Submission for the Larry L. Sautter Award for Innovation in Information Technology - 2021

Project Title: UC Cyber Security Summit

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Project Leaders

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Project Team

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Project Summary:

The UC Cyber Security Summit is a biannual summit to encourage collaboration in the UC community interested in cybersecurity. It has been held in person for years, but due to the pandemic, our planning team converted the event into a virtual one within 25 days. As one of the first, if not first, big UC virtual event during the pandemic, we set a standard and paved the way of how networking and community building could still occur during the pandemic. Thanks to our process and our team's dedication, the virtual transformation was not only a success, it also allowed us to quadruple our audience to 426 attendees at crucial time in the field of cybersecurity preparedness. Our successful and innovative response to a true challenge ended up improving opportunities for learning, sharing, and collaboration among professionals at UC. After the first event, we have continued to evolve and maintain the engagement in our Summits. Additionally, based on our experience with this event, we were able to provide invaluable guidance and expertise to other UC Locations who were working on their own virtual events, further enhancing and increasing collaboration between UC Locations.

Project Narrative

For many years, the UC Cyber-Risk Coordination Center (C3) team coordinated the biannual UC Cyber Security Summit, attended by numerous individuals from all UCs and California's higher education institutions. The event promotes collaboration between professionals of numerous disciplines interested in cybersecurity through teamwork and learning opportunities with industry leaders and experts. In March of 2020, our summit planning team quickly transformed the event to a virtual one once news of the severity of the pandemic became clear. With only 25 days to prepare, the team acted swiftly and

effectively to select a digital platform and offer new kinds of opportunities for learning and collaboration. The April 2020 Summit was an astounding success, attracting nearly four times as many attendees and reducing the average cost per attendee. Since then, we have hosted two more successful virtual events. C3 plans to continue using the online and in-person format in the future, building on what we have learned during this challenging time in order to continue to enhance learning and collaboration among UC's cybersecurity professionals.

Describes the problem being solved and the project goals

As many organizations cancelled in-person events due to the pandemic, we decided instead to organize a virtual event with an even larger audience because of the incredible value of our topic in general and specifically its value considering the rapid transition to remote work that the pandemic required. We knew that we could meet our longstanding goal of building community, even if we had to do so in a new way. The project goal was to chart this new path to digital collaboration.

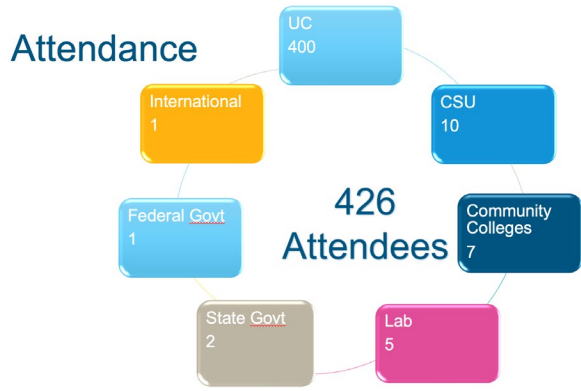## Emphasizes the solution and innovation, rather than technical detail

Our team vetted dozens of virtual platforms quickly to find a digital solution that offered the most opportunities for customization, collaboration and ideal content delivery. We knew that we could enhance attendee engagement through gamification and opportunities for interaction such as ice breakers and live music. We also offered sponsors the chance to engage as thought leaders, informing our attendees about the latest challenges due to the rapidly changing cybersecurity landscape. Our speakers agreed to pivot with us to the virtual event learning how to use various engagement tools to maintain the audience's attention.

Tells how the solution has impacted customers/users

The digital shift has broadened the reach of our summit and enhanced communication between UC leaders and colleagues. It also allowed UC professionals to learn more about each campus's pandemic challenges and solutions.

Explains how project success was measured

Our audience size grew tremendously, but we knew that size was not the only measure of success. We also measure our success by surveying attendees and responding to their feedback. Over the course of the last three virtual events, we have added more opportunities for engagement, more panel discussions with UC cybersecurity leaders, and enhanced platform features, such as polls and moderated chats and tradeshow features for our generous sponsors.

Attendance

UC
400

International
1

CSU
10

Federal Govt
1

426
Attendees

Community
Colleges
7

State Govt
2

Lab
5

Overall Satisfaction

• 206 responses of 426 attendees

95.6%
were **very satisfied** or **satisfied** with the overall event

92%
are **extremely likely** or **likely** to **attend future** Summits

91%
are **extremely likely** or **likely** to **recommend** our Summits to a colleague

*Over half were **first time** or **attendees** of the Summit

Platform and Engagement

96%
were **very satisfied** or **satisfied** with the registration process

82%
were **very satisfied** or **satisfied** with the Summit page

92%
were **very satisfied** or **satisfied** with the Zoom webinar experience

WHAT ATTENDEES ARE SAYING

The talks were very informative. I learned about topics, like social engineering, that help me enhance my personal security, too.

I really appreciated the variety and flexibility of this virtual format.

The virtual format was cool. The agenda and sessions were easy to find and the games kept us engaged.

I enjoyed networking and chatting with my colleagues.

WHAT ATTENDEES ARE SAYING

I truly enjoyed the day with the mix of topics interspersed with the interactive games.

Great selection of speakers, outstanding remote technical delivery, and overall a really fun Summit.

This was the best virtual event I have been to yet. Thank you and the team for the great program.

The topics were 110% appropriate to my work and they were interesting and engaging.

Highlights collaborations with other locations, departments, or teams

Our Summit has always been a collaboration across UC locations, and the importance of working together has never been more obvious than during a global pandemic. For our virtual summits, our team and the speakers were from many different UC Locations. This year, each campus had specific challenges. Healthcare providers and medical researchers experienced cybersecurity problems that differed from those of educators focused on remote and secure learning. We knew, however, that, as different as these challenges might be, we would all learn by discussing our innovative solutions together. This is why our virtual events have offered increasing opportunities for UC-led panel discussions and systemwide chats on valuable topics that affected every member of our community.

Provides the timeframe of deployment

We only had 25 days to completely transform the in-person summit into a virtual one. This included selecting the appropriate team members who were then tasked with choosing the correct virtual platform and configuring it from scratch, confirming the speakers and sponsors for the event, selecting the appropriate methods of communications and much, much more.

Briefly describes the technology utilized

We wanted to use technologies that were familiar to our audience along with intuitive new tools which delivered useful features. We assessed multiple options for virtual platforms and chose an option that allowed us to customize it for the best possible and accessible experience for our attendees. Technologies included event platform software and licenses, Zoom webinar and meeting license, email, webpages, chat, digital activities for gamification, etc.

Optional: Provides relevant screenshots or urls (included in the 5 page limit)

First Virtual Summit Spring 2020 (link)
Spring 2020 Program (link)

THE 9TH BIANNUAL

CYBER SECURITY SUMMIT

⊘ Top Industry Leaders
⊘ UC Experts
⊘ Unique Collaboration

April 15, 2020

[Fall Summit of 2020 (link)](#)
[Fall 2020 Program (link)](#)

THE 10TH BIANNUAL

CYBER SECURITY SUMMIT

Top Industry Leaders
UC Experts
Unique Collaboration

October 14, 2020

[Spring Summit 2021 (link)](#)
[Spring 2021 Program (link)](#)

THE 11TH BIANNUAL

CYBER SECURITY SUMMIT

› Top Industry Leaders
› UC Experts
› Unique Collaboration

April 14, 2021