

# Clintondale Community Schools

## Role-Based permissions protects students from Inappropriate Websites

### Case Study

#### Situation

Clintondale Community School District is located in Clinton Township, Mich., northeast of Detroit in southern Macomb County. The Clintondale school district includes a preschool, three elementary schools (McGlennen, Rainbow and Parker Elementary), Clintondale Middle School, Clintondale High School and Clintondale Continuing Education Center.

The school district has more than 2,300 students and 500 faculty and staff dispersed throughout five buildings. Each of the three elementary schools has a computer lab and the high school has three computer labs. Such easy access to the Internet ensures that every child touches a computer every day. This also brings about security problems as students are becoming more tech savvy.



With a diverse group of Internet users, it was impossible for the IT staff at Clintondale Community Schools to set different Internet permission levels. Realizing that faculty and staff sometimes needed to view Websites that students didn't need to access such as YouTube, or Yahoo! Video, the school district decided to look for a new Web filtering solution.

Another issue that the IT staff was having with the previous Web filtering solution was students accessing proxy sites to go around what was blocked by the school district.

"With more than 3,000 new proxy sites being created each day, we were struggling to keep up to date with those sites," said Len Lewandowski, director of IT at Clintondale Community Schools. "We needed to quickly find a solution that would allow us to easily keep track of those sites as well as securely protect our students, faculty and staff from unwanted Websites."

When it came time to look for a new vendor for the Web filtering solution, Clintondale Community Schools turned to its trusted partner, UltraLevel. Headquartered in Detroit, UltraLevel, Inc. is focused on utilizing information technology to maximize its clients' bottom line. Having previously worked with Fortinet®, UltraLevel suggested that Clintondale Community Schools select Fortinet for a complete unified and integrated threat management solution.

"We chose Fortinet because it offered the ability to scale and grow to the school's needs by easily adding security functionality in the future as needed," commented Lewandowski.

#### Solution

When determining what Websites are appropriate for the students at the individual schools, Lewandowski and his team rely on three factors. First, they have to consider what is acceptable by the community. Secondly, each school has different needs based on the ages of the students. What is appropriate for a high school age student might not be appropriate for a first grader, so this becomes an important factor. The third factor is Fortinet's FortiGuard® Network's list of approved Websites.

**Deployment:**  
FortiGate-500A  
FortiAnalyzer-800B

**Industry:**  
Education

A FortiGate®-500A appliance was deployed at the school district's main office and is providing Web filtering protection for the students, faculty and staff of the school district. Since deploying the Fortinet appliance, the IT staff can create permissions based on user type (i.e. students can't access YouTube, Yahoo! videos or MySpace, but faculty and staff can).

The school district was also in need of a network security reporting and analysis solution so that they could analyze network activity. The natural solution was Fortinet's FortiAnalyzer™-800B appliance. The FortiAnalyzer system is easily aggregating, analyzing and reporting on Internet usage of thousands of students, faculty and staff. FortiAnalyzer is allowing the school district to simplify and centralize the collection and analysis of log and event data from the FortiGate appliances. It then delivers highly relevant network reports and valuable intelligence on network usage.

"We wanted to be able to get very granular with our network reporting and the FortiAnalyzer is allowing us to do just that," added Lewandowski.

## Success

Prior to deploying the FortiGate-500A appliance, individual schools would send Website requests to the school district for review. About a week later, the changes would be made. Using the old Web filtering solution, global changes were made but the IT administrators were not able to make local changes specific to each individual school. In essence, the school district was doing the primary filtering of Websites and would leave the fine tuning to the individual schools. Now with the FortiGate appliance deployed, the individual schools can add or remove blocked sites almost immediately and therefore have more local control and responsibility over their network usage.

To help manage the plethora of sites available on the Internet, including proxy sites, Clintondale Community Schools relies on Fortinet's FortiGuard Network which helps ensure protection against the most damaging, content-based threats from email and Web traffic such as viruses, worms, intrusions, other unwanted network traffic and more. Website permission updates are automatically pushed to the FortiGate appliance so that Lewandowski and his team don't have to figure out which sites should be blocked. And, if there is a site that the FortiGuard Network blocked that Lewandowski and/or his faculty and staff don't think should be blocked, it's simple enough for them to go into the FortiGate GUI and allow the site.

"The FortiGuard Network is phenomenal and the amount of administrative time saved by my team is invaluable and has allowed us to focus efforts in other areas," concluded Lewandowski.

Another benefit is that by using FortiAnalyzer, the IT staff is able to aggregate and analyze log data from the FortiGate appliances in order to provide the network administrators with the most comprehensive view of network usage and security information. Prior to FortiAnalyzer, Lewandowski and his team had to manually review the logs of all 2,300 students and 400-500 faculty/staff and see what sites were being viewed. The previous solution wasn't very user friendly and the reviewing of logs had to be done on a user basis rather than site basis. Fortinet's FortiAnalyzer lets the IT staff see logs based on sites viewed as well as being able to drill down by the user. Now the IT staff can view what an individual is viewing as well as analyze the most viewed sites – often resulting in finding common proxy sites that the students are trying to use.

Another benefit of the FortiGate appliances is the integrated and unified approach to network security. Although Clintondale Community Schools is solely using the FortiGate appliance for Web content filtering, as the school district grows and has greater network security needs, Fortinet can easily allow the IT team to add network security functionalities such as firewall, antivirus, virtual private networking and anti-spam. In addition, Fortinet's custom ASIC accelerates network performance rather than degrading it when additional security functionalities are added.

## About Fortinet

Fortinet is the pioneer and leading provider of ASIC-accelerated unified threat management, or UTM, security systems, which are used by enterprises and service providers to increase their security while reducing total operating costs. Fortinet solutions were built from the ground up to integrate multiple levels of security protection—including firewall, antivirus, intrusion prevention, VPN, spyware prevention and anti-spam -- designed to help customers protect against network and content level threats. Leveraging a custom ASIC and unified interface, Fortinet solutions offer advanced security functionality that scales from remote office to chassis-based solutions with integrated management and reporting. Fortinet solutions have won multiple awards around the world and are the only security products that are certified in six programs by ICSA Labs: (Firewall, Antivirus, IPSec, SSL, Network IPS and Anti-spam). Fortinet is privately held and based in Sunnyvale, California.

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