



Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology Gives M86 Security an A+ for CIPA Compliance

Client:

RINET (Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology)

Web Site:

www.ri.net

Number of Users:

183,000+

Requirements:

Web Filtering

Solutions:

M86 Web Filter

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Pam Christman
Director of Technology Programs
and Services

Profile

The Rhode Island Network for Educational Technology (RINET), a non-profit corporation, is a collaborative center for developing partnerships and technologies to foster educational and community excellence in Rhode Island. Utilizing its statewide network, RINET supports its members' collective technology needs. RINET's programs and services include high-speed Internet access to schools, libraries, and municipalities; E-rate application assistance; data services; and email services such as virus protection and listserv management. With over 175,000 students and 7,500 teachers, RINET provides services to 100% of Rhode Island's public school districts, as well as many private and independent schools.

The Challenge

The majority of schools depend on federal technology funding that demands compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). In response to this requirement, Rhode Island's schools and districts asked RINET to find a centralized solution capable of supporting multiple high-bandwidth sites while allowing each entity to set its own filtering parameters and rules. In addition to finding a solution that fit administrator needs, RINET needed to effectively curb "illegal" Web site surfing. Schools had experienced problems with students attempting to access unacceptable sites, as well as bandwidth-consuming music file sharing and broadband radio.

With these issues in mind, RINET reviewed a variety of Internet filtering products. Director of Technology Programs and Network Services, Pam Christman, says, "We researched a number of products, but found they were too expensive and the interface was not as user-friendly as the M86 Web Filter appliance. We chose M86 over competitors because of tech support assurance, the Linux-based appliance, friendly interface, and ease of use and management."

Solutions

The M86 Web Filter is the company's flagship filtering appliance, offering an easy to use Java-based GUI, a database consisting of millions of Web sites in 100+ categories, transparent user authentication, and instant message and peer-to-peer file share blocking. The M86 Web Filter, in particular, has GigE-ready capability and enhanced system board features, where users may see improved performance gains of up to 33% depending on their network infrastructure. In addition, the appliance is completely backward compatible, providing a cost-efficient way to future-proof a school district's technology. What this means is that the M86 Web Filter is able to handle higher bandwidth while remaining user-friendly and cost-effective.

Christman adds, "Downstream administration and M86's pass-by technology make the M86 Web Filter a superior product. Downstream administration means that we can offer to our members a service that truly meets their CIPA compliance requirements by allowing them to set their own community-developed filtering parameters. Local administrators have the flexibility to make changes when they are needed." In addition, M86's pass-by technology ensures that nothing slows down on the RINET infrastructure. "For instance," Christman says, "we never run the risk of having our video-over-IP traffic degraded due to Internet content filtering."

Result

With over 100,000 Internet users at any given time, RINET found the M86 Web Filter to be an excellent solution to keeping bandwidth congestion down and Internet learning up. Christman says, "The pass-by filtering technology from M86 allows normal traffic and high bandwidth applications (such as video conferencing) to flow smoothly, while keeping students safer on the Internet." She adds, "M86 was the logical choice for RINET in 2001 and remains so today. Use of the M86 Web Filter allows schools and districts to maintain CIPA compliance, which means that RINET members remain eligible for federal E-rate funding."

ABOUT M86 SECURITY

M86 Security is the global expert in real-time threat protection and the industry's leading Secure Web Gateway provider. The company's appliance, software, and Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions for Web and email security protect more than 24,000 customers and over 17 million users worldwide. M86 products use patented real-time code analysis and behavior-based malware detection technologies as well as threat intelligence from M86 Security Labs to protect networks against new and advance threats, secure confidential information, and ensure regulatory compliance. The company is based in Orange, California with international headquarters in London and development centers in California, Israel, and New Zealand.

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