



# Rebuilding Defenses

One Step Secure IT Rebuilds  
LA Business Journal's Digital  
Defenses After Ransomware  
Nightmare

"It was a morning I'll never forget," recalls Fabian Avellaneda, Executive Assistant to the Publisher & CEO of the Los Angeles Business Journal (LABJ). On a frantic Friday in October 2022, he walked into the office to find chaos: "The internet was down, we were essentially locked out of our system."

A ransomware attack had struck the heart of LABJ, a leading voice in Greater Los Angeles business news. An unsuspecting accounting team member had clicked a malicious email link, unleashing attackers who held critical data hostage and demanded a ransom.

With the FBI and Homeland Security involved, the crisis exposed the vulnerabilities of LABJ's outdated PC-based systems and physical servers, highlighting the shortcomings of their former IT provider.

"I believe there was something our previous IT company could have done to prevent this," Fabian says, his frustration evident.

Desperate for a solution, LABJ turned to One Step Secure IT to rebuild its defenses and secure its future.

## Facing the Fallout: A Call for Change

The ransomware attack was a wake-up call. LABJ's physical servers and desktops were relics, vulnerable to modern threats.

Their previous provider had "dropped the ball," as Fabian puts it, failing to implement robust defenses. They sought a managed service provider with significant expertise in cybersecurity.

Referred by their cyber liability insurance provider, LABJ partnered with One Step Secure IT. The goal was clear: modernize LABJ's infrastructure, migrate to a secure Apple environment, and exceed their insurance provider's standards with industry best practices.

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—Fabian Avellaneda, Executive Assistant at LABJ

## Crafting a Secure Future: One Step's Solution

Beginning in spring 2023, One Step led a careful migration to a more secure IT network, evaluating LABJ's needs and implementing tools to boost both efficiency and security. The partnership transformed LABJ's operations. Their strategy included:

### Transition to Apple and Cloud

One Step replaced outdated PCs and servers with MacBooks and a cloud-based infrastructure, eliminating vulnerabilities and improving scalability.

"The silver lining of the attack is that it forced us to modernize," Fabian notes. "With the assistance of One Step, we were able to get all of our staff members on MacBooks. We are now on the cloud, which is also more secure."

### Fortified Cybersecurity

With CISSP-certified experts, One Step implemented robust protections, including simulated phishing attacks and training, emphasizing the importance of ongoing vigilance.

### Dedicated Support

LABJ works with a dedicated network administrator, Peyton Hitchcock, who is familiar with their technology and maintains smooth and secure operations.

"As office manager, I often input a lot of tickets on behalf of the company," Fabian says. "Peyton is always very responsive and helpful when we need him."

### Proactive Collaboration

Regular meetings with One Step's leadership, including Tim Derrickson, ensured transparency in their partnership.

"Tim will have meetings, once every quarter, if not more, with my publisher and myself just to go over the state of things," Fabian says, appreciating the communication.

## A New Era: Security and Confidence Restored

"With One Step's help, I do feel better in regards to security," Fabian shares. "I've learned a few things from Peyton along the way."

### Streamlined Workflows

MacBooks and cloud access empowered staff to work efficiently anywhere, modernizing LABJ's operations.

### Proactive Partnership

Quarterly Security Briefings with One Step's team address ticket trends and potential issues. "That communication is something we didn't necessarily always have with our old company," Fabian notes.

### Empowered Staff

The attack left LABJ shaken and uneasy, but One Step's training has fostered a culture of vigilance. "We're all constantly thinking about cybersecurity. 'That email doesn't look right' or 'I'm going to pick up the phone to make sure this is legitimate,'" Fabian explains.

## Building Resilience: A Lasting Partnership

The ransomware attack could have been LABJ's undoing, but One Step Secure IT transformed it into a turning point. By guiding LABJ to a secure, cloud-based Apple system, they rebuilt trust and operational strength.

"Our experience has been very positive," Fabian reflects, his confidence in LABJ's digital future restored. With One Step Secure IT as their partner, LABJ now stands stronger with a fortified IT foundation and a vigilant team.

## Let's Start a Conversation About Your Digital Defenses

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