[content]watch
INTERNET MANAGEMENT

Maximizing Limited Resources Across a Distributed Environment
(Aztec Municipal School District, New Mexico)

Profile

Home to more than 3,000 preschool through high school students and 450 staff members, Aztec Municipal School District (AMSD) is nestled in a rural community in the northwest corner of New Mexico, just in the "four corners area" where New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, and Arizona meet. Although the district is much smaller than most big city districts, it prides itself with providing the best technological resources for both its students and staff while adhering to the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). In fact, AMSD's technology mission is to provide innovative solutions, rapid and reliable communications, operational systems and accurate and timely incident response in support of learning, teaching, working and living in the district.

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Challenge

Like its incredibly diverse student population, AMSD required a diverse, all-in-one solution that would effectively address all of its multifaceted technological needs in a fast-paced environment. Unfortunately, its current security appliance was unable to keep up with the ever-changing dynamics of the Internet. AMSD's technology department began researching alternate solutions. With the entire district utilizing one centralized server and the inability to find a solution that could meet all of their needs, the technology team considered breaking up functions and purchasing multiple solutions to get the best products for each task.

"With the varying needs that existed across multiple locations, we were unable to find a singular, cost-effective solution that had all of the features we required," said Nathan Holmes, AMSD technology director. "To meet our growing needs, we felt our only option was to purchase individual solutions and put them together to create a comprehensive, reliable system."

AMSD's requirements included the following:

- Dynamic Content Filtering
- Bandwidth and Internet Activity Management
- Spyware and Virus Prevention
- Peer-to-Peer / Instant Messaging Activity
- Detailed Reporting
- Proxy Site Prevention
- SSL Certificates support
- Flexible settings control

Purchasing multiple products, however, proved to be time consuming, expensive and the products did not all function well together. Holmes and his team were also disappointed with the other all-in-one solutions they reviewed due to their cost, inefficiency and lack of control.

Solution

After an exhaustive search with no results, one vendor suggested testing ContentWatch's ContentProtect Security Appliance. Holmes and his team were immediately satisfied, finding that the product not only delivered everything they required, but the features performed optimally and quickly with one another, saving the district and technology team time and money. "We didn't have to make the decision between high performance and affordability with ContentProtect—we were able to get everything we needed within our budget," said Holmes.

The scalable and high-performing ContentProtect CP 450S Security Appliance offers filtering, traffic shaping, high-level reporting and the ability to integrate with the active directory and break information down on a granular level. And perhaps what is most important to any educational institution of any size, ContentProtect has been able to effectively counter the fast-paced growth of social networking sites and streaming media. The solution is uniquely situated from other all-in-one solutions in that it not only has the ability to control bandwidth, but its flexibility in doing so, based on different situations and needs, has allowed the technology department to create standard protocol, as well as change specifications on the fly. Finally, the ContentProtect Security Appliance is optimized to provide best-of-breed performance and functionality with fast results. Uniquely situated at the gateway, ContentProtect monitors everything going in and out in real-time without slowing down throughput.

In addition, AMSD is now able to provide each school department with a customized environment. Unlike the district's previous solution that forced it to set standard parameters for all groups without exceptions, ContentProtect's features create efficiencies within the various departments and allow the technology department to manage the content flow based on need.

Troubleshooting is also a less arduous process and there are fewer false positives. Holmes and his team can proactively see the district's online activities, so they can manage an infected computer or other issues before it affects the entire network. Granular reports provide needed data to allocate bandwidth to critical groups and identify where potential problems reside before they create more costly and detrimental issues.

Result

"One of the key reasons we went with ContentWatch over other solutions was the ease of use and the detailed reporting capabilities," said Holmes. "And, with the real-time monitoring, we can proactively manage things before they become an issue and immediately see what is going on and why."

Today, AMSD is proud of its safe online environment as well as its ability to monitor Internet activity in real-time. Although students still attempt to utilize proxies to access blocked sites, ContentProtect has circumvented most of the known proxy sites and the number has dramatically decreased.

"In the past, we didn't have the flexibility to create a safe, efficient environment that met the needs of students and faculty," said Holmes. "ContentProtect allows us to do that and be more proactive in our efforts, saving time and money overall. We couldn't have asked for a better appliance. It really made the grade."

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Nathan Holmes
AMSD technology director

About Aztec Municipal School District

Aztec Municipal School District (AMSD) is located in a rural community in the San Juan River Basin, in the northwest corner of New Mexico. AMSD has six schools and serves a diverse student population of more than 3,000 students in preschool through grade twelve. The district employs more than 250 certified staff members and a support staff of more than 150 to provide transportation and educational services to students.

For more information, visit: www.aztecschools.com .

About ContentWatch, Inc.

Based in Salt Lake City, ContentWatch delivers Internet security solutions for the consumer and business markets. ContentWatch intends to lead the global industry with Internet management tools and services that employ its patent-pending contextual analysis engine to provide a safer, more productive Internet experience. ContentWatch delivers Internet Management solutions in more than 157 countries, and is the Reviewer's Choice for Government Computer News and Editors' Choice for PCMag.

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