

Case Study

K-12 Education

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Eliminate bandwidth utilization issues by prioritizing traffic, controlling content

CUSTOMER:

Trinity Preparatory School-
Florida, USA
(900 users, 1 location)

CYMPHONIX PRODUCT:

Network Composer DC30X

TRINITY PREPARATORY
SCHOOL



Situation

Trinity Preparatory School, located in Winter Park, Florida, is an independent college preparatory school with approximately 820 students enrolled in grades 6 through 12. The school's mission is to "develop students who are able to excel in college and beyond, contribute to their communities, lead in a changing society, and grow spiritually." In order to maintain a student-faculty ratio of 12 to 1, Trinity Preparatory employs over 100 staff and administrators.

Operating on a 1GB fiber-backbone network with Cisco wireless access points, Trinity Preparatory manages 350 desktops between classrooms, offices, and two instructional computer labs located throughout campus. The school also has two wireless laptop carts that move among classrooms in addition to two stationary carts that reside within the campus' state-of-the-art library facility.

Challenge

Network administrators for Trinity Preparatory recognized two serious issues within their Cisco firewall infrastructure. First, they were struggling with the misutilization of bandwidth resources. They found that students were accessing web-based materials that monopolized the school's overall bandwidth availability, causing extreme latency for faculty and staff trying to complete necessary daily tasks and lesson plans.

Secondly, the firewall did not provide network administrators the ability to prioritize websites and content but instead, limited users to the confines of a black and white list. "We were unable to prioritize the individual needs of our faculty and students without essentially eliminating the student's ability to access the web. We got to a point where we had to completely block Facebook, Myspace, YouTube and all other streaming media for the entire network, which is not conducive in the academic environment - especially when there is so much content-rich information readily available through sites like these," commented Denise Musselwhite, Director of Technology for Trinity Preparatory. Even with Facebook on the school's black list, their firewall was unable to filter HTTPS traffic so students were still able to access the website simply by using a secure site prefix.

Solution

Trinity Preparatory was first introduced to the Cymphonix Network Composer by a postcard they'd received in the mail. After looking at multiple competitors' products including IronPort, which was out of their budget, and Websense as

Reveal.
Optimize.
Protect.



well as other software based solutions, the school decided to give Cymphonix a try. "We wanted to go with a hardware device instead of software because we have so much traffic running through our server and we wanted to avoid yet another program straining it. Not to mention a hardware device requires less investment in the long run," said Network Engineer Chad Griffith.

The school worked with SL Powers, a value-added reseller (VAR) located in West Palm Beach, to secure a Network Composer DC30X for a trial period. "SL Powers was wonderful to work with and allowed us to have the eval-unit in place for a number of weeks so we could be sure the device was going to solve our issues before buying. Not only that, they were willing to be onsite and help us integrate the Network Composer into our system at no charge," commented Musselwhite.

Once the device was installed, Musselwhite and Griffith saw immediate value in the product. The Network Composer revealed that students were streaming media even more than administrators had originally expected and monopolizing the available bandwidth. "Being able to run a number of reports in real-time and have full visibility of our network is invaluable," said Griffith.

Network Composer has provided Trinity Preparatory the ability to prioritize its web traffic so that faculty and staff no longer experience latency of their network due to students streaming media or visiting bandwidth-intensive sites like Facebook and Myspace. Since the Network Composer is an in-line device that utilizes layer-7 deep packet scanning technology, it has the ability to see all incoming Internet traffic and apply policy to content accessed through HTTPS protocols. "Since the Cymphonix integration, we've completely eliminated the need for our Trend Micro CSC module and now run all content filtering through the Network Composer," added Musselwhite.

Success

The Cymphonix Network Composer immediately revealed that streaming

media was indeed the culprit for lacking bandwidth speeds, however, to a much greater extent than network administrators had originally expected. Upon seeing this information, administrators were able to implement specific bandwidth shaping policies that automatically governed what percentage of bandwidth sites like YouTube could take at any given time. The Cymphonix device also allowed Trinity Preparatory to prioritize websites and applications so that those considered critical to the daily operations of the faculty and staff would take precedence over a request for a social networking site.



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Denise Musselwhite
Director of Technology
Trinity Preparatory School



Finally, the Network Composer has also prevented students from bypassing the content filter configurations by providing complete visibility into all incoming and outgoing Internet traffic requests and even blocks attempted traffic accessed through an anonymous proxy or secure HTTPS protocols.

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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