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365 TOTAL PROTECTION SAVES NORTHERN IRELAND COMPANY FROM FRAUDULENT EMAILS



 **INDUSTRY** Property Development & Hospitality

 **COMPANY SIZE** 450 employees

 **WEBSITE** www.andrashouse.co.uk

 **INTERVIEWEE** Richard Banks - IT Manager

As companies and organisations move their email infrastructure to the cloud, convenience brings with it a higher level of risk. While solutions like Microsoft 365 have in-built security filters, many customers realise early on that they are simply not enough.

When fake and fraud emails started to bypass Microsoft's default filters, Richard Banks, IT Manager at Northern Ireland company Andras House, decided it was time to add a more robust and comprehensive layer of protection.

Established in 1981 in Belfast, Andras House is a leading property development and hospitality company. It is the city's largest hotel group with nearly 1,000 bedrooms.

"Like many companies, we utilized Microsoft's built-in filters. As good as these filters are, unfortunately spam and fake emails were still able to bypass them. These issues led me to look for additional protection, something that could help reduce or stop spam emails altogether. In addition to better filters, I also wanted something more user-friendly, a solution that gave me better control," Mr Banks explained.

A product that "does all the hard work for you"

After an extensive search and many demos, Mr Banks chose Hornetsecurity. He found that the Hornetsecurity solution stood out among competing products and shared the reasons for his choice: "In comparison to some of Hornetsecurity's competitors, I found the Hornetsecurity admin console to be very

user-friendly and self-explanatory. Hornetsecurity's solution has a sophisticated / advanced filtering process to help reduce the potential spam rate. One thing that stood out about the product was how easy it was to set up and import users into it – very much an automated process."

Mr Banks said he found that the Hornetsecurity app – which integrates directly into the Microsoft tenant – "does all the hard work for you", something often lacking in competitors' solutions.

"Moreover, Hornetsecurity has a wider portfolio of applications and solutions which I already utilize within the organisation for critical areas. Hornetsecurity's 365 Total Protection is another fantastic solution to help protect our infrastructure."

Hornetsecurity: a higher level of protection for Microsoft 365

Shopping around for the right solution, Mr Banks had a clear set of requirements – both in terms of feature set and customer service.

"We wanted a solution that offered a higher level of protection than Microsoft did. In essence, I wanted Advanced Threat Detection – the ability to find and detect impersonation attempts; advanced email spam detection; and the ability to easily monitor and see this from the admin console. From a management perspective, I wanted simplicity in the product's setup,



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a training platform or element of, and importantly, great support. I didn't just want a solution; I wanted the backing of a fully trained support team who would assist me with any issues I might have," he explained.

A solution fit for purpose at a sensible, competitive price

There were other factors that influenced his decision. "One, I need to be sure that the solution is fit for purpose – did it filter emails effectively or not? Two, a solution that helps the admin to manage things and when we stumble, expert support is there to step in. Three, cost – is the price sensible and competitive?"

"Now looking at these points as a 365 Total Protection customer, I feel that I have definitely achieved what I set out to get in a solution. I only had to compromise on the training element, but the solution definitely delivers on all other points."

"A noticeable reduction" in spam emails and threats

Since the company started using 365 Total Protection, Mr Banks said he has greater control over the flow of emails coming in and out of the organisation and a few things stand out.

Mr Banks said the filters are much more sensitive than Microsoft's and truly catch a high volume of spam emails. "Since the implementation of 365 Total Protection, there has definitely been a noticeable reduction in spam emails received in end users' mailboxes."

Given that email attacks are becoming more sophisticated, 365 Total Protection "has shown to be very effective in stopping the different types of threats".



Richard Banks
IT Manager - Andras House

Greater control over email traffic

Finally, he said he has greater control on outbound traffic. "With 365 Total Protection, I can monitor and apply rules easily. This is great because in the event of a mailbox becoming compromised, Hornetsecurity's filters will detect improper/unusual traffic and lock-down the user account, thus preventing spam emails from being sent from that account."

He added that having control and a clear view of what's going on is a huge benefit to their daily operations. He described the simple process: "Every day, a member of the IT team goes through the email logs to check that emails flows are normal and to keep an eye out for any false positives."





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Smooth migration to Hornetsecurity

The successful implementation of a solution that has such an impact on a company's infrastructure and operations is dependent on a smooth migration and an expert support team ready to help every step of the way. Moving to 365 Total Protection for Mr Banks was 100% smooth.

"At no time did we experience any down time. The mail flow simply changed from Microsoft server to Hornetsecurity servers instead. This process was simple and stress-free. At all times I had support taking me through the process step by step," he said.

He also has a bit of advice for other admins making the switch to Hornetsecurity. "I would suggest that all work is reviewed and planned in advance before any 'go live' decision is taken. By that point, you will have fully understood all the steps required and what the process will be like. Working alongside support, the migration should be smooth."

'Fantastic' benefits provided by 365 Total Protection

Mr Banks also had invaluable assistance from their IT service provider. "The service I received was tremendous. They ensured that I got the help I needed and supported me throughout the migration. They were always available to me and promptly replied to any queries I had. Furthermore, now that the migration is done, I know they are available to and ready to provide any assistance should I need it."

All in all, Mr Banks's experience with Hornetsecurity has been excellent and the benefits, according to him, are just 'fantastic'.

"We can monitor the spam volumes and see how effective the filters are from the admin console. That 365 Total Protection allows you to send a summary report to the end users with a list of their own blocked emails has helped to relieve some of the pressure on the IT Department. It even allows limited end user involvement further reducing the workload on the IT team. Overall, I would say that the solution is fit for purpose and more importantly, doing what it's meant to do," Mr Banks said.

All-in-one solution, complete with security awareness training

Mr Banks also referred to the Security Awareness Service add-on to provide automated security training to employees. "The email security training module continuously improves our employees' knowledge and awareness, empowering them to identify and respond to potential email threats effectively," he observed.

He added that his company also uses Hornetsecurity's VM Backup for virtual machines backups and he is thrilled that this product too can be managed and monitored via the same online console as 365 Total Protection and Security Awareness Service: "The integration of VM Backup provides seamless visibility into all our virtual machine backups, simplifying management and ensuring data protection."

Mr Banks affirmed: "These new features are working exceptionally well and have significantly enhanced the overall security of our emails and backups. With both these advancements, I can confidently say that our email security solution has become even more robust, and I am genuinely satisfied with the all-in-one solution."