnowBe4 trainings are and how our users actually pay attention and learn."

The company also tracks overall risk using KnowBe4's reporting, which combines training performance and phishing simulation data into a measurable score. "Over time, KnowBe4 has helped



"I couldn't even calculate how much time the combination of Phish Alert Button, PhishER Plus and PhishRIP saves us. There's no way we could handle that volume manually."

– Morgan Tickner,
Information Security Specialist, BNBuilders

us reduce our risk score from 36 to 25, putting us in a lower risk category," Tickner says. "This helps us identify where to focus and who needs support."

Turning Employees into a Security Asset

Because BNBuilders uses a variety of KnowBe4 products, Albano and Tickner have been able to effectively track how employees are engaging with their security awareness work.

Today, employees report an average of 130 suspicious emails per week using the Phish Alert Button, totaling nearly 7,000 emails annually. PhishER Plus fields those reported messages and enables the team to triage and respond efficiently. Clean emails are automatically resolved, while confirmed threats can be removed from all inboxes using PhishRIP, an email quarantine feature within PhishER Plus that allows for automatic, organization-wide removal of malicious emails from corporate mailboxes.

"I couldn't even calculate how much time the combination of Phish Alert Button, PhishER Plus and PhishRIP saves us," Tickner says. "There's no way we could handle that volume manually."

Albano and Tickner have worked diligently to help employees understand that their commitment to security awareness isn't just personal; it helps the whole company.

This mindset has had a measurable impact in 2025 when the company experienced a large-scale, legitimate phishing campaign that delivered tens of thousands of malicious emails to users.

“Because KnowBe4 had trained our users so well, we experienced zero successful compromises during this event,” Tickner says. “Our users thought it was just more testing and did what they have been trained to do – be aware, do not click, and report.”

Albano chimed in, “There was ample opportunity for something to go wrong, but it didn’t. KnowBe4 did its job and so did our users.”

“Together with KnowBe4, we’ve built something that grows with us and that’s made a real difference in our business.”

– Morgan Tickner,
Information Security Specialist, BNBuilders

Making Security Relevant to the Business

For BNBuilders, making security relevant to its diverse workforce is important.

“We can’t ask someone in the field to sit through a 45-minute training,” Tickner says. “That’s not realistic.”

With AIDA, training is now targeted and concise. When users fail a phishing simulation, they receive short, tailored content, often under five minutes, focused on the specific behavior that needs correction.

“AIDA makes the training more effective because it’s relevant to that particular user and their experience,” Albano says. “That personalization makes people more receptive and helps them learn.”

According to Tickner, AIDA mirrors what attackers are actually doing, which helps the team keep pace with changing threats without increasing administrative overhead.

Executive Buy-In and Cultural Impact

Executive support has played a key role in the KnowBe4 program’s success. Initial skepticism gave way to strong advocacy, with leadership actively reinforcing participation and accountability.

“Our CFO, who was initially concerned that the simulated phishing might feel like we were tricking employees, has actually become one of our biggest supporters,” Albano says.

Security awareness is now woven into the broader company culture. Whether it’s in the office, on a job site or in internal communications, BNBuilders reinforces cyber security as a shared responsibility.

“We’re a construction company that is committed to safety practices. KnowBe4 has helped our users recognize the importance of cybersecurity, too,” Albano says. “We think about KnowBe4 like digital PPE. You wouldn’t go onto a job site without a hard hat. This is the same idea...you don’t go online without being prepared to identify threats.”

A Long-Term Partnership

After nearly a decade of use and expansion across multiple products, BNBuilders sees KnowBe4 as more than a tool.

“There’s no comparison,” Tickner says. “From SAT to PhishER to AIDA, everything works together. KnowBe4 is easy to manage, and it actually engages people and gives us results.”

For BNBuilders, the value comes from consistency, flexibility and partnership.

“Together with KnowBe4, we’ve built something that grows with us and that’s made a real difference in our business,” Tickner says.



KnowBe4, Inc. | 33 N Garden Ave, Suite 1200, Clearwater, FL 33755
855-KNOWBE4 (566-9234) | www.KnowBe4.com | Sales@KnowBe4.com

Other product and company names mentioned herein may be trademarks and/or registered trademarks of their respective companies.