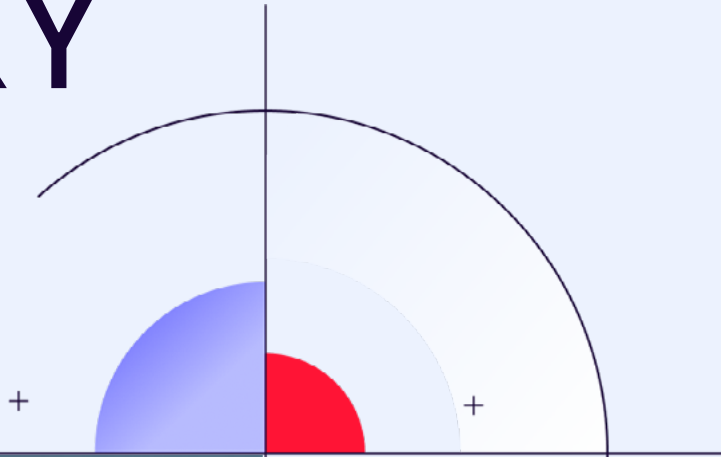# CUSTOMER STORY

LEEDS FC, ENHANCING CYBER RESILIENCE IN A HIGH-STAKES ENVIRONMENT

> " For us, the priority was finding a solution that delivered real value. While some clubs turned to established vendors, **we saw in Gatewatcher an emerging leader with strong capabilities.**

Graham Peck
Information Security Manager and DPO at Leeds United Football Club

#SPORT #NDR #HIGHVISIBILITYEVENT

GATEWATCHER

01

WHAT ARE THE SPECIFIC AND UNIQUE CYBERSECURITY CHALLENGES FACED BY LEEDS FC, AND HOW DO THEY IMPACT CLUB OPERATIONS?

Cybersecurity at Leeds FC extends far beyond matchdays. As a club, we manage **thousands of personal records, financial transactions, and a complex digital infrastructure** that spans everything from **ticketing platforms to stadium security systems.** With such a fragmented ecosystem, **securing every entry point is a major challenge.**

Protecting **fan and financial data** is a top priority. Our online ticketing and retail platforms handle vast amounts of **personal information and payment details,** making them a target for cybercriminals. A breach wouldn't just have **financial consequences** — it would severely damage trust and reputation.

Beyond digital risks, our **stadium infrastructure, access control systems, and third-party vendors** add further complexity. Whether it's **securing employee networks, preventing unauthorized access, or ensuring compliance with Premier League and UEFA cybersecurity regulations, we must constantly adapt to evolving threats** to keep the club's operations secure.

02

HOW DO HIGH-VISIBILITY EVENTS INCREASE CYBERSECURITY RISKS?

Matchdays bring a **surge in digital traffic and a heightened risk of cyber threats.** With **over 37,000 spectators in the stadium —soon increasing to 55,000 — our network must support secure access control, payment systems, and public Wi-Fi,** all while remaining resilient against potential attacks. Imagine **VAR failing** in a decisive match—delayed calls, confusion on the pitch, and a result questioned by millions. A cyberattack **on real-time data transmission could disrupt decisions, alter the game's outcome, and damage trust in the competition.**

The global reach of high-profile matches makes us an even bigger target. Cybercriminals may attempt to **interfere with live feeds, overload our digital infrastructure, or exploit vulnerabilities in ticketing and security systems.**

The sheer **diversity of people and devices connected** adds to the challenge, increasing the risk of **unauthorized access or data breaches.**

Cyber challenges_

Manage
a segmented infrastructure

Detect
targeted threats in real time

Control
temporary exposure spikes

Correlate
security signals effectively

Guarantee
data protection

Graham Peck_
Information Security Manager and DPO at Leeds United Football Club

03

HOW IS LEEDS FC'S NETWORK ARCHITECTURE STRUCTURED, AND HOW WAS THE NDR SOLUTION DEPLOYED?

Leeds FC operates a **segmented network, ensuring matchday operations and administrative systems remain separate.** The matchday network supports stadium operations, ticketing, and broadcasting, while the head office network handles financial transactions, internal communications, and club management. This separation is essential, as **administrative environments are more vulnerable to cyber threats due to human factors.**

When deploying NDR, our priority was **ensuring visibility across both environments without adding complexity.** Gatewatcher allowed us to **monitor traffic centrally** without interfering with daily operations. The deployment was straightforward because we use a **virtualized infrastructure** rather than relying on **physical appliances,** making it easier to scale, configure, and integrate into our existing security framework. This approach provided **real-time monitoring** across both networks, ensuring we could **detect and respond to threats efficiently.**

04

WHAT LED LEEDS FC TO IMPLEMENT AN NDR SOLUTION, AND HOW DOES IT INTEGRATE WITH EXISTING SECURITY TOOLS?

