

ContentWatch Helps Protect Children from Pornography

Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School

ContentProtect from ContentWatch ensures that youth are adequately safeguarded, and that schools are Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) compliant

Background

The Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School (PA Cyber) began providing education in 1999 to students who have not had their needs met in a traditional educational setting. PA Cyber's services and educational programs use current technology necessary for these students to earn a high school diploma as well as giving them the opportunity to grow beyond the normal curriculum and confines of a traditional school setting.

Each student at PA Cyber receives a personal computer to take home for online assignments, allowing them to electronically enter a virtual classroom with other students and a teacher.

Problem

PA Cyber, now in its 6th year, has experienced phenomenal growth and expects that growth will only continue, having enrolled an additional 1,200 students this school year alone. With this prosperous increase in enrollment, coupled with the ubiquity of Internet pornography and other objectionable content, the school needed to monitor students' online activity while maintaining educational productivity. PA Cyber's daunting task meant monitoring online activity of about 4,600 students.

Because of PA Cyber's reliance upon state-of-the-art technology to teach appropriate courses to students, their educational structure was in jeopardy unless there was a way to monitor and filter online activity.

Even with the previous software PA Cyber was using, students would occasionally come across pornography and other inappropriate content. The program was difficult to manage with the broad and wide circulation of the PA Cyber student body. At any given time, only a couple of dozen students had the software working correctly on their computers.

"Over the course of the last school year, I saw what kind of junk could come up in front of them whether they purposely click on it or not," says Brian Laquinta, PA Cyber's technical support manager.

Solution

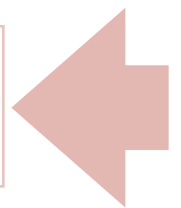
ContentWatch is an innovative company focused on delivering Internet protection solutions for consumers, small businesses, libraries and educational institutions. ContentWatch's top-rated, Internet filter, ContentProtect is specifically designed for the non-technical user.

In the spring of 2004, and beginning with a beta version, Laquinta ordered ContentProtect Internet filtering for 2,200 student computers. Because of the product's unique Web-based Remote Management tools, installing and administrating the software was easy. With the Remote Management tools, Laquinta, or another staff member of PA Cyber, can sign onto ContentWatch's Web administration site and manage online activity and change Internet usage policies from any location. This allowed school staff to protect, filter and monitor the online activity of their students remotely.

"If it's blocking a site we need for school, I can grant access to it from my desk right here on the spot and it instantly goes out to all our PCs in the state," Laquinta says. "ContentProtect is the only product I could find that would do that."

Currently, PA Cyber uses ContentProtect dynamic context Web filter to block all pornography, hate-speech and violence based Web sites. With ContentProtect's custom URL list manager, PA Cyber can recategorize and designate sites that they don't want to filter. A powerful reporting tool enables Laquinta to track where students are spending their time online through detailed reports that outline where, students are spending time, how much time they are spending on certain web sites, how often the sites are being visited and more. All this through a unique, interactive report tool found in ContentProtect. Laquinta says he would like to keep the worst things blocked across the board to avoid accidental exposure.

By implementing ContentProtect Internet filtering PA Cyber has been able to safeguard their students from the wiles of those creating pornographic pop-ups and other adult content Web sites.



PA Cyber has found other applications for ContentProtect. Instant Messaging, for example, has become a popular form of communicating for youth. "Students would use Instant Messaging for things such as cheating on exams," Laquinta says. "But with ContentProtect, I could block access to popular Instant Message applications completely."

Beginning with the 2006 school year PA Cyber will implement ContentProtect on an additional 2,000 computers. Laquinta says he hopes to have all student computers equipped with ContentProtect to ensure full protection for all PA Cyber's students.

Conclusion

Just as ContentWatch's Internet protection tools safeguarded PA Cyber's student body, it can help other schools and small-medium business

maintain safe online activity. Businesses, mid-market companies, government agencies, schools and districts nationwide depend on the Internet for various purposes. ContentWatch allows online activity to continue, while keeping the subject matter retrieved conducive to the business and educational purposes.