



Taking Anonymous Proxies To Task: Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD Halts Emerging Threat

Client:

Waterford-Halfmoon
Union Free School District

Web Site:

www.whufsd.org

Number of Users:

1,000

Requirements:

Web Filtering and Reporting

Solutions:

8e6 Professional Edition and 8e6 Mobile
Client

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Joe Spretty
Network Manager

Profile

Located in Saratoga County, New York, the Waterford-Halfmoon Union Free School District (UFSD) serves approximately 1,000 students in grades K-12.

Integral to the education process, computers equipped with Internet access are available to staff and students. Accordingly, the district provides a safe and educational computing environment for its students and staff.

Challenge

Like most school districts across the nation, the Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD faces a proliferation of anonymous proxies, as well as savvy students who know how to bypass existing Web filters. With limited resources, network managers need to save the time and cost associated with monitoring, detecting and blocking prohibited content.

Joe Spretty, a Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD network manager, originally implemented a filtering solution from SurfControl to prevent students from accessing inappropriate or threatening content from school computers. Initially SurfControl fulfilled the district’s security requirements, but over time, the solution failed to detect more sophisticated, emerging anonymous proxies.

According to Spretty, “It seemed that it was quite easy for students to find an unfiltered, uncategorized anonymous proxy site.”

After researching open source programs like Circumventor, Spretty realized that filtering anonymous proxies based solely on a list-type database would never be effective. He needed a more innovative solution – one that could detect proxies based on their unique pattern or signature.

Solution

After researching the topic, Spretty found Marshal8e6 online and contacted the company for additional information about its solution. Promptly, Marshal8e6 set up an online WebEx conference to demonstrate the Web filtering and reporting capabilities of its signature product, the 8e6 Professional Edition. Plus, the product offers historical and detailed reports, as well as up-to-the-minute graphical snapshots of Internet traffic.

Spretty discovered that Marshal8e6 employs “Proxy Pattern Detection,” a unique signature-based technology, to detect and block Web-based proxies/anonymizers as they occur. This was a welcome alternative to list-based methods which often turn up prohibited URLs weeks or even months after a breach has occurred.

“I was pleased to see there was a Web filter on the market that took the anonymous proxy problem into great consideration,” said Spretty.

Impressed by the demonstration, Spretty contacted other network managers in the school districts under the Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex (WSWHE) BOCES to ascertain their interest in changing Web filtering products.

He received an overwhelming response, including a deluge of questions about the Marshal8e6 solution. Consequently, the company presented another WebEx demonstration to the other districts served within the WSWHE BOSES and received enthusiastic feedback.

The result? Twelve districts and the WSWHE BOCES decided to purchase the 8e6 Professional Edition and 8e6 Mobile Client, a remote laptop filtering solution.

Spretty and the other district network managers appreciated the features offered by the Marshal8e6 Internet filtering and reporting solution, specifically:

- **Signature/Pattern-based Detection**
Only Marshal8e6 uses signature-based blocking technology to detect and block Web-based proxies, IM/P2P, streaming media, remote access applications and online/network games.
- **Invisible/pass-by network configuration**
When deployed in pass-by (transparent) mode, the 8e6 R3000 Internet Filter resides outside the flow of network traffic to deliver network compatibility, scalability and unmatched performance.
- **Transparent domain user authentication**
Network managers can easily identify individual students and staff who violate the district's Acceptable Use Policies.
- **Intuitive GUI/product ease-of-administration**
Easy to install, configure and maintain, the 8e6 Professional Edition includes responsive and world-class technical support free of charge.
- **K-12 specific feature set**
Education-specific features include: a CIPA Rule enhanced database, X-Strikes blocking, Google/Yahoo! SafeSearch enforcement, authentication, and multi-tiered multi-site administration.
- **Detailed Reporting**
Can quickly generate detailed Web usage reports, either custom or canned, with drill down capabilities that help in establishing "user intent".

Because Marshal8e6 is uniquely experienced with the K-12 education sector, Spretty knew he would receive the best possible solution for Waterford-Halfmoon UFSD students.

Result

Initially, Spretty configured the Marshal8e6 filter to run in parallel with the SurfControl filter, enabling him to uncover what content Marshal8e6 detected that SurfControl missed.

"To date the Marshal8e6 filter has caught a significant amount of proxies, games and other inappropriate material that the SurfControl filter never knew existed," said Spretty. After implementing the Marshal 8e6 Web filtering solution, students can no longer circumvent their school's Web filter.

Spretty continued, "I'm truly impressed at how the Marshal8e6 filter uses a multi-layered approach to thwart off anonymous proxy threats."

About Marshal8e6

Marshal8e6 is a global provider of Secure Internet Gateway products for organizations of all sizes. Marshal8e6 is the only security company capable of delivering comprehensive content security across multiple delivery platforms, including software, appliances and Software-as-a-service (SaaS). The company's complete security portfolio delivers the tools necessary to manage and secure email, Web and the endpoint as well as protect against data leakage. Today, more than 16 million end users in more than 20,000 companies in 96 countries rely on Marshal8e6 solutions to protect their businesses at the email and Web gateway.



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