

Xtel AI-Powered Cyber Defense Suite Honored with 2026 AI in Cybersecurity Innovation Award from TMCnet

Enterprise-grade security operations, delivered as a managed service for the organizations that need them most

MOUNT LAUREL, NJ, UNITED STATES, July 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Xtel announced today that TMC, a global, integrated media company, has awarded the [Xtel AI-Powered Cyber Defense Suite](#) as a 2026 AI in Cybersecurity Innovation Award winner.



The Xtel AI-Powered Cyber Defense Suite is built on a straightforward idea: The security operations that protect large enterprises should be within reach of the organizations that need them just as badly but cannot afford to build one on their own. The gap is widest in sectors that the security market tends to overlook. Schools, healthcare practices, local governments, professional services firms, and nonprofits face the same targeted threats as major enterprises and carry the same compliance weight, yet most run with small IT teams and have no dedicated security staff. Xtel specializes in these environments.

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Delivered as a fully managed service, the platform consolidates defense layers across email, endpoints, identities, networks, and cloud environments, all backed by a 24x7 security operations center. The suite uses advanced AI and machine learning models to identify known attack patterns alongside emerging, novel threats. By correlating data signals across different environments, it cuts down on exhausting alert noise and automatically triggers response playbooks to isolate compromised devices in seconds before handing the issue off to a live analyst. Because it connects with over 350 existing security tools, organizations can easily upgrade their protection without throwing away their current technology investments.

Xtel designed this suite around the day-to-day operational realities of the sectors it serves.

- For K-12 school districts, the platform monitors student emails for phishing attempts, compromised accounts, and critical student safety concerns.
- For healthcare systems and local governments, it simplifies compliance management for rigorous standards like FERPA, HIPAA, CIPA, NIST 800-171, and CMMC 2.0.
- Within education, Xtel aligns its services with funding vehicles like the FCC E-Rate and the FCC Cybersecurity Pilot, ensuring high-tier protection remains financially realistic for local school districts.



“AI has changed how fast an attack unfolds. Once someone gets in, they can move laterally across a network in seconds, which means monitoring cannot stop at the end of the business day. It has to be 24x7x365,” said Chris Chirico, Chief Commercial Officer at Xtel. “We stay on watch so our customers stay online, even when their own teams are off the clock. Schools, towns, and medical practices get the same caliber of defense that large enterprises rely on, without having to build it or staff it themselves. Recognition like this tells us the model is working.”

“It gives me great pleasure to honor Xtel as a 2026 recipient of TMC’s AI in Cybersecurity Innovation Awards for their cutting-edge AI-Powered Cyber Defense Suite,” said Rich Tehrani, CEO, TMC. “Our judges were very impressed with the innovative and impactful use of AI technology displayed by Xtel in their groundbreaking work on the Xtel AI-Powered Cyber Defense Suite.”

The complete list of the 2026 AI in Cybersecurity Innovation Award winners [can be found directly on TMCnet](#).

About Xtel

Founded in 1994, Xtel is a privately owned, facilities-based competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC) regulated under FCC and state BPU rules. The company owns and operates its own network, with data centers in Philadelphia, Newark, Baltimore, and Plano, and delivers voice, connectivity, and cybersecurity as a single managed service. Xtel serves government, education, and healthcare organizations, including more than half of New Jersey’s school districts. Xtel also serves professional services firms, nonprofits, and other compliance-driven businesses. The company holds national purchasing contracts including PEPPM and ESCNJ. For more information, visit xtel.net.

About TMC

For more than 20 years, TMC has been honoring technology companies with awards in various categories. These awards are regarded as some of the most prestigious and respected awards in the communications and technology sector worldwide. Winners represent prominent players in the market who consistently demonstrate the advancement of technologies. Each recipient is a verifiable leader in the marketplace.

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