

Case Study

K-12 Education

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Eliminate expense of additional T1 connection

CUSTOMER:

Mercy High School
Michigan, USA
(800 users, 1 location)

CYMPHONIX PRODUCT:

Network Composer DC30X

MERCY HIGH SCHOOL

Situation

Mercy High School is a Catholic college preparatory school for young women located in Farmington Hills, Michigan, a suburb just outside of Detroit. The school fosters spiritual, intellectual, moral, physical, and cultural development for approximately 800 students enrolled in its curriculum in grades 9 through 12 and employs over 80 staff and faculty members.

Mercy High School is in the process of implementing a 1:1 student to computer ratio and currently utilizes 700 computers across its campus. Once the 1:1 program is fully implemented, each student will have her own wireless tablet. Presently, Mercy High School utilizes a 4.5MB bonded tri-T1 connection and has public access computers located in two instructional computer labs as well as in a third lab located in the school's media center.

Challenge

Once Mercy High School made the decision to integrate the one to one program, Network administrators realized that they needed to have complete control over their users and the sites they had access to during school hours. The school had been operating a Novell product as its content filtering solution; however, the solution was being discontinued and did not provide network administrators with the tools necessary to pull historical data regarding their users and their individual Internet usage.

"We really didn't know where our

traffic was coming from or where our students were going when they were online," commented Adele M. Stommel, IHM and Director of Information Technology for Mercy High School. "Our students are 14 to 18 years old and we needed a solution that would quickly and accurately provide both historical and real-time data so we, as administrators, could monitor student traffic, bandwidth usage and also see what bandwidth capacity we would need to implement in the future as we move from a word processing to a multi-media curriculum."

Solution

Network administrators for Mercy High School wanted to move away from software based content filtering and integrate a gateway appliance that did not require a large investment or require the retraining of current IS staff. The school initially considered solutions from McAfee and SonicWALL but was referred to the Cymphonix product line by value added reseller (VAR), Access Interactive. Access Interactive, also a Cymphonix customer, suggested the Network Composer based on the positive experiences they encountered with the device integrated in its very

Reveal.
Optimize.
Protect.



own network.

"It was extremely beneficial to work with Access Interactive because they not only had experience selling the product, but they are actual users so their personal testimonial was a big selling point. In addition to that, we saw incredible value in the ability to group users and prioritize bandwidth, all while efficiently and most importantly - cost-effectively - controlling Internet content," Stommel continued.



"Before we decided to move forward with a new content filter, we considered installing another T1 connection to help with our bandwidth issues. As it turns out, not only was integrating the Network Composer a more cost-effective decision on our part, but we are now in our second year operating our network at the same bandwidth capacity - even though we have doubled the number of users!"

Adele M. Stommel, IHM and Director of Information Technology
Mercy High School



Once Mercy High School installed the Cymphonix Network Composer DC30, network administrators saw value in their investment within the first week. "Monitoring content is very much a cat and mouse game and Network Composer reduced the frustration of the chase dramatically. Not only does the appliance identify exactly who is accessing the content or attempting to bypass our filters, it also shows how much bandwidth each user is consuming. It was very surprising to us to see that P2P software was one of the biggest bandwidth hogs on our network and it also shocked us to see how much time students were passing throughout the day by visiting sites like YouTube," commented Tom James, Network Administrator. "Finally, it was also interesting for us to be able to see that there was constant bandwidth usage by

teachers streaming media from radio sites," continued James.

Once network administrators had complete visibility into their network traffic, they were able to effortlessly create user groups with varying levels of Internet access for students, teachers, administrators and guests.

Adele Stommel finished, "Before we decided to move forward with a new content filter, we considered installing another T1 connection to help with our bandwidth issues. As it turns out, not only was integrating the Network Composer a more cost-effective decision on our part, but we are now in our second year operating our network at the same bandwidth capacity - even though we have doubled the number of users!"

Success

The Cymphonix Network Composer immediately revealed on the most granular level what activities were taking place across Mercy High School's network and who was responsible for consuming the majority of the school's available bandwidth. This increased visibility allowed network administrators to create specific user groups with varying levels of Internet access so that they could more easily and quickly identify network issues. The integration of the Network Composer has also allowed administrators to avoid the expense of upgrading their bandwidth even though they have doubled the number of users on their network since the integration of the Cymphonix solution.

See for Yourself

See how Network Composer delivers visibility, security, and performance in one reliable package. Contact your Authorized Cymphonix Reseller for an online demonstration or call or email Cymphonix at 866-511-1155 or sales@cymphonix.com



About Cymphonix

Cymphonix Corporation, headquartered in Sandy, Utah, uses patentpending Cross-Layer Intelligence™ (XLI™) technology to provide unmatched network threat protection and resource optimization. With the powerful XLI engine, Cymphonix products seamlessly integrate network protection, application performance, and traffic visibility into a single, easily managed solution. Leading the Cymphonix product line is Network Composer, a smart gateway appliance that helps organizations understand at a glance who is abusing network resources and with what applications - enabling problems to be corrected instantly through a clear, easy-to-manage interface.



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