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Cybersecurity: Market View

Keep your company data safe with Microsoft Office 365

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Microsoft's Office 365 service has over 180 million users and numbers continue to grow, it's the words most successful business cloud service. The platform's success makes it a major target for cyber criminals who anticipate rich pickings from its high net worth customers, and for a relatively small monthly outlay, hackers can subscribe to the service and run their own live 'test-bed'.

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Recent reports by Forbes point to an increasing number of attacks with a worryingly

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high degree of success, with 29% of organisations' O365 accounts compromised in a single month. And once an account has been compromised, hackers tend not to launch an immediate attack. They bide their time, monitoring emails and company activity, to maximise the impact of their attack.

Recent hacks of email accounts in a number of Guernsey companies prompted Guernsey Law Enforcement to alert customers to the heightened risk. Simulated and malicious messages from colleagues' email boxes were circulated internally with potentially disastrous consequences.

Early this year it was reported that cybercriminals had developed an app to target O365. In one instance scammers sent a phishing message to users, asking them to click on a link that actually took them to a real Microsoft login page. After login they were asked to grant permission to an app called 'O365 Access' giving the cybercriminals complete access to their O365 files, contacts, and inbox.

Like all single vendor solutions, they can become a single point of failure, it lacks the layered levels of resilience and business continuity that we are used to. In the UK, the average cost of a cyberattack to a company is estimated to be £3million, and interestingly around half of all cyberattacks here involve email phishing, a figure that's 20% higher than the global average.

Being the world's predominant cloud business platform, it's sheer size and success make it a prime target for cybercriminals to try to exploit its weaknesses. O365 also experiences downtime and periods when the service is unavailable.

So, in the face of such adversity, what can be done to give businesses the additional protection and resilience they need?

We work with Mimecast, a leading 'Gartner Magic Quadrant' cyber security provider, and together, we've built a unique range of on and off-shore services to give organisations the business continuity 'belt and braces' and added levels of security that they require.

Our enforced security controls and safeguarding provide additional protection across three zones - the email perimeter, inside the networked organisation, and beyond the perimeter.

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Says Sam Field, Sure's Enterprise Solutions Product Manager; "In the event of an O365 security breach, there's an additional layer of security from Mimecast that keeps businesses safe. This extra level of security is extremely cost effective - less than a cup of coffee per person per month. All too often we see clients retrospectively layering Mimecast services onto their security and business continuity after an attack has happened. We often wonder about the cost of recovery, and the fact that it's much more effective to secure the stable door before the horse has bolted!"

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Mimecast dynamically identifies and protects against malware, phishing, ransomware, malicious URLs, attachments, impersonation, and data leaks using multiple detection engines, innovative applications and intelligence feeds.

Archiving of corporate information, emails, files, and other relevant content ensures sensitive data and knowledge is protected, and immediately available through a secure digital corporate memory that meets stringent legal, regulatory and compliance requirements, enabling anytime anywhere access to archived data. Information is always-available, always-replicated, and always-safe.

Mimecast are cyber security experts, that's all they do - they live and breathe IT security, and their services are modular, so you can decide which of the elements to use to bolster your existing security. We would encourage any organisation that wants to fully protect their systems and data, and currently uses Microsoft Office 365, to have a conversation with one of our locally based experts as soon as possible.