Case Study

mimecast

az groeninge kortrijk

Mimecast Prescribes Preventive Security For Hospital AZ Groeninge

> "We just had a good feeling about Mimecast immediately. The interface was very intuitive. Everything was better than our current solution."
>
> **Steven Blondeel, IT systems engineer at AZ Groeninge**

Business Case

Like most healthcare facilities, AZ Groeninge has stores of sensitive information that are very attractive to cybercriminals. However, its email protection was not up to the task of fending them off. To protect against spam, phishing and a rising trends in impersonation attacks — as well as facilitate an ongoing migration to the cloud — the Belgian orthopedic hospital deployed email and URL protection from Mimecast.

Results

In its first year since deploying Mimecast's email security products in January 2022, AZ Groeninge has seen a sharp decrease in phishing and malicious attachments and links, along with a corresponding drop in the number of alerts. This has enabled the hospital's lean, seven-person security staff to focus on more proactive work. The team was also relieved of cloud maintenance duties that were a further time drain.

Data Points

- Routine maintenance has dropped with at least 20%.
- We now only need a couple of half-hour checks to spot problems and make any necessary rule changes.
- Training staff for backup or relief duties is much simpler, thanks to the user-friendly interface.
- A sharp decrease has been seen on spam, phishing, malicious files and URLs.
- The power of Mimecast Integrations capabilities (Palo Alto and SentinelOne)

'Vaccinating' Against Email Security Threats

After the year-end 2021 holidays, AZ Groeninge deployed Mimecast's Secure Email Gateway, to protect against spam and phishing attacks, and DMARC Analyzer, to protect against domain spoofing. Thanks to the work done during the trial period, implementation took only two days and went smoothly. "It was pretty straightforward," Blondeel said.

Implementation was supported by a Mimecast engineer, a customer care representative and two staffers from Orlox, all of whom thoroughly explained the new features and answered any questions that came up along the way, according to Blondeel. The engineer "was helpful from the beginning to the end," he said.

Since deploying Mimecast's solutions, the number of malicious attachment and link alerts, plus time spent on mitigation, maintenance and addressing user complaints, have dropped dramatically Blondeel said. This has freed him and his team to turn their attention to proactively anticipating and defending against emerging threats, such as the increase in impersonation attacks many European organizations are reporting.

"Now I just [handle issues] Monday morning, or Thursday or something. It takes half an hour now, and I check on the rules, check some problems and go on with my work," he said. "I have more time to anticipate problems, check on the rules and make policies, instead of implementing updates and spending time at the server itself. I have more time to be working with the product."

Cloud Functionality and Integrations

Also separating Mimecast's tools from the pack was the fact they are cloud-native, Blondeel noted. This mattered because AZ Groeninge has been migrating its email from Microsoft Exchange on-premises to Office 365 on the cloud. Thanks to Mimecast, Blondeel and his team no longer have to handle updates or maintenance for that server — an absolute time-saver.

"It takes a bit of pressure off me, actually," Blondeel said. "I just have to maintain some rules and policies, and then Mimecast does its thing."

In addition, Mimecast's user-friendly features made training staff to support or fill in for him a simple process, Blondeel explained. "If you work with it a few times, the product speaks for itself," he said.

Another Mimecast plus: Its tools integrate with security products from other vendors. AZ Groeninge management wanted to diversify its cybersecurity portfolio, so it also uses Palo Alto Networks for its firewall and SentinelOne for its endpoint security. Mimecast works well with both, said Blondeel, noting the solutions share threat intelligence.

More recently, AZ Groeninge is evaluating Mimecast's Internal Email Protect and AI-powered CyberGraph. The interest in Internal Email Protect is in response to an increase in impersonation attempts seen around Europe recently, Blondeel noted.

"That shows technology evolves and so do people with malicious intentions," he said. "We want to try and see if it helps us."

> I only have positive experiences with Mimecast. I'm very happy with it. It really made me work less."
>
> **Steven Blondeel, IT systems engineer at AZ Groeninge**

The COVID-19 pandemic has put a strain on the healthcare sector. Cybercriminals, who have targeted hospitals and research facilities for ransomware, data theft and other exploits, certainly haven't helped.

"We have very delicate information. The patient file contains a lot of private stuff. And that's, of course, a hot spot for people with malicious intentions," said Steven Blondeel, IT systems engineer at hospital AZ Groening, which specializes in orthopedics. "Worst-case scenario, that could mean loss of life if a doctor can't operate or doesn't get the images he wants from a patient. That can be very painful."

With just over 1,000 beds, AZ Groeninge is a regional healthcare hub in Belgium. After a few cyberattacks targeted other Belgian hospitals in 2021, management began to consider its situation: The contract with its email security provider, which couldn't meet its needs, was about to expire, so it began to investigate alternatives in partnership with service provider Orlox.

"We started evaluating: Are we actually protected? Are we well-protected?" Blondeel said. "Our management did the exercise and said, 'Yeah, our current solution isn't up to the task anymore.'"

As part of a series of proof-of-concept tests used by AZ Groeninge to assess competing vendors, Mimecast participated in an email security risk assessment (ESRA) that put all emails first filtered by the hospital's existing email solution through the Mimecast email security environment. The outchttps://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/JeffNick@mimecast.com/bookings/e? Mimecast's platform caught substantial amounts of malicious content that were coming through. After a 30-day trial, it was abundantly clear to AZ Groeninge that it was ready to do business with Mimecast.

Click here to learn more about Mimecast's complete suite of security solutions.

For more about AZ Groeninge's operations, **visit its website.**