

The No-Nonsense Buyer's Guide for Security Awareness Training

Think outside the compliance checkbox and learn how to choose an SAT solution that drives meaningful change and minimizes human risk across your organization.



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Intro

As digital threats evolve, reducing human risk is more important than ever

There's a natural instinct to avoid threatening scenarios. The irony is that remaining secure demands the opposite: a constant readiness to face the very threats we'd prefer to avoid.

As a decision maker for your organization, you know this well. But no matter how many experts or trusted cybersecurity tools you have, there's still one group that can inadvertently open the gates to unwanted threat actors: your own people.



Your people are smart, but they're not immune

For your organization to thrive, you need capable employees. After all, they're your source for great ideas, innovation, and ingenuity. However, they're also human. And humans make mistakes. Hackers know this all too well.

This is why your people must become your first line of defense. But to do this, they need to be trained on the real-world threats actually targeting them.

That's where the right security awareness training (SAT) program can make a difference.



Reduce risk with training built by and for humans

Unfortunately, most SAT programs weren't designed to reduce human risk. Some only exist to let you check a box for compliance (and it shows!). Long, tiresome content. Complex management demands. Lack of relevance to today's threats. These SAT programs only serve to frustrate your admins, bore your learners, and, worst of all, leave your organization exposed.

That's why this eBook exists. It'll help you cut through the noise and select a SAT solution that can drive real security outcomes.

The following pages will help you understand what separates ineffective training from impactful programs, how to build a culture around security, and how to find a solution that uses threat intelligence, expert-backed content, and personalized, memorable reinforcement to reduce human risk.

60%
of human-related
breaches involved
the human element in
2024, remaining the
same as 2023²

²Verizon. 2025 Data Breach Investigations Report. Retrieved from <https://www.verizon.com/business/resources/reports/dbir/>

What is security awareness training (SAT)?

No business wants to fall prey to malicious hackers. The financial burdens alone can debilitate your entire operation. And that's why SAT exists.

The overall goal of a SAT program is to keep your employees and organization secure. The underlying benefit, however, is demonstrating compliance. While content is different from program to program, most are generally similar, requiring your employees to watch scripted videos, study generic presentations, and take tests on "cyber hygiene."

At their core, SAT programs are designed to help you:



Educate your employees to spot phishing and other social engineering tactics



Reduce your organization's exposure to cyber threats



Stay compliant with cyber insurance stipulations

These are all worthwhile goals in helping your organization thrive amidst ever-evolving cyber threats. But achieving these outcomes can feel like a pipe dream. That's because of one unfortunate truth about most SAT programs: **they don't work!**

So what separates an effective solution from an ineffective one? Before diving into what an impactful SAT program can look like, let's first understand why most don't work.

Age-old challenges of old-school SAT programs

Traditional SAT programs don't have the best reputation, and for good reason. They're usually boring, overly complicated, and fail to keep people interested. If you've ever sat through one, then you likely lost focus quickly. And if you've ever been responsible for managing a SAT program, it was probably a headache.

Between clunky admin, disengaged participants, low completion rates, and little real impact, what starts as a simple compliance task often turns into an ongoing challenge.

97%

of Huntress users agree that Huntress Managed SAT helps their learners remain more vigilant for threats (phishing, social engineering, etc).²

98%

of Huntress users say Huntress Managed SAT has better learner engagement compared to other solutions they evaluated.³

97%

of Huntress users say Huntress Managed SAT has a better value/ total cost of ownership compared to other solutions they evaluated.⁴



² UserEvidence, Huntress Customer Evidence Profile, https://app.userevidence.com/assets/2786SBOU?share_link=1.

³ UserEvidence, Huntress Customer Evidence Profile, https://app.userevidence.com/assets/6727NQLY?share_link=1.

⁴ UserEvidence, Huntress Partner Story – Rapid Onboarding and Trust Building, https://app.userevidence.com/assets/2030YIKA?share_link=1.

⁵ UserEvidence, Huntress Partner Story – Faster Response & Fewer False Positives, https://app.userevidence.com/assets/1357TEVB?share_link=1.

Challenges for Administrators

Painful to manage.

