



Two-Way Email Security: Safeguarding Business Reputation and Customers

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Duncan Smit , Head of Group IT at Pam Golding Properties

About Pam Golding Properties

Pam Golding Properties, Southern Africa’s leading independent real estate group, is renowned both locally and internationally for its exceptional real estate services. With a network of over 300 offices in sub-Saharan Africa and offices in Mauritius, and Seychelles, Pam Golding Properties caters to a diverse clientele and handles a wide range of property transactions. As the industry evolves in a digital age, ensuring robust email security becomes paramount to protect sensitive information and maintain trust.

About Grove

Grove unlocks business success by defending our customers with the most advanced cybersecurity solutions in the market place today. We are always evaluating new and evolving techniques to keep improving how we help our customers defend their digital assets and brand.

Grove supply and fully support a comprehensive set of advanced cybersecurity solutions covering our global customers entire digital estate preventing existing and novel threats. Reducing risk, improving efficiency and ensuring operational resilience.

Challenge

Duncan Smit, Head of Group IT at Pam Golding Properties, discusses the unique challenges they faced within their organisation. Operating in multiple countries and including franchise businesses, Pam Golding Properties has a decentralised IT structure. This poses difficulties in enforcing security measures and creating a unified approach to email security. Additionally, the real estate industry has become a prime target for cybercriminal syndicates, exploiting the vulnerabilities of agents and small conveyances. The consequences of a compromised mailbox could result in financial loss and damage to the company's reputation.

"I'm the Head of Group IT. We operate primarily in 8 core countries, with an overall user base of 2500 people, both staff and our agents. But we're the best of both worlds, the fact that we are corporate but also family-run. Very entrepreneurial but with a very large user base, and of that user base, a fair amount are franchise businesses. Throughout Africa, the business is franchised, with Mauritius being the only one that is branch-owned, and in SA two thirds of the offices you see are all franchised."

"Everything that is outside of our data centre, only a third of it I'm directly responsible for, two thirds of it is up to every individual business to run as they see fit, ideally conforming to our recommended specifications, but we can't enforce things, example endpoint protection, even those things, all we can do is put down recommendations."

"My main focus is really the core network, the core data network run services of cloud hosted services that everybody makes use of and seeing how we can benefit from that. The security side goes two ways, one is trying to protect the business from a brand reputation perspective as well as actually protecting our customers."

Solution

To tackle these challenges, Pam Golding Properties has formed a long-standing partnership with Grove, a trusted cybersecurity provider, and adopted Mimecast's DMARC Analyzer solution. By leveraging Grove's expertise and Mimecast's cutting-edge technology, they were able to address their unique email domain spoofing security requirements effectively.

Duncan Smit highlights the value of the Mimecast solution, particularly in terms of ease of use and additional benefits. The solution provided a user-friendly interface that empowered their small IT team to proactively monitor and detect security threats. Mimecast's solution not only strengthened the security of their email domain, but also delivered valuable insights into mail delivery volumes, allowing them to identify and rectify issues promptly. For Pam Golding Properties, this meant ensuring that their marketing emails reached their intended recipients and their brand reputation was kept intact.

"The advantage of Mimecast's DMARC Analyzer solution is that we can integrate it easily into our existing security stack, which is a real value-add. It's also great to know we can form that partnership and integrate additional solutions as our needs grow."

"We don't have the capacity to have a single person dedicated to reviewing mail, to reviewing security logs, to looking at our central consoles. We need a product that doesn't require weeks of training. We need a solution that's really easy to use, and that's where Mimecast really showed value. A beautiful, technically detailed product, with a simple user interface."

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Results

The collaboration between Pam Golding Properties, **Grove**, and **Mimecast** yielded significant improvements in email domain security and overall operations. By implementing **Mimecast’s DMARC Analyzer**, Pam Golding Properties achieved enhanced protection against brand impersonation, streamlined management of their email infrastructure, and strengthened compliance measures.

The results speak for themselves. Pam Golding Properties experienced a substantial reduction in the unauthorised use of their email domain and successfully prevented numerous impersonation attacks targeting their agents and customers. The implementation of DMARC provided the necessary framework to validate email senders, reducing the risk of brand spoofing and ensuring secure communications.

Duncan Smit proudly asserts, “Our partnership with Grove and the adoption of Mimecast’s DMARC Analyzer solution have been game-changers for our organisation. We now have peace of mind knowing that our critical communications are protected, and our clients can trust the integrity of our emails.”

Through their collaboration with Grove and Mimecast, Pam Golding Properties demonstrated their commitment to staying ahead of evolving cyber threats and safeguarding their stakeholders’ interests. By proactively protecting their email domain and leveraging industry-leading expertise, they continue to maintain their position as a trusted and reputable real estate company.

“**Mimecast’s State of Email Security 2023 Report** found that nearly nine in ten South African organisations (88%) were made aware of attempts to misappropriate their email domains in the past year, with 48% reporting an increase in such attempts. Threat actors know that email is a popular communication channel between brands and customers - especially in sectors such as real estate - and they are constantly refining their impersonation attacks to take advantage of this,” says Collin Kunene, Channel Director, Mimecast South Africa.” It’s becoming harder for individuals to distinguish a legitimate email from a fake one and it’s up to organisations to protect their brands online, as part of improving their overall security posture. It’s great to see such an established brand like Pam Golding taking ownership of their online presence and preventing criminals from using it to target individuals in phishing attacks. Ultimately, it’s about organisations protecting people, whether they are customers or their employees, and allowing them to always work protected”.