



Profile

General further education college

12,000 students and 600 permanent staff

An annual turnover of £24 million

Industry

Education

Websense Integration

Websense Web Security™

“Websense’s reporting feature is intelligent enough to detect proxy evasion, which warns us if someone using a college PC is trying to get round the filtering we have in place. On these rare occasions, it is possible that one of our students is deliberately trying to get round our Internet security so we contact them and politely ask them to stop. Websense makes it very quick and easy for us to do this and nip any potential problems in the bud.”

Simon Tams

Network & Security Manager,
City College Coventry



case study: City College Coventry

City College Coventry provides secure online learning environment for its students and staff with Websense

Overview

City College Coventry is a large general further education college, opened in 2002. Following the merger of two colleges with some 12,000 students and 600 permanent staff, its mission is to cater for its students diverse education needs and to integrate education further into business and social communities.

The college offers a wide variety of courses ranging from construction to humanities and beauty therapy. It is strongly committed to widening the participation of groups who have not traditionally entered further education and those who are disadvantaged.

The Problem

With thousands of students accessing the Internet at any one time and usage of Web 2.0 sites on the increase, City College Coventry had growing concerns that it was adequately protecting its students and network.

“One of the trends affecting us is signing up to social networking sites,” says Simon Tams, Network and Security Manager. “While we recognise the importance of these sites to our students for personal and social use, unlimited access can sometimes be an issue during classes – there is always the temptation for our students to be using social networking sites rather than focusing on studies. In addition, these and other Web 2.0 sites can considerably drain bandwidth and we needed to be able to free up space for learning purposes if this was required.”

It falls to the colleges’ IT department to manage the computer, network and Internet resources across the multiple sites. Despite using a basic Web filtering to block access to specific Web Sites, it had become evident that the college needed a more customised product to better manage Internet access.

“We have a responsibility to ensure that our campus is safe and enjoyable for everyone who studies here and uses our facilities,” says Tams. “Our duty of care is to all our students including those who are more vulnerable learners; those in younger age groups or who have learning disabilities.”

The Solution

In order to safeguard its students and networks from Web threats, City College Coventry chose to implement Websense – providing flexibility and granular control over how the students and staff use the valuable learning resource. The solution ensures that while students and staff have Internet access when they need for their studies, it prevents Web misuse and potential security threats.

Intelligent Web filtering

Websense’s intelligent and adaptable content filtering has provided the college with more than a simple tool for blocking Web sites. “We rarely experience issues with the surfing habits of our students,” adds Tams. “The ability to categorise and restrict access to Web sites was one factor in our decision, but it was very important to choose a tool that offered insightfulness in the way this was done.”

Websense offers improved reporting and analysis which Tams and his team are able to access through the click of a button. The solution automatically reports any students who are misusing the Internet and trying to evade the policies that the college has in place for Web access.

“The reporting feature is intelligent enough to detect proxy evasion, which warns us if someone using college PCs is trying to get round the filtering we have in place. On these rare occasions, it is possible that one of our students is deliberately trying to avoid our Internet security so we contact them and politely ask them to stop. Websense makes it very quick and easy for us to do this and nip any potential problems in the bud.”

Challenge

Protect students from online threats and manage the increasing use of Web 2.0

Solution

Websense Web Security

Benefits

Robust and real-time Web security, tailored Web use policy and flexible control

About Websense

Websense, Inc. (NASDAQ: WBSN), a global leader in integrated Web, data and email security solutions, provides Essential Information Protection™ for approximately 44 million product seats under subscription. Distributed through its global network of channel partners, Websense software and hosted security solutions help organisations block malicious code, prevent the loss of confidential information and enforce Internet use and security policies. For more information, visit www.websense.com.

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Duty of care to younger students

In addition to its traditional student base, City College Coventry provides learning resources for those with learning disabilities and younger students who are part of the UK government's Increased Flexibility Agenda, or who are disaffected and require education outside the traditional state school system. Although fewer than 5% of the college's students fall into the 11-16 age group, Tams and his team need to protect these individuals from what they see and do on the Internet under the 2007 Every Child Matters UK government legislation.

"Our obligation of care is even greater to this younger age group. For example, we'd allow our students aged 16+ with access to sites providing relevant advice on things like drugs or alcohol, but for under 16s we need to adhere to entirely different legislation. Websense enables us the flexibility to enforce different policies for these age groups and thus deliver on our duty of care for all our students. For our youngest students, we increasingly need to be wary and protect against cyber-bullying and prevent these students from accessing material inappropriate for their age."

Wider protection

As well as providing students with a secure Web environment, City College Coventry was aware of its need to safeguard its network from the wave of threats it was facing daily. Websense Web Security protects organisations against spyware, malicious mobile code, phishing attacks, bots, and other threats. Incorporating the intelligence of the Websense ThreatSeeker Network which scans the Internet and reviews one billion pieces of content daily to proactively search for threats, Websense Web Security blocks known and new threats within minutes of discovery.

The Websense ThreatSeeker Network adaptive security technology uses more than 50 million real-time data collecting systems that continuously monitor Internet content - including new and dynamic content - for emerging threats. The ThreatSeeker Network feeds this intelligence into its Web security, messaging security and data loss prevention solutions. As a result, Websense is able to adapt to the rapidly changing threat landscape at speeds not possible by traditional security solutions and basic email filtering solutions.

Smooth integration

It was also essential to the college that its Web filtering solution integrated fully with Microsoft Active Directory, which provides learning resources to groups of students and departments.

Other reasons for choosing Websense include ease of integration with the IT standards set by the college and scalability to work across multiple sites, with the IT requirements at each site varying according to need.

Websense can be adapted for the main servers at the Swanswell campus or standalone servers at one of the satellite sites or outreach centres. "Anything we purchase has to fit into the IT standards and design we have set for the entire college infrastructure. Not only was Websense software very easy to run alongside our Cisco network, it sat in line with the firewall, so any traffic going in and out of the college IT system also had to go through the Websense box giving an extra layer of protection."

The Results

Websense Web Security has enabled City College Coventry to provide a safe learning and working environment which maximises the educational power of the Web while mitigating the potential risks.

The college is now able protect its students, staff and network from Internet threats with flexibility and confidence. With the Websense solution the IT team can easily set appropriate policies across a broad spectrum of learning age groups and needs.

In addition, City College Coventry is able to take advantage of real-time security. Despite the evolving nature of the Internet and the college's initial concern at the use of Web 2.0 amongst students, it is possible for it to have greater control through Websense. Ultimately, students benefit in their studies, while the college is protected from the threats Web 2.0 presents to many unsecure businesses.

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