- In-house management is time-consuming, frustrating, and expensive.
- Resource-strapped teams typically see it as an afterthought. There's no dedicated role to manage the program.
- Requires cybersecurity expertise to keep content fresh and relevant to modern threats.
- Programs lack automation, integration, multi-tenancy, and reporting.
- Feels like more of a burden than a benefit.

Challenges for Employees

Learners aren't learning.

- Training is long, boring, or too "in the weeds" to engage learners.
- Content is too infrequent (e.g., quarterly, annually) to keep security awareness top-of-mind.
- Regulatory roadblocks prevent simulated training for anything but phishing.
- Content gets stale and repetitive if it's not constantly updated.
- Training doesn't resonate with learners, failing to help them understand the risks they face.

Challenges for Your Organization

Poor results.

- The SAT industry is driven by compliance check boxes rather than security outcomes, leading to ineffective products.
- Programs are designed by generalists, not cybersecurity practitioners.
- Offer no way to address high-risk users and behaviors.
- They don't keep up with the current threat landscape.
- Cheaper programs might look like a good deal at first, but they can end up costing more in the long run. They often focus on ticking compliance boxes rather than providing real security, which means they don't deliver where it really matters.

Reducing human risk starts with a security-first culture

The routines, habits, and values your team brings to work each day are the core of your organization's culture. And, like any culture, it starts at the top. When leadership prioritizes security, it sets the tone for everyone, making it easier to build smarter, more secure habits across the team.

But changing behavior isn't something that happens with a once-a-year security check-up. It takes consistent effort and reinforcement, which is why SAT is so important.

A good SAT program does more than just teach your team how to spot phishing emails. It inspires them to care about identifying threats. By making security approachable, engaging, and maybe even a little fun, an effective SAT program empowers your team instead of lecturing them. Over time, this mindset becomes second nature, creating a culture of security that sticks.

A strong SAT program should be:

- ✓ **Memorable:** Content should cover a variety of topics that help learners easily absorb and remember the info.
- ✓ **Relatable:** Lessons should tackle real-world threats and be approachable enough for just about anyone to understand, regardless of their technical background.
- ✓ **Accessible:** Keep lessons short and to the point, just a few minutes long. Deliver them monthly, instead of annually or quarterly, to keep security fresh in everyone's mind.

These are the key to building a culture where security goes from being "someone else's responsibility" to becoming second nature for everyone.



Ask the right questions before choosing your SAT program

Building a culture around security entails embracing SAT. When it comes to choosing the right solution for your organization, however, you should first ask yourself some questions.

By assessing the following, you'll be better equipped to select the option that best fits your specific needs.



Learning-Based Questions

- Are the topics covered in this SAT relevant to my organization's security and compliance concerns?
- Are the lessons updated regularly to reflect current threats and scenarios?
- Does this SAT engage users in a unique, meaningful manner?
- Is this SAT built and supported by real cybersecurity practitioners?
- Does it adhere to any adult learning frameworks proven to improve knowledge retention?
- Will learners be motivated to complete their training?
- Is training reinforced in any way?
- Will it be accessible and approachable to all of my users, regardless of their technical background?
- Is my training built by security experts or simply training generalists?

Management-Based Questions

- Can I have my SAT program managed for me?
- Can it be deployed quickly?
- Does it require manual upkeep, or can I automate tasks such as enrolling new learners?
- Can I ensure that I'm only paying for actual learners, not non-human identities like, say, our copy machine?
- Is it simple and intuitive enough for anyone across my organization to use?

Your ideal SAT will allow you to answer a resounding "Yes!" to all of the above.

Essential outcomes of an effective SAT

By now, it's clear that old-school SAT programs fall short where it really matters: motivating learners, creating efficiencies for admins, and, worst of all, reducing human risk.

To stay ahead of malicious threat actors, your SAT solution should combine simplified management with engaging, expert-informed training built on real-world threat intelligence. The right program will:

Strengthen your security posture and reduce human risk

Your SAT program should help turn your end users into reliable members of your security team. With better training, they'll think twice before clicking malicious links, and they'll be better able to spot and stop potential threats to your business.

