

8e6

CASE STUDY



Securing the Learning Environment

Client: Mesa County Valley School District
Web Site: www.mesa.k12.co.us
Number of Users: 23,000+
Requirements: Authentication, Internet Filtering and Reporting
Solutions: R3000 Internet Filter and Enterprise Reporter

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Ray Walls
Senior Systems Engineer,
Mesa County Valley School District

Mesa County Valley School District Gives 8e6’s Hardware Solution and Authentication Feature an A+

Profile

Mesa County Valley School District (MCVSD) located in Grand Junction, Colorado, encompasses the area known as the Grand Valley, which includes the smaller communities surrounding Grand Junction. Neighboring the Grand Mesa (the world’s largest flat-top mountain), Grand Junction serves as the hub of business and recreational activities on the western slope of the Colorado Rockies, about 250 miles west across the mountains from Denver. Because of the quickly growing community, Mesa County Valley School District has been helping students reach their individual potential by providing not only a disciplined and nurturing environment, but one that is technologically advanced as well. As such, the district must ensure that school Internet-use is safe and productive for all students and staff.

Challenge

With over 23,000 students and 5,000 workstations, securing student online safety is a preeminent goal for the network administrators at Mesa County Valley School District. Yet their previous filtering provider proved to be detrimental to this goal considering the number of hours that administrators actually spent on maintaining the filtering system. Ray Walls, Senior Systems Engineer, states, “Our previous filter was very slow and sluggish due to the fact that it was software-based.”

In addition, the school district’s previous filter had a faulty authentication system. “Our previous filter’s transparent authentication required a client piece to be installed on all workstations. It would error out on at least 25% of the workstations when trying to remotely install it from the content filter. Therefore, someone would have to go and physically touch each workstation to get it to install,” Says Mr. Walls. “There was also an extreme time lag between users. We ended up trying to use to Web-based authentication but that didn’t work as well either.”

Solution

Overall, the IT team at Mesa County Valley School District found that their previous filter’s basic problem was that it did many things, but none of them really well. “It was like a Swiss-army knife—it was our firewall, bandwidth shaper, content and spam filter, but it performed poorly with in all of its jobs. We decided to go with 8e6 Technologies’ Internet filtering and reporting appliances because the solution excels in its filtering and reporting functions,” says Mr. Walls.



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Ray Walls

8e6 offers scalable, high-performance filtering and flexible reporting designed to secure against Internet threats, ensure regulatory compliance and lower total cost of ownership. Optimized as stand-alone appliance, the R3000 Internet filter and Enterprise Reporter free a school's network of bottlenecks and downtime. With a single appliance capable of supporting over 30,000 users, 8e6 solutions integrate into any network seamlessly and reliably. “Unlike our previous filter that we had to reboot at least four times a day, we’ve only had to reboot the R3000 four times a year. That alone has saved us so much time and has allowed us to focus on our other job duties such as installing new student programs,” says Mr. Walls.

In addition, 8e6's transparent authentication is one of the best in the filtering industry. Stored on the network server, the authenticator runs as soon as a student or teacher logs into the school's network. Because it runs locally, it provides repudiation and gets a student or teacher user's information real-time on the workstation. Therefore, no matter where that user goes on the network, he or she is being authenticated. Mr. Walls states, “We haven't experienced any lag-time between users with the R3000's authentication.”

Result

“We've tried and tested many Internet content filtering solutions out there, but 8e6's solutions are definitely the best,” says Mr. Walls. “Not only is the hardware filtering appliance so much faster and less troublesome than a software filter, but I would give the filtering and reporting an A+.”



8e6 Technologies is the leading provider of appliance-based Internet filtering, monitoring and reporting solutions for education, and has played a significant role in filtering the Web for over 10 years. 8e6 directly addresses the challenges of online child safety by giving network administrators and educators the tools to view, understand and react to Web-based threats arising from online learning. As a single-source vendor, 8e6 provides all of the hardware, software and support to ensure a secure learning environment while maintaining CIPA compliance. The company maintains headquarters in Orange, California, and has a network of channel partners worldwide.

For more information on 8e6 Technologies and 8e6 appliance-based solutions for Internet Filtering and Web-use Reporting, visit www.8e6.com.