

# Panathinaikos FC teams up with TicTac and **Acronis** against phishing attacks

Athens-based MSP protects the entirety of Panathinaikos Football Club from phishing and spoofing.

## INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1908, Panathinaikos Athletic Club (Football Club of Athens POA) was established by Giorgos Kalafatis. Inspired by the Olympic games in 1906, Kalafatis had an idea to create Panathinaikos and serve as the main founder of the club. Panathinaikos grew to become an internationally recognized football club thanks to its loyal fans and strategic partners.

As a high-performance sports organization, Panathinaikos depends on the security, reliability and efficiency of IT environments — both on the football and business sides of operations. Panathinaikos partnered with [TicTac Laboratories](#) and Acronis to form a transformative technology partnership through the [Acronis #TeamUp Program](#).

TicTac, an Athens-based managed security service provider (MSSP), was founded in 2001 as the first company in Greece specialized in providing data and file recovery, computer forensics and data sanitation services. TicTac is the first MSSP to offer incident response services to companies attacked by threat actors since 2014 in Greece. TicTac has the largest and most modern data recovery facilities in Greece.

## THE CHALLENGES

Professional football clubs are not only hubs for sensitive player data, but also critical business, financial and personally identifiable information. High profile in nature, these organizations have a global network of fans, strategic partners and vendors, making them lucrative targets of phishing and malware campaigns.

Panathinaikos' operations span beyond the stadium and football field, including several offices, a state-of-the-art training center and an online merchandise store and warehouse. Data and IT environments are widespread across multiple departments, which adds complexity to protecting them.



## Acronis

## CHALLENGES

- Evolving email threats targeted Panathinaikos FC and other football clubs.
- Potential cyberattacks jeopardized the success of operations and fan experiences.
- Safeguarding Panathinaikos' public profile became increasingly important as their fan base grew.
- Securing disparate data across multiple IT environments, including Microsoft 365.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Advanced email protection against spoofing, phishing, APTs and BEC.
- Unified Microsoft 365 protection.
- Immutable backups.

## KEY BENEFITS

- Acronis #TeamUp helped TicTac develop a strong partnership with Panathinaikos, a globally recognized football club.
- TicTac and Acronis Cyber Protect Cloud provided Microsoft 365 email security and data protection.
- TicTac reports increased brand visibility and new leads.



Acronis  
Delivery  
Partner

According to Panagiotis Pierros, CEO of TicTac, “The primary challenge is to avoid all spoofing and phishing attempts, and there are a lot — especially in a professional football club. Secondly, we have the responsibility of backup and disaster recovery.”

For the Panathinaikos IT team, advanced email security, Microsoft 365 protection and immutable backups were nonnegotiable. This led them to their partnership with TicTac and Acronis.

## THE SOLUTION

Acronis Email Security delivers multiple layers of email protection to safeguard MSP clients against sophisticated attacks, including account takeover (ATO), business email compromise (BEC), advanced persistent threats (APTs) and phishing. Acronis Email Security scans 100% of inbound and outbound email traffic in real-time to prevent tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) such as lateral movement, which are prevalent in email attacks.

According to the IT Manager at Panathinaikos, Miltos Lykiardopoulos, the club recently experienced a phishing incident.

Acronis Cyber Protect Cloud protected Panathinaikos' email accounts from the threat and enabled TicTac and Lykiardopoulos to act swiftly. As a result, TicTac and the Panathinaikos team were able to delete and block the malicious email sender.

Pierros says, “There was a substantial phishing attempt against the team. We had a very big win because Acronis did stop everything, and our team also engaged in preventing this phishing attempt from escalating.”

In addition to Acronis Email Security, TicTac uses

immutable backups delivered by Acronis Backup to ensure Panathinaikos' data remains comprehensively protected. Immutable backups provide an additional layer of security by preventing any unauthorized changes or deletions to the backup data, even if the system is compromised by ransomware or other malicious attacks. This ensures that Panathinaikos can always recover data to its original state, maintaining business continuity and minimizing downtime. Since the #TeamUp partnership began, TicTac reports increased brand visibility and new leads.

## RESULTS

Had the phishing attack been successful, Pierros estimates that it could have cost Panathinaikos more than €200,000 (\$216,361) in damages. Pierros feels confident that Acronis Email Security catches 99% of spoofing and phishing

scams. And since partnering with TicTac, Panathinaikos' IT team reports having more time to focus on critical tasks and feels more confident that their organization is protected. “Now, we're sure that we are safer than before. We trust Acronis,” says Lykiardopoulos.



“The #TeamUp experience brings people, clients and partners together to the training center of the sports team. You get to know the football players and the hospitality of their (Panathinaikos') marketing and IT teams.”

**Panagiotis Pierros, CEO of TicTac**