Help your riskiest users

Find SAT programs that help your team turn mistakes into valuable learning moments. For example, expert-led coaching delivered quickly can make a big difference for at-risk learners. This personalized approach helps them learn from real mistakes while the experience is still fresh, giving clear context on what went wrong and why.



Take on the latest threats

The best SAT programs give you clear insight into real threats targeting millions of endpoints and identities, so learners get training based on the latest hacker tactics they're most likely to encounter.

Foster a culture of security awareness

A great program gets your end users involved as active participants in building your org's security culture. With engaging training that starts conversations and phishing simulations that keep awareness sharp, security stays top of mind.

Free up your internal security and IT resources

Your SAT program should have cybersecurity experts handling everything, so you and your team can focus on more important tasks while keeping costs down.



Increase participation and completion rates

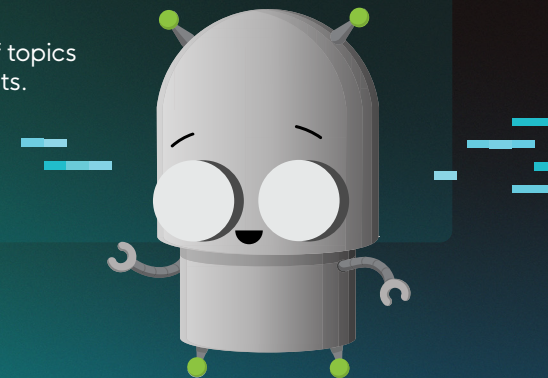
A SAT program that combines engaging content, gamification, and threat simulators—plus notifications for both learners and managers—can really boost training completion. Your program should also make it easy to spot who still has assignments to finish, so no one gets left behind.

Prove its value every day

Your SAT program should make it easy to prove business, insurance, and regulatory compliance with automated reporting. It should also include an admin dashboard with clear, easy-to-read metrics and charts that show how your learners' compromise rates improve over time.

Demonstrate compliance

It goes without saying, but your SAT program needs to cover a range of topics to show you're meeting business, insurance, and regulatory requirements.



Huntress Managed SAT: Built and backed by real security experts with the admin and learner in mind

Designed and managed by the trusted cybersecurity experts of Huntress, Huntress Managed SAT takes a unique approach to security awareness training. It's easy to deploy and operate, so unlike other SAT solutions, you don't need a PhD in cybersecurity to use it.

Huntress Managed SAT goes beyond the compliance check box. It's designed for so much more.

3.8M+

endpoints under management by Huntress, from which our experts draw threat intelligence.

~2M

identities under management by Huntress, from which our experts draw threat intelligence.



Drive real security outcomes

Using threat intelligence from millions of endpoints and identities managed by Huntress, our security experts create customized training content and phishing simulations based on the biggest threats your users face.

Our tools are built to help your learners tackle real-world risks, correct unsafe behaviors, and reduce human risk effectively.

Eliminate tedious admin tasks

Designed with administrators in mind, we simplify SAT from the very beginning. You can get set up in minutes and benefit from a seamless, hands-off experience with expertly managed learning plans.

Our comprehensive reporting tools make it effortless to demonstrate compliance, regulatory adherence, and business impact.

Create a security-minded culture

Managed SAT uses adult learning frameworks with a mix of gamification, personalized coaching, and threat simulations to make training more effective and memorable.

The story-driven content is engaging and easy to follow, no matter your learners' technical skill levels. This means everyone across your organization can play a role in creating a stronger security culture.

Features that set us apart

Huntress Managed SAT is powered by expert cybersecurity practitioners who really get how hackers think and operate. With deep knowledge of emerging threats—gained from monitoring millions of endpoints and identities under their watch—these white-hat hackers provide a complete SAT program designed to help boost your organization's security posture, including.

Expert backing

Managed SAT is designed and managed by real cybersecurity pros, not generalists. That means your training will be timely, relevant, and based on real tactics hackers use out in the wild.

Unparalleled visibility into emerging threats

With threat intel from over 3.5 million endpoints and 2 million identities (all managed by Huntress), your training reflects the real threats targeting your business.

