

In the Age of Internet

Keeping a Small Company Safe

With more than 35 years of construction experience, Flaherty Construction, Inc., of Mokena, Ill., has built its reputation on integrity, assurance, and peace of mind. Particularly as a family owned and operated company, Flaherty is extremely conscious of conducting a business that carries the family's name.

Overall, the company comprises 80 employees, of which the majority are field workers building the company's homes. There are fewer than 20 office employees, and of those, the company requires just 15 PCs.

However, in the world of Internet access, even 15 employees using computers are more than ample for putting a company at risk. In February 2005, a computer in one of the offsite offices suddenly developed trouble. As managers investigated the computer, it was quickly apparent that the PC had been used to download a quantity of questionable material. Not only had the material been brought into a company worksite, but the downloads had brought computer viruses, too. Now the computer—and the work for that entire office site—had been brought to its knees.

Prior to this situation, the company had realized for some time that it would need to find a solution for Internet filtering—but with an entire office disabled, the situation was now dire. There would need to be a solution, and it would need to be cost effective, easy to implement, and available fast.

As with many smaller businesses, Flaherty doesn't employ any full time Information Technology (IT) staff. The company's accountant, Rob Kmetz, also fills the company's computer technology role.

“For some time, we had known that we were losing a lot of productive work time to unnecessary web browsing,” Kmetz said. “But with questionable material being downloaded, we were also facing a liability concern.”

To protect the employees from the unwanted material—as well as to protect the computers from virus and malware—Kmetz began the search for an appropriate tool.

Many options surfaced, but virtually all of the business-oriented solutions were well beyond the budget and technology boundaries of a smaller firm.

He narrowed his search to the top three tools on Yahoo, and among the three products he tested, decided to download a free trial of ContentWatch's ContentProtect.

“We’ve been thrilled with this solution,” Kmetz reports. “Not only did it give us the protection we needed, we soon realized that we were now also effectively eliminating unproductive web surfing time. We recouped the cost of the 10 software licenses we purchased during the two week trial period alone.”

“This is a perfect solution for small to medium-sized businesses that can’t afford expensive firewall software,” Kmetz adds. “The software is fantastic. It allows us to easily allow or disallow any website where we see a lot of activity occurring.”



Kmetz recommends that anyone considering a web filtering solution simply give the ContentProtect free trial a try.

“If you run an activity report on your router before installing ContentProtect—or perhaps just leave the software open to any site for a few days after installing—you will have the basis for knowing just how much unproductive and even inappropriate web surfing is occurring during your company’s time.”

“With ContentProtect, it’s easy to see the contrast in the nature and use of your employee’s Internet time. I would imagine that any company would be likely to recoup the cost of their software license within the very first month,” Kmetz maintains.

Have any employees complained?

“Our employees understand the liability issues, and they know and respect our responsibility to protect them from inappropriate content on the company computers they use,” said Kmetz. “The few complainers tend to be the folks who are guilty of unproductive surfing—but our software is easy to adjust day by day as it’s needed, and we have run into very few real complaints.”

For a smaller company, assurance and peace of mind are essential. And for Flaherty Construction, ContentProtect has provided the critical key.