

OFFSEC CASE STUDY

How a Dutch training center is solving the challenges of classroom training with rigorous, hands-on cybersecurity courses

About TSTC

TSTC is a Dutch training institute founded in 1999 and recognized for its specialized training in cybersecurity and information security. TSTC cultivates a unique approach to traditional classroom training with a focus on training that is practical, personal, and effective. TSTC offers over forty courses across three core markets: IT, cybersecurity, and privacy.

Their experienced instructors are preparing Dutch professionals for a wide variety of roles, from security specialists to CISOs.

HIGHLIGHTS

Challenges

- Solve the four main challenges with traditional classroom training
- Provide exclusive training to maximize demand and revenue

Solutions

- Become OffSec's Learning and Channel Partner
- Offer live bootcamps twice a year to keep it exclusive

Benefits

- A one-week course with 30 students brings substantial revenue to the institute
- High demand from the local community, students consider it a "holy grail" of courses
- The only institute in the Benelux region to offer live OffSec training
- All students are on the same skill level due to a 2-month preparation and the necessary PEN-200 prerequisites

THE TRADITIONAL TRAINING GAP

TSTC has a long tradition of providing the Benelux region with best-in-class training in IT, cybersecurity, and privacy. The institute wanted to expand its offering to the technical cybersecurity domain.

Emile Kok, the Founder, and Managing Director at TSTC explained that their unique approach to learning aims to solve four main challenges of traditional classroom training:

- Large differences in skill level between students
- Theoretical slide training that adds little to self-study
- Low efficiency due to a need for a lot of independent learning after the training
- Practical labs that don't correspond with the real-world

The training provider they partnered with would need to fill this gap.

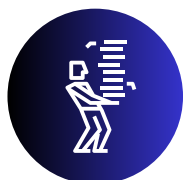


WHY OFFSEC?

TSTC connected with OffSec in 2016. After covering the usual foundational courses and wanting to take their cybersecurity training offering to the next level, TSTC partnered with OffSec as both a Learning and Channel Partner.

The partnership started with live boot camps in the Netherlands where the team of OffSec's expert instructors was teaching a week-long PEN-200: Penetration Testing with Kali Linux course. The partnership evolved from there. Now, TSTC has OffSec-certified instructors teaching boot camps in Dutch.

EMILE CITED A COUPLE OF REASONS WHY TSTC DECIDED TO GO WITH OFFSEC...



Rigorous training and the OSCP certification exam

When looking for a training provider, Emile and TSTC didn't find that any of the other leaders on the market came close to the level of meticulousness that OffSec courses offered. The 24-hour exam and the focus on mastery of both technical and methodological skills made OffSec an easy pick.



When going to the real world, you have to know what you're doing and understand what is expected from you on the job. For us, OffSec is the champion in this league in educating and preparing learners.



Worldwide recognition

For Emile, partnering with a training provider had a clear goal:



You want to learn from the best.

Partnering with a training provider that is recognized worldwide provides TSTC with confidence in the training content quality.

Working with a recognized provider like OffSec helps TSTC meet global standards and offer up-to-date content, combined with access to a wider network of experts and resources, enhancing the marketability and competitiveness of their offering.





Exclusivity

When starting its partnership with OffSec, TSTC was the only training center in Europe to offer live boot camps for the PEN-200 course. Today, they remain the only ones in the Benelux region to offer it.

This exclusivity allows TSTC to have a unique and powerful selling point and differentiate itself from its competitors in the region. It also provides increased demand for an exclusive course, attracting a high number of learners. Additionally, with such a well-designed and thought-out course like PEN-200, TSTC is able to build stronger relationships between the center and its students. This can lead to increased loyalty, repeat business, and positive word-of-mouth referrals.



The holy grail among students

TSTC identified a highly sought-after course among its student community. Through discussions with students, they discovered that the OSCP certification was widely considered to be the "holy grail" of technical cybersecurity courses. According to the students, OSCP was one of the highest achievements one could attain in the field of pentesting.



From talking with students you find the holy grail in the market, what is the highest thing to accomplish.