Memorable episodes

Episodes use a story-driven approach based on adult learning principles to make lessons stick. With relatable characters created by an Emmy Award-winning animation team, they keep learners engaged and help them absorb and remember the material more effectively.

Phishing Defense Coaching

This personalized training is designed for anyone who gets caught by phishing scenarios, helping them understand what went wrong and build the skills to spot threats more easily in the future.

Full management of the program

Let Huntress do the hard part for you. Our team will take over creating, curating, and scheduling your learning programs so you can focus on other business priorities.

Interactive Threat Simulator

Move past basic phishing simulations and show your learners how to think like a hacker, helping them become stronger defenders with this game changer. With Threat Simulator assignments, learners get a hands-on, interactive experience with different types of tradecraft, building their skills and critical thinking so they understand how it works—and how to stop it.

Behavior-Based Assignments

Spot and address risky behaviors in the real world. With Behavior-Based Assignments, you can easily assign targeted training to users based on the risky behaviors flagged in Huntress Incident Remediation Reports.

Custom content creator tool

Easily create custom training for whatever your business requires, at no additional cost.

A true partner in cybersecurity

Huntress is known to protect businesses that lack the resources to maintain their own security teams. With Huntress, you get a partner who understands your needs, listens to your feedback, and looks out for your business.

Best-in-class support

The Huntress Support team boasts an impressive 98.8% customer satisfaction score. If you need help, we've got your back.

“The relatively short, humorous videos are **attention grabbing** and **aimed at all experience levels**. The reporting is relatively easy to navigate to figure out who to chase down to ensure they complete their training.”

Clinton V.
Beaver Process Equipment



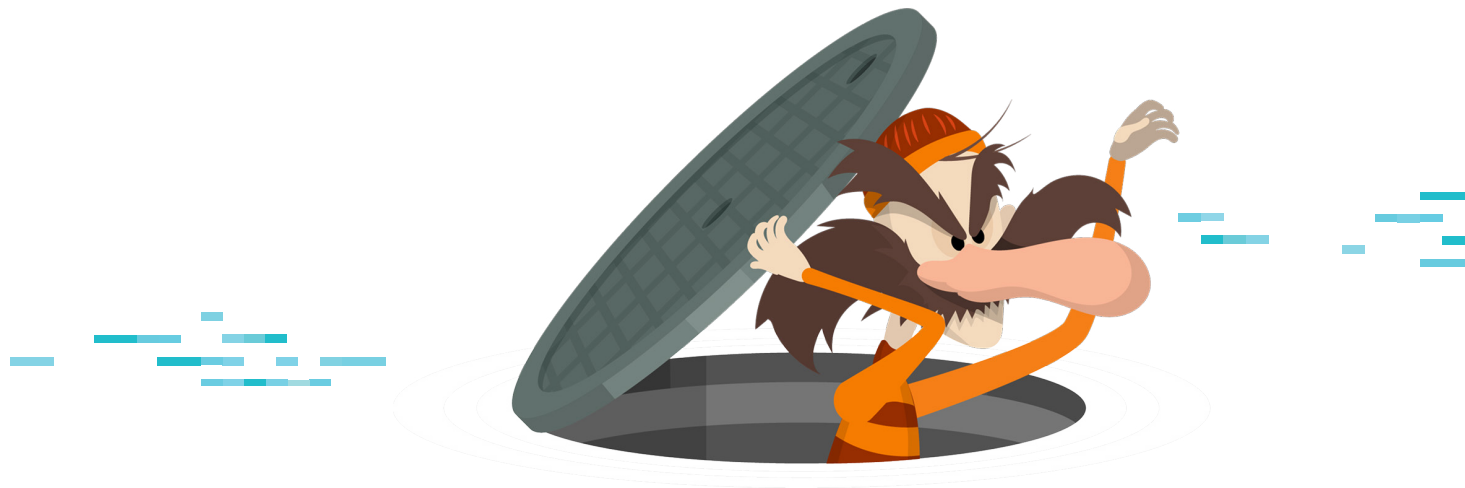
“Most of the training in HIPAA is very dry with a ‘check-the-box’ kind of mentality . . . I was looking for something different and was introduced to Huntress Managed SAT. I loved this new idea with how to present this information . . . **Nothing compared to the inventiveness that Huntress offered with their training episodes.**”

Jared Couillard, CISSP
Senior Director, IT & Security Officer,
Cohere Health



“The updated onboarding process and Huntress-managed features are game changers for us. I just onboarded a client with 68 users in under five minutes. **Huntress Managed SAT** has my clients eager to do their training now. They are liking these characters and are actually learning.”

