



“Thousands of schools and millions of children in the UK continue to rely on Netsweeper to deliver appropriate Internet filtering.”

The Need...

Managed Internet Service Providers face several unique challenges when they take on schools as customers; challenges that are quite different from business or residential customers. Schools have a constantly changing user group, regulators and parents to satisfy. Schools also are home to some of the most gifted computer hackers on the planet.

Synetrix, the premier provider of applications and infrastructure for the UK Public Sector and Education, required an Internet Content Filtering solution which would provide the highest level of categorization accuracy and would also easily integrate with the variety of user authentication methods used by their customers. In particular, one of Synetrix' largest customers, the London Grid for Learning (LGfL) was responsible for protecting over 1.2 million students and faculty.

With their own fiber optic network, servicing 2,684 schools, Synetrix also required a solution in the core of the network that would manage an average of 1 billion user requests per week, yet not incur network overhead, administrative bottlenecks or system degradation.

The Solution...

Synetrix chose to deploy Netsweeper which would work with the diverse group of the authentication systems deployed by their education customers. This solution was capable of handling the anticipated bandwidth spikes and very high volume of similar or identical sites being accessed.

The Netsweeper Categorization Engines with their categorize-on-demand architecture was an ideal fit for a school environment. This ensured that inappropriate content was categorized and blocked on the first attempt. Unlike other filtering systems which allow inappropriate new URLs to be accessible for days, categorize-on-demand was able to block any new sites that were recently categorized and deemed inappropriate.

Additionally, the delegation of some administrative functions to senior staff at each school was an absolute requirement. Using Netsweeper's SysOp (System Operator) capability, Synetrix can allocate a variety of privileges to named staff at each school, allowing the school some autonomy over their day-to-day use while Synetrix maintains system wide administration.



About Netsweeper Inc.

Netsweeper Inc. empowers organizations to guard against Internet abuse and to offer their end users a secure, productive Internet experience, protected from harmful, malicious and inappropriate content. Netsweeper provides intelligent, network and workstation based web filtering technology to corporations, Internet Service Providers, educational institutions, government organizations and OEM partners worldwide.

True ROI: Netsweeper provides educational organizations with reliable and accurate filtering solutions that are CIPA and BECTA. Netsweeper solutions are cost effective and reduce legal liabilities of schools, boards, districts and departments while keeping the Internet experience of students safe, simple and secure.

Immense Flexibility: Netsweeper Filtering solutions allow for multiple deployment scenarios and are flexible to accommodate the needs of educational environments. From network-based filtering to downloadable client versions on student laptops, Netsweeper provides educational organizations with the options to meet all of their filtering needs and protect their students.

Unparalleled Speed and Accuracy: Netsweeper Filtering utilizes advanced AI systems that actively scan the Internet and categorize pages on the fly as internet users request them. The Filtering has been optimized for speed and boasts over 94% categorization accuracy rate.

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The Implementation...

Initially, Synetrix used Squid proxy servers, communicating with dedicated Policy Servers for each major Learning Authority (LA). This allowed the necessary throughput and gave each LA the ability to define unique policies for their schools.

Recently, Synetrix replaced the proxy servers with the Netsweeper Enterprise Filter. This provides for greater throughput and also provides application filtering – specifically Instant Messaging.

Synetrix also used the Netsweeper AdminAPI to interact with the various user authentication systems. Each Policy Server is load balanced, providing redundancy.

The Outcome...

Today, LGfL uses Netsweeper to filter approximately 2 Gb per second of HTTP traffic and 10,000 HTTP requests per second. To control this type of traffic, each school in the region is provided with 2 policies – one for students, the other for teachers. Having also delegated administration rights to named staff at each of the schools, Synetrix allows LGfL staff to create additional policies on an as needed basis.

The accuracy of the solution has met the school's needs and more importantly, has met the expectations of BECTA (the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency). BECTA sets the standards for computer and Internet use for school in the U.K. Meeting BECTA's requirements provides a level of security expected by the British government and parents alike.

Synetrix, the client...

Synetrix is an experienced provider of bespoke ICT solutions which may include infrastructure, managed services and application services to the public sector. Education customers number into the thousands of locations across the UK. Its expertise is in delivering collaborative e-learning platforms and personalized applications that span connectivity and security services, integration and hosting, and desktop management.

www.synetrix.co.uk

