



Industry: Education
No. of Users: 1,100
Solution: UTM

Requirements

- An all-in-one content filter and firewall
- Real-time, content-aware filtering
- Engaged technical support

What's the background?

South Beloit Community Unit School District is a public K-12 district in Illinois with 1,100 students across five schools: Clark Elementary School, Riverview Elementary School, Blackhawk Elementary, South Beloit Junior High and South Beloit High School.

The technology team, headed by Buddy Pride, Director of Curriculum and Technology, manages internet access centrally across all sites.

Access to the internet is required for students, teachers, and guests, and the connection is provided thru a single centralized connection, with each individual site linked to the network by fiber.

All students from 1st thru 12th grade have 1-to-1 Chromebooks, and there are eight shared devices in each kindergarten class. Teachers use a combination of laptops and hardwired desktops.

What was the problem?

Buddy tells us a major problem with their previous solution were compatibility errors between the filter and the firewall. **"We were having issues with sites that were being allowed through the filter being blocked at the firewall level,"** says Buddy. This double-work ate into their productivity.

The filter often required manually adjusting a URL list. According to Buddy, **"Lots of sites were blocked, and we had to maintain the block list frequently."**

Additionally, the interface on their previous products made the process of policy creation and adjustment difficult. **"In the previous product, it could be done, but it was really cumbersome,"** says Buddy.

South Beloit's technology team, although highly capable, don't have infinite resources, so they wanted the best solution for their money.



How we helped

The primary reason Buddy chose Smoothwall's UTM to secure his network was to have a unified firewall and filter, as a single point of control for the network.

Once installed, South Beloit saw an immediate improvement in ease of use. **"The interface on the Smoothwall was much easier to create policies, to adjust policies, and to create different policies for students and teachers."**

Product performance was also clearly better while using Smoothwall. **"It's rare that I have to go in and make a policy tweak. That's saved an enormous amount of time."**

The benefits of switching from a URL based filtering model to a real-time, content-aware approach were instantaneous. **"Occasionally the students would find that we need to add to the system, but for**

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the most part, the Smoothwall finds everything in advance, and the students can't even reach those kinds of things."

The process of reporting has also become much easier for Buddy. **"Now I can provide detailed PDF reports on user behavior to an administrator within minutes."**

According to Buddy, the single best thing about choosing Smoothwall was the level of personalized support he received. **"It's been excellent; I've never had a CEO of any company call me before. I was very impressed."**



To read more about how Smoothwall can improve **productivity, security and peace of mind** for your users visit **www.smoothwall.com** or call **800-959-3760**

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