Michael Ehlert
President, We Travel PC



The threat landscape is changing. Your SAT should change with it.

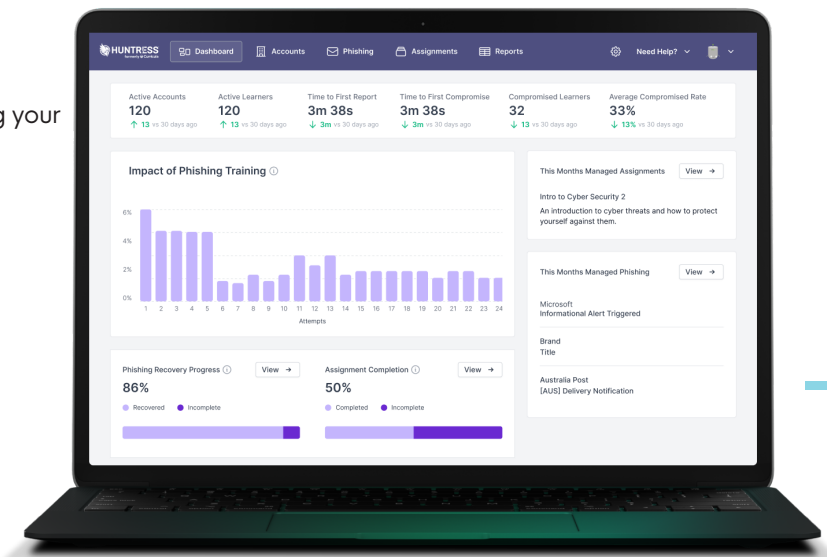
Threat actors think they're smart, targeting individuals across organizations like yours. That's why you need to ensure your people are even smarter. If they're aware of the ever-changing tactics employed by malicious hackers, they can stand as your first line of defense. But first, you need to deploy an SAT solution you can trust, one that's backed by real cybersecurity experts who have unparalleled visibility into threats based on the millions of endpoints and identities they themselves manage.

Huntress Managed SAT is the easy, effective, and enjoyable solution that helps:

- Minimize time-consuming maintenance and management tasks
- Improve knowledge retention through adult learning frameworks
- Update you and your employees to the current threat landscape
- Establish a culture that values cybersecurity
- Inspire meaningful behavioral habits to improve security awareness
- Engage you and your employees in a creative, impactful manner
- Assure regulatory compliance
- Keep threat actors out of your organization

Experience a fully managed SAT that can free up your time and resources, all while empowering your employees with smarter habits that better protect your organization from cyber threats.

Say goodbye to ineffective, outdated training.
Say hello to Huntress Managed SAT.
Start your [free trial](#) today.



About Huntress

Huntress is the enterprise-grade, people-powered cybersecurity solution for all businesses, not just the 1%. With fully owned technology developed by and for its industry-defining team of security analysts, engineers, and researchers, Huntress elevates underresourced tech teams whether they work within outsourced IT environments or in-house IT and security teams.

The 24/7 industry-leading Huntress Security Operations Center (SOC) covers cyber threats for outsourced IT and in-house teams through remediation with a false-positive rate of less than 1%. With a mission to break down barriers to enterprise-level security and always give back more than it takes, Huntress is often the first to respond to major hacks and threats while protecting its partners and shares tradecraft analysis and threat advisories with the community as they happen.

As long as hackers keep hacking, Huntress keeps hunting. Join the hunt at www.huntress.com and follow us on [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

**Want to know more about Huntress
Managed SAT? Or just about Huntress in
general? [Get in touch](#) with our team.**

