



Schools Give High Grades for Performance and Web Safety

A Case Study in Network Security

“I would have graded our old product at a D, and we’re in the A+ range with WatchGuard and eMazzanti Technologies. The impact since WatchGuard has been implemented is night and day. Complaints from the business office, from teachers, from administrators, they’re almost gone.” **Terry Van Auken, School Business Administrator, Andover School District**

BACKGROUND

Located in Sussex County, New Jersey, Andover Regional School District serves approximately 750 students in grades K through 8. The district takes great pride in putting technology in the classrooms. Every year when the school board declares its goals for the district, technology initiatives are always near the top of the list. Unfortunately, the district’s Internet security and access imposed huge limitations on what the organization could accomplish. That led them to eMazzanti Technologies, a local technology consulting firm, two-time WatchGuard Partner of the Year, and a company with broad experience serving educational institutions.

CHALLENGE

The district was suffering from an Internet bottleneck. With 350 computers across two school campuses and the business offices, there was contention for bandwidth – especially when multiple classrooms were pulling video and audio streams. Recalls Terry Van Auken, School Business Administrator, “We were experiencing tremendous difficulties, on a daily basis. It was not only impacting the classrooms and the teachers’ lesson plans, it was impacting the business office to the point where we were having difficulty performing daily functions.”

Recommendations from other districts in the area led to eMazzanti Technologies. “We brought in some other companies, but consistently eMazzanti Technologies came to the top of the list,” she states. “They were responsive to every question that we put in front of them.”

WATCHGUARD® SOLUTION

Bill McNeir, Network System Administrator for the district, took the lead in evaluating the potential solutions. As he explains, “When eMazzanti Technologies presented their program, built around the WatchGuard equipment, it was a win/win all around. I contacted several high schools and a college in the area who were using WatchGuard firewalls, and they all were successful with the product. When the presentation was made to our Board of Education, it cruised through.”

The solution chosen was a WatchGuard Firebox® X Core™ unit, with a full unified threat management (UTM) suite including Gateway AntiVirus protection, Intrusion Prevention Service, spamBlocker, and especially important for the school district, the WebBlocker service. After designing and configuring the gateway security policies in the eMazzanti Technologies’ labs, the company came onsite, installed the WatchGuard unit and within minutes, the cutover was complete.

BENEFITS

It was evident from the get-go that the Andover district had found the perfect fit. WatchGuard addressed not only the bandwidth concerns, but also some other needs surrounding bandwidth aggregation, gateway security and the Web browsing behavior of the students. “It was the solution we were looking for,” declares McNeir. “I’m looking for security, savings and service, and WatchGuard and eMazzanti Technologies provided all three.”

Higher Bandwidth at the Lowest Possible Cost

The district subscribed to the eMazzanti Technologies eCare managed firewall plan. Part of that service was collecting logs and building reports on connection performance, which found that the district’s only link to the Internet was highly unstable. Within a very short time, eMazzanti Technologies provided hard evidence to the faculty and school board that justified the need for additional bandwidth.

By enabling the policy-based routing which was a standard feature of the WatchGuard unit that eMazzanti Technologies had already installed, they were able to connect the district to a secondary DSL line and aggregate the traffic over the two links. Result? A permanent solution to a long-standing problem, at very little incremental cost to the district.

Straightforward, Easily Enforced Web Safety

As with any school district, Andover has students who have the time, the means and the desire to circumvent Internet-safety measures and the institution’s educational mission. There had been a web-safety solution in place, but it had not been up to the task.

The eMazzanti team configured the WatchGuard WebBlocker service to disallow categories of sites that were obvious concerns, plus individual sites that were outside the educational purpose. The service was set up to return a web page informing the user of the block, with instructions to contact McNeir for access. After installing the WatchGuard unit, “Web access was not a problem anymore,” he declares. “I knew it was working, because the teachers were calling me. They were going on certain sites, and they were being blocked. It was tremendous – a great success.”

Stable Costs, Happier Taxpayers

Because of their experience with WatchGuard firewalls and the ease-of-management, eMazzanti Technologies is able to deliver several services for a fixed fee. Their eCare network management plan offers installation, maintenance and support over multiple years, for a cost that is guaranteed and predictable. Plus, fixed licensing for the WatchGuard WebBlocker service ensures that if the district brings in additional computers, those costs will remain the same.

That's important to McNeir. "I have a certain budget which I'm allotted each year in technology, and I cannot be throwing money out the window to every company that thinks they could sell me the world. We want to keep the costs down and the taxpayers happy. We're doing that, with a product that delivers performance that's well over 100%."

Partners for Education

"I would have graded our old product at a D, and we're in the A+ range with WatchGuard and eMazzanti Technologies," concludes Van Auken. "The impact since WatchGuard has been implemented is night and day. Complaints from the business office, from teachers, from administrators, they're almost gone."

McNeir credits that success to the WatchGuard-eMazzanti partnership: "It has to be one of the best technology partnerships around. We're a local school district, we're K to 8, but they also work together on the high school level here in New Jersey, and colleges and universities, too. It's a tremendous partnership, and we're proud to be part of it as well."



866.EMAZZANTI · www.emazzanti.net

eMazzanti Technologies provides computer network solutions for growing businesses, from initial setup to ongoing support and management. The firm's services include network design, security, disaster recovery, remote connectivity and beyond. In addition to network consulting services, eMazzanti offers a portfolio of managed services and an online store showcasing more than 500,000 hardware and software products from leading technology manufacturers. An innovative and comprehensive approach to network services has earned eMazzanti the trust of a rapidly growing client base and recognition by many of the industry's foremost publications.

ADDRESS:

505 Fifth Avenue South
Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98104

WEB:

www.watchguard.com

U.S. SALES:

1.800.734.9905

INTERNATIONAL SALES:

+1.206.613.0895

ABOUT WATCHGUARD

Since 1996, WatchGuard has been building award-winning unified threat management (UTM) network security solutions that combine firewall, VPN and security services to protect networks and the businesses they power. We recently launched the next generation: extensible threat management (XTM) solutions featuring reliable, all-in-one security, scaled and priced to meet the unique security needs of every enterprise. Our products are backed by 15000 partners representing WatchGuard in 120 countries. More than a half million signature red WatchGuard security appliances have already been deployed worldwide in industries including retail, education, and healthcare. WatchGuard is headquartered in Seattle, Washington, with offices throughout North America, Europe, Asia Pacific, and Latin America.

No express or implied warranties are provided for herein. All specifications are subject to change and any expected future products, features, or functionality will be provided on an if and when available basis. ©2009 WatchGuard Technologies, Inc. All rights reserved. WatchGuard, the WatchGuard logo, and Firebox are either trademarks or registered trademarks of WatchGuard Technologies, Inc. in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks and tradenames are the property of their respective owners. Part No. WGCE66669_110309