



Profile

School district of 16,850 students and 2,000 adult staff members, located east of Seattle, Washington

Comprised of 16 elementary schools, five middle schools, four high schools, and two alternative schools

Industry

Education

Websense Solution

Websense Web Security

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Mark Choi

Manager of Instructional Technology
Bellevue School District

case study: Bellevue School District

Safeguard Student Web Access with Websense Web Security

Overview

The Bellevue School District in the state of Washington is located just 10 miles east of Seattle and includes approximately 16,850 students and about 2,000 adult staff members. The school system is comprised of 16 elementary schools, five middle schools, four high schools, and two alternative schools.

The Problem

As part of its responsibility to efficiently manage a network of interconnected server farms, databases, centralized applications and telecommunications infrastructure, IT staff at the Bellevue School District must protect their computer systems from external and internal security risks.

“Right up the street from us is Microsoft in Redmond, Washington. We have a lot of these very technically oriented kids with a lot of time on their hands. They were good, very good, and they were going everywhere and doing everything on our network. We had limited security,” says Mark Choi, manager of instructional technology at Bellevue. “We wanted something that could stop the majority of the kids and allow us to have control over our networks so we could make sure that inappropriate material and malicious content was not coming through.”

“Security is very important to us, so we contacted other school districts to see what they were using to get a sense of what other products were out there and they mentioned Websense® solutions. So we got a demo of the product and we said ‘That’s it, it’s perfect,’” remarked Choi.

The Solution

Bellevue School District chose to implement Websense Web Security over other evaluated security products due to its simplified user interface, detailed database repository and ability to filter by Web content, URLs, online protocols, and productivity groups.

Currently running Websense Web Security in a mixed PC and Macintosh computer environment, Bellevue School District has been able to keep student Web indiscretion to a bare minimum. If any student accesses a restricted site, Choi and his IT staff are immediately alerted. Further, easy-to-read reports are regularly produced that detail Web traffic logs and highlight any items flagged for suspicious activity.

Choi recalled how a Websense Web Security report enabled the school system to quickly solve a mysterious problem which dramatically slowed network performance by 80 percent one spring. The report showed the slowdown was caused by students

Challenge

Needed to manage student Internet access and protect the network from Web-based threats.

Solution

Websense Web Security

Benefits

Full control over network security with easy administration

About Websense

Websense, Inc. (NASDAQ: WBSN) Websense, the global leader in integrated Web, messaging, and data security, enables its customers' success by protecting essential information in the Web 2.0 world. Only Websense solutions provide complete visibility and control over who may use Web, email, or information resources; what information must be protected; how information can be exchanged; and where users and information can go on the Internet. Websense keeps employees productive on any network, anytime and anywhere, to help businesses realize the full potential of constant connectivity while minimizing the risks of data leaks due to human error and malicious attacks. Websense is Essential Information Protection™.

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accessing live streaming video from a single Web site during the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament. Choi blocked access to the site and network bandwidth returned to normal levels.

Websense Web Security version 7 features a redesigned user interface with dashboards to improve reporting, relay data to other business departments, and take action based upon events which have taken place. "I was happy with the new dashboard right out of the box," said Choi. "It's nice to be able to fire up the Websense dashboard and quickly glance at which services are down, what's working, or whether there's a huge spike in traffic, and to be able to see that very, very quickly."

[Websense Web Security](#) protects organizations against spyware, malicious mobile code, and phishing attacks, bots, and other threats. Incorporating the intelligence of the [Websense ThreatSeeker™](#) Network which scans the Internet and parses one billion pieces of content daily to proactively search for threats, Websense Web Security blocks known and new threats within minutes of discovery.

The Results

Expanding the Reach of Security Administrators

By taking advantage of the ability of Websense Web Security to be easily managed via a Web browser, Bellevue School District has dramatically improved productivity by extending its security policy management and administrator controls to additional IT staff members. "I do like the fact that you don't have to install a Java client. You can just go to any Web site with any Web browser and manage your policies, your categories, your users, and other things. Because of that, I've been able to delegate control and I can give different responsibilities to those users. That's been a very nice feature," said Choi.

Securing Content in an Evolving Web 2.0 World

In 2008, Bellevue School District took part in an early beta test of the [Websense Web Security Gateway](#). The Websense Web Security Gateway provides inline inspection of Web traffic, SSL traffic, Web 2.0 applications, and more than 100 network protocols to classify dynamic content in real-time. By using the intelligence of the Websense ThreatSeeker™ Network inline at the organization's Web gateway, Websense Web Security Gateway immediately determines whether the content on a Web site is safe. Rather than block a Web 2.0 site entirely, the solution enables users to recognize any harmful or suspicious content associated with a Web site and keep out only that data —while allowing safe content to securely pass through.

According to Choi, he easily envisioned the benefits of gaining greater control of Web 2.0 types of content, such as iGoogle and other mashups, which is becoming more popular among students and staff. "Right now we're blocking Web 2.0 sites completely. There could be content on that site which is perfectly reasonable, but because it's embedded in other content that is not appropriate, we have to block the whole URL. With Websense Web Security Gateway, we may be able to open up access a little bit more," said Choi.

The Importance of Trust

"I've worked with many different vendors where it was hard to get a hold of anybody to get a question answered and find people to help us with our problem. It was very reassuring that I could just pick up the phone and call someone at Websense to get help right away and get a problem resolved within a reasonable amount of time. Everyone I spoke with was very knowledgeable of the product and had an intelligent answer," Choi remarked.

For a free evaluation of all Websense products or to view our online demos, visit www.websense.com/evaluations.