

How Travelmob stopped fake listings from harming customer experiences

- ✓ Got up and running twithin hours
- ✓ Fraud dropped dramatically within days

OVERVIEW

Enabling an authentic travel experience

Travelmob (acquired by HomeAway) was created to help global travelers find unique places to stay across Asia Pacific, from Bangkok to Melbourne. Hosts list their rooms and properties, and guests use the Travelmob site or mobile app to book them.

When they contacted Sift, the team at Travelmob was considering different approaches to handling the growing number of fake listings on its site that were negatively impacting the customer experience, as well as credit card fraud that was resulting in costly chargebacks.



Challenge

- Fake listings were harming customer experience
- No dedicated in-house team for handling fraud



Solution

- Automated fraud detection for catching fake listings to maintain an excellent customer experience
- Saved valuable time and money by applying machine learning to credit card fraud



Results

- Saw useful results immediately after setup
- Constant improvements in accuracy for preventing fraud



“

Sift is flexible enough that it can handle all of our needs when it comes to fraud detection. It's holistic.

Jan Hecking, Principal Software Engineer



CHALLENGE

Preserving customers' trust

As a social marketplace for travellers, Travelmob's customer experience is key – it means a positive brand experience, repeat business, new users, and continued growth. That's why the company was particularly worried about stopping a growing trend of bad users posing as legitimate hosts, posting photos of properties they didn't own, and trying to con unsuspecting guests into making their payment offsite.

Jan Hecking, Principal Software Engineer at Travelmob, began evaluating options for tackling both their fake listings and credit card fraud. Without a team dedicated to handling fraud, the responsibility for all types of fraud prevention was shouldered across multiple teams.

Travelmob began by manually reviewing new listings and booking requests, but it soon became clear that this approach just wouldn't scale – plus, without a structured process, fraud was slipping through the cracks. Travelmob realized that building dedicated internal tools for fighting fraud would require time and resources that they couldn't spare, and that anything they created internally couldn't adequately address the complexity of fraud.



SOLUTION

A flexible, scalable fraud-fighting tool

After perusing Sift's easy-to-use REST API, it only took a few hours for Jan and his team to get Sift's machine-learning fraud solution up and running, and they were fully integrated within a week.

“The JavaScript is just a few lines of code. That alone helped in catching fake listings, almost solving that problem. Network Visualizations help us find other fraudulent accounts we haven't noticed before. It's easy to find fraud through this tool.”

Travelmob soon observed that the signals Sift was using to evaluate fraud were sophisticated and useful. The Travelmob team tackles fraud efficiently by using Sift Scores to know which bookings are truly high-risk and deserve their attention for manual review. And then they dive into advanced tools and rich insights in the Sift Console – like Network Visualizations – that help them connect the dots between different users and locations so they can make smart decisions about who to block.

While the company initially used Sift to catch fake listings, that experience was so successful that they also applied the machine learning solution to their credit card fraud problem – halting

RESULTS



A single solution for all types of fraud

Once they were integrated with Sift, Travelmob started seeing results immediately. But Jan and the rest of the Travelmob team have been especially impressed by how Sift's fraud detection grows increasingly accurate as Travelmob continues to send more data and feedback.

Through the Sift Events API, it was easy for the Travelmob team to record and send new data to Sift – in fact, Jan noticed that after doing this their fraud detection would grow remarkably more accurate in just two days. Also, Sift's machine learning was incredibly flexible, allowing Jan to customize their fraud detection by sending data unique to Travelmob.

The flexibility of Sift has made it a one-stop shop for Travelmob to catch and prevent all types of fraud that threatened their business.

“ It was easy to get started with Sift, and then we continuously evolved how we used it.

Jan Hecking, Principal Software Engineer

ABOUT SIFT

Sift is the leader in Digital Trust & Safety, empowering digital disruptors to Fortune 500 companies to unlock new revenue without risk. Sift dynamically prevents fraud and abuse through industry-leading technology and expertise, an unrivaled global data network of one trillion (1T) events per year, and a commitment to long-term customer partnerships. Global brands such as DoorDash, Poshmark, and Twitter rely on Sift to gain a competitive advantage in their markets.

Visit us at sift.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).