When we assessed our cybersecurity landscape, we realized that **the network was our biggest blind spot.** We had Crowdstrike endpoint protection (EDR) covering user devices and XDR securing servers **and applications,** but **network activity remained largely invisible.** Without a way to detect anomalies in real-time, we were vulnerable to **hidden threats moving undetected across our infrastructure.**

And also, I'll be honest—**cost was also an important factor in our decision.** Many NDR solutions come with a high price tag, often reflecting **brand recognition rather than functionality.**

While exploring various NDR solutions, what stood out about **Gatewatcher** was its **agility and adaptability.** Instead of forcing us into a predefined framework, they were **willing to evolve with us,** helping to address **specific vulnerabilities** as they emerged. For us, the priority was finding a solution that delivered real value. While some clubs turned to established vendors, **we saw in Gatewatcher an emerging leader with strong capabilities.**

For a football club, security needs to be **fast, seamless, and tailored to our unique environment.** Gatewatcher's NDR integrates smoothly with our existing security stack, **enhancing visibility without disrupting daily operations.**

"

When deploying NDR, our priority was **ensuring visibility across both environments without adding complexity.** _Gatewatcher allowed us to_ **monitor traffic centrally** _without interfering with daily operations._

HEAD OFFICE
Leeds, England

BUSINESS SECTOR
Professional Football Club

$196.1 million
revenue

37 000 *(expanding to 55 000)*
stadium capacity

DIVERSE ENVIRONMENTS
Stadium, training facilities, head office, online platforms

VARIED USER PROFILES
Fans, players, staff, media, partners, third-party vendors

GLOBAL EXPOSURE
International audience, cross-border data exchanges, remote access points

05

HOW DID LEEDS FC DEFINE SUCCESS WHEN IMPLEMENTING NDR, AND WHAT WERE THE KEY PRIORITIES?

When adopting NDR, our primary goal was **visibility.** Security tools are only effective if they provide **clear and actionable insights**—otherwise, they generate **too much noise,** overwhelming teams with false positives. The first step was ensuring that the system **could accurately learn our normal network behavior** before shifting into **active threat detection.**

Another key factor was **integration.** We didn't want an isolated tool; we needed an NDR solution that could **seamlessly export data and provide a unified view alongside our XDR, EDR, and other security tools.** Gatewatcher delivered on this by allowing us to **see all activity in one place**, eliminating the need to jump between multiple dashboards.

Success wasn't just about detecting threats—it was about doing so **efficiently and without disrupting daily operations.** By reducing unnecessary alerts and fine-tuning detection capabilities, we ensured that security teams focused only on **genuine risks** while keeping the club's network **secure and responsive.**

06

WHAT WERE YOUR MAIN GOALS WHEN IMPLEMENTING THE NDR SOLUTION, AND HOW DID YOU MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF ITS INTEGRATION?

Cybersecurity in football is evolving, and **network visibility is now as critical as traditional endpoint protection.** Clubs can no longer rely solely on antivirus and firewalls—securing the entire network is essential to protect sensitive data and ensure operational continuity. At Leeds FC, our goal was to **align our choice of cybersecurity solution with our security policies:** which basically includes **threat detection, incident response, and proactive monitoring.**

Gatewatcher's NDR has helped us achieve **clear, actionable insights.** Instead of drowning in alerts, we can **identify what is normal traffic and what isn't,** allowing us **to focus only on real threats.** Whether it's a genuine cyberattack or an unusual but legitimate access request from another club or external vendor, we can now **analyze and respond with precision.**

This approach **directly supports our security policies and aligns with best practices in the sports sector**, where **protecting sensitive data, ensuring operational continuity, and complying with cybersecurity regulations** are essential.

> "
> Success wasn't just about detecting threats—it was about doing so **efficiently and without disrupting daily operations.** By reducing unnecessary alerts and fine-tuning detection capabilities, we ensured that security teams focused only on **genuine risks** while keeping the club's network **secure and responsive.**

07

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANY ORGANIZATION CONSIDERING DEPLOYING AN NDR SOLUTION IN A HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT?

At Leeds FC, **NDR is an essential part of our XDR strategy,** ensuring a unified and proactive approach to cybersecurity. While XDR provides detection and response across endpoints and cloud environments, integrating NDR allows us to **extend that visibility to network activity,** ensuring no blind spots.

By adopting NDR within our XDR framework, we can **correlate endpoint, cloud, and network data,** creating a **cohesive security ecosystem.** This seamless integration allows us to detect and neutralize threats faster, ensuring our entire infrastructure remains protected, from internal systems to matchday operations.

Want to *learn more ?*

Contact us today →

BENEFITS_

Securing a segmented ecosystem
provides real-time monitoring across stadiums, training centers, head offices, and online platforms.

Managing high-profile event risks
Detects and neutralizes threats targeting matchdays, live broadcasts, and mass fan connectivity.

Controlling temporary exposure spikes
Tracks and analyzes every connected device and network interaction during events.

Enhancing visibility on targeted threats
Identifies stealthy attacks exploiting vulnerabilities in ticketing, payments, and media feeds.

Correlating security signals efficiently
Unifies alerts across IT, OT, and operational systems to accelerate threat detection.

Reducing operational disruption
Adapts to high-traffic, high-stakes environments without slowing down performance.

Easy as_

◎ NDR_   ◉ CTI_   ⚬ TAP_   ◉ GEN AI_   ◎ DEEP VISIBILITY_

Want to *learn more?*