

## HEALTHCARE CASE STUDY

# Morphisec Helps Houston Eye Associates Stay Agile Against Attacks

## Customer

Houston Eye Associates is the largest ophthalmology practice in Texas with 24 locations, 60 doctors, 600 employees, and 1,200 endpoints. In business for more than 5 years, the company does upwards of \$100 million in revenue annually through a combination of healthcare services and eye-ware sales.

## Challenge

Tom Merkle serves as the CIO for Houston Eye Associates. He leads a help desk team, has some support staff, and relies on a SOC provider to analyze his logs, but Tom is otherwise the only one responsible for cybersecurity. When something goes wrong, he's the first one to hear about it and the only one to respond.

With so much responsibility on his shoulders, Tom has a strong incentive to prevent attacks as early and often as possible. No small feat. "I kept seeing new vulnerabilities appear," Tom says, "And more and more they were being exploited before the vendors could patch them." Realizing how vulnerable he was to zero-day attacks, he went searching for a solution...and then the Covid-19 pandemic started.




## INDUSTRY

Healthcare



## ENVIRONMENT

- 1,200 endpoints running on Windows
- 600 employees spread across 24 locations
- CIO supplemented by help desk and basic support staff

## CHALLENGES

-  Defending against increasing zero-day threats using signature-based defenses
-  Managing cybersecurity as a one-person operation
-  Staying secure while the Covid-19 pandemic disrupted operations and fostered new threats

## SOLUTION

-  Deploy Morphisec and Windows Defender AV
-  Protect the entire enterprise from advanced attacks without adding to the IT burden

## Challenge cont.

Like so many other businesses, Houston Eye Associates was thrown into turmoil by the pandemic. The company saw around \$8 million in business disappear, leading to belt-tightening everywhere. Tom also started noticing a huge rise in phishing attacks disguised as information about Covid. The organization faced threats both medical and digital, and each made the other one harder.

"I was losing a lot of sleep wondering when we were going to get hammered." Tom admits. But with shrinking revenues, there was no enthusiasm to hire security professionals or spend on expensive solutions. Tom saw only one option: invest in whatever tool could deliver the most protection for the least cost.

*"I told them, you've already approved a \$2 million IT budget for this year. I won't ask you for another cent if you will approve the cost of Morphisec."*

— Tom Merkle, CIO,  
Houston Eye Associates

## Solution

Tom and the sales team at Morphisec connected in late 2019. Tom was eager to explore how Morphisec could complement his security strategy, and he knew the cost fit comfortably into his budget. But the pandemic changed his plans. He went to the board to make the case for additional funding so he could implement Morphisec immediately.

Morphisec fit organically into Tom's existing cybersecurity strategy. As essentially a one-person operation, Tom relied on layered protection supplied by multiple vendors – for antivirus, EDR, endpoint protection etc. – who could enlist his input only when it was absolutely necessary. Since Morphisec randomizes the application memory, it successfully prevents attacks and takes the pressure of response and remediation off Tom's shoulders.

The breach prevention that Morphisec deploys was also the ideal solution for the pandemic. Cyber attacks spiked throughout 2020, and hackers experimented with new attack types and exploit strategies. Signature-based protections couldn't thwart these novel attacks. Morphisec, on the other hand, makes the memory unreachable to old, new, simple, and sophisticated attacks alike.

## Results

Cyber attacks added insult to injury at so many companies fighting to survive the pandemic, but not Houston Eye Associates. They experienced no significant cyber incidents in 2020 despite the elevated threat level and the complications created by remote work.

Tom estimates he receives around 5 alerts a week from Morphisec. But they're just updates: the threats have already been identified and neutralized without needing Tom's input. "I feel like you're my last line of defense," he says, which couldn't be more important in a situation with few security

resources (and lots of valuable data) facing off against the most aggressive cyber attacks in history.

With Morphisec preventing so many threats, Tom has begun to reconsider his layered cybersecurity strategy. Microsoft Defender offers the same level of signature-based protection as solutions Tom pays for, except it's free and already installed on every endpoint. Plus, it works seamlessly in conjunction with Morphisec, forming a dual-layer defense that consolidates the number of solutions in play while multiplying the level protection.

*"A layered defense consisting of AMTD obstacles and deceptions significantly elevates an organization's security posture"*  
Get your complimentary report **here**.

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Tech Innovators in Automated Moving Target Defense

## About Morphisec

Morphisec provides prevention-first security against the most advanced threats to stop the attacks that others don't, from endpoint to the cloud. Morphisec's software is powered by Automated Moving Target Defense (AMTD) technology, the next evolution of cybersecurity. AMTD stops ransomware, supply chain attacks, zero-days, and other advanced attacks. AMTD provides an ultra-lightweight, Defense-in-Depth security layer to augment solutions like NGAV, EPP and EDR/XDR. We close their runtime memory security gap against the undetectable cyberattacks with no performance impact or extra staff needed. Over 5,000 organizations trust Morphisec to protect nine million Windows and Linux servers, workloads, and endpoints. Morphisec stops thousands of advanced attacks daily at Lenovo/Motorola, TruGreen, Covenant Health, Citizens Medical Center, and many more.

**Schedule a demo now: [morphisec.com/demo](https://morphisec.com/demo)**