Most students really wanted the OSCP. What CISSP is for management, OSCP is for penetration testing.



Practical and hands-on training



Practical and hands-on cybersecurity courses can provide students with a range of advantages. These advantages can help students become better prepared for the workforce and increase their chances of success in cybersecurity. The practicality of PEN-200 was crucial for Emile and TSTC.





Why?

- **Applicable Experience:** PEN-200 provides students with real-world experience dealing with cybersecurity challenges. Experience that is invaluable in preparing them for cybersecurity roles.
- **Problem-solving Skills:** The practical nature of PEN-200 can help students develop a security mindset, think critically, handle uncertainty, and overcome unforeseen obstacles.
- **Collaboration:** Many cybersecurity threats require collaboration and teamwork to be addressed effectively. Hands-on cybersecurity courses can provide students with the opportunity to collaborate with others in a simulated environment, which can prepare them for similar situations in the workforce.
- **Interactive Learning:** Hands-on cybersecurity courses like PEN-200 are typically more interactive than traditional lecture-based courses which is an essential part of TSTC's mission.
- **Real-time Feedback:** With PEN-200 focusing on practical applications and being taught live at the training center, students receive real-time feedback on their work. This can help them to identify areas where they need to improve and can help them to correct mistakes more quickly.

BUSINESS AND LEARNER BENEFITS

TSTC's cybersecurity training program and the addition of PEN-200 have had a significant impact on its revenue streams. As a channel partner, they've sold a large number of licenses across Europe, resulting in a substantial increase in revenue.

In addition, their instructor-led courses, even with smaller class sizes of 8-10 students, have generated considerable revenue.



In the past, a one-week course with 30 students would bring in significant revenue. While we haven't yet returned to pre-COVID levels, our current revenue streams demonstrate the effectiveness and value of our program and our partnership with OffSec. As the world continues to recover, we expect further growth in revenue through our cybersecurity training program.



When it comes to learner benefits, students enjoy having an opportunity to attend OffSec training in their native language. Although in the Netherlands most speak English as well and they can easily follow the training, it is incredibly valuable for students to have an instructor in Dutch. This promoted better collaboration and connection between students and instructors, both during training and during their breaks where they shared experiences and laughed together.

Additionally, TSTC was able to tackle one of its main challenges of ensuring all students are on the same skill level. PEN-200 requires baseline cybersecurity knowledge and is not suitable for beginners, so TSTC also required students to go through a 2-month preparation period.



To maintain the aura of exclusivity, TSTC wanted to keep the schedule of their boot camps unique and not make it a commodity. Offering boot camps twice a year gives students an opportunity to actually have the 2-month preparation before the boot camp. Furthermore, penetration testing is a niche in the cybersecurity field so not everyone is in their target group. Keeping the PEN-200 boot camp exclusive means that they can maintain the high demand the boot camp is generating currently.

According to Emile, **the partner team at OffSec is also one of the main reasons they enjoy this partnership** and only want to continue to expand on it.



The Partner Team at OffSec is always open-minded and incredibly helpful. The team had specific ideas on how to conduct boot camps and courses but was very flexible in working with local partners. They had demonstrated a strong desire to work with TSTC and to help us achieve success. It was easy to get in touch with the team and its consultants for questions and support. We are communicating almost every day via email or phone!



Emile shared that a PEN: Network Penetration Testing Essentials boot camp is also in the process, as well as two more boot camps for PEN-200 planned in 2023.



HERE'S WHAT TSTC'S STUDENTS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT OFFSEC AND THE PEN-200 BOOT CAMP:

"Learned a lot from experienced trainers and from OffSec itself. Good training with many assignments and demos." -

Marvin van Routz, BV

"The OSCP training at TSTC is highly recommended, lots of hands-on and personal attention! The OffSec-authorized instructors are experienced and give clear explanations! Do it if you get the chance!" -

Wietse of I-Real, BV

"Great training with very knowledgeable and experienced trainers. Intensive and inspiring! I went home after the training with itching fingers to try and learn more ASAP." -

Jesse from KPN

"Good trainers. Excellent care and enjoyed the course!" -

Rob from ING