

Case Study

Dauntsey's School imposes Internet control with Lightspeed Systems

School: Dauntsey's School
Location: Wiltshire
Size: 770 students



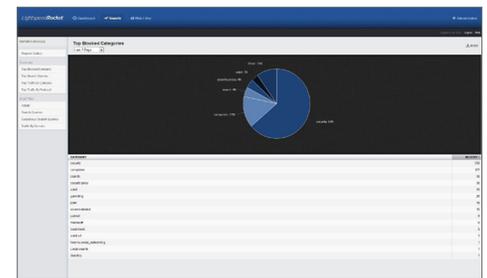
Overview

With an increasing proportion of the National Curriculum requiring Internet access during lessons, many schools are struggling to impose control over pupils' in-lesson activity. From access to inappropriate web sites to IM led distraction, maintaining focus and discipline is a growing problem.

Dauntsey's, which is located near Devizes in Wiltshire, was founded in 1542 and is one of the most popular fully co-educational schools in the country, with some 770 boys and girls, aged between 11 and 18.

The school provides Internet access during school hours to support teaching activity and has just completed the roll-out of a network across all four boarding houses to provide pupils with Internet access in their rooms.

Mark Braby, Network Administrator, comments, "Obviously while it is very important for pupils to use the Internet to support the teaching process, the school has to be very careful about controlling access to specific content. As with any school, Dauntsey's has pupils who wish to push the boundaries – it is essential to be able to monitor and control that activity."

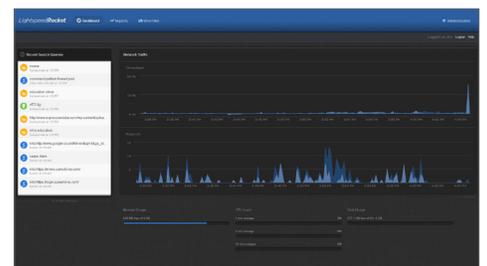


With granular reporting of network activity, Dauntsey's can have an overview of their entire network in just a few clicks.

Reliable Protection

The school has developed an Internet policy to cover all pupils from 11 to 18. However, pupils can make requests for access to specific sites and each request is then considered on its merits. As Braby explains, "The sixth form has its own study area that is not accessed by younger pupils. At their request, Dauntsey's has allowed access to Facebook for these pupils."

However, this policy can only be sustained if the school has a strong, reliable content filtering tool. In the past, Dauntsey's used a product that on occasions failed to provide a consistent service.



With The Rocket Appliance, they are able to see, in real time, search engine queries on sites such as "Google" and "YouTube".

Initially the school was using Lightspeed Systems only as its firewall. "Lightspeed Systems demonstrated the latest version of The Rocket which delivers the full range of monitoring, control and content filtering," Braby says. "Furthermore, with a strong pedigree in the education marketplace, Lightspeed Systems maintains far more detailed and robust website categorisation, which is essential within a school."

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Dauntsey's is now using The Rocket to monitor, control and secure its internal network and Internet connection and also utilises the tool's bandwidth management and granular reporting to ensure fast and secure browsing.

Braby adds, "By using a single product to handle the whole range of Internet security issues, Dauntsey's can reduce its IT management overheads and realise significant savings."

School Protection

Critically, The Rocket offers the level of reliability and control demanded by schools and expected by parents. "Parents are concerned about the amount of time spent by pupils online. With Internet browsing in the boarding houses, access is now tightly controlled. For example, the Internet will only be available until a time that's considered appropriate in the evenings". The Rocket also offers very detailed site categorisation, enabling the school to impose stringent controls over pupils' access to a range of sites, including those offering a 'cut and paste' solution to homework. Braby comments that "with Lightspeed Systems, Dauntsey's does not need to police pupils' online behaviour every hour.

The depth and accuracy of site categorisation provided is excellent and, using reports, the school has immediate visibility of any attempt by a pupil to access an inappropriate site. The reports also show trends in Internet use and behaviour which is very useful, especially for the school's management team."

Rapid response to escalating and changing threats is also essential as Dauntsey's discovered during a recent increase in IM use. Braby explains, "IM is blocked as a default by the system to prevent pupils being distracted in class. However a number of sites popped up, such as IMhaha, which enabled pupils to send IM as normal web traffic, bypassing the IM blockers." The school raised the issue with Lightspeed Systems and received an immediate response. "The Rocket is now configured to stop IM traffic via any route, ensuring pupils cannot chat during class". Braby concludes, "Dauntsey's now has a solution in place that enables the Internet to retain its primary role within the school as a valuable teaching tool."

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*Mark Braby, Network Administrator,
Dauntsey's School*