



Adel, Georgia

The City of Adel, Georgia operates a municipal wireless network that serves the entire surrounding Cook County area. Multiple problems arose from peer-to-peer (P2P) usage on the network. First, P2P bandwidth consumption led to user complaints about network performance and prevented the network from supporting the number of users expected. Second, copyright infringing P2P file trades were responsible for a steady stream of legal notices that required time-consuming responses from network personnel. Finally, concerns developed over possible illegal child pornography trading. The city found the CopySense Network Appliance to be the perfect solution for managing P2P and remedying all of these problems. Now the city sees significant economic benefits after putting the CopySense Appliance to work.

“When the CopySense Appliance stops illegal trading and frees up 50% of the Internet capacity you’re buying, it doesn’t take long to realize that dollar value.”

– Wayne Taunton, Superintendent of Electric & Internet Services

Overview

Industry

- Government / Municipality & County

Challenges

- County-wide wireless network performance was impacted by P2P bandwidth usage
- The impacted system supported fewer users than specified
- Customers complained of slow network performance
- Legal copyright notices impacted network personnel
- Concerns developed over trading of illegal child porn

Solution

- Filter illegal P2P file trading with the CopySense® Network Appliance

Benefits

- Blocks illegal P2P file trading
- Prevents legal notices
- Regains lost bandwidth
- Network supports more users
- Users regain performance
- Customer complaints diminish
- Easy to use and manage

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Adel is the seat of Cook County, located in South Central Georgia, 40 miles north of the Florida border. Wanting to assist a county population underserved by commercial Internet service providers as well as to promote development along the Interstate-75 corridor, Adel government leaders opted to pursue wireless options. The city now operates a Wi-Max (802.16) network with coverage over virtually the entire 233 square miles of the county. Network subscribers pay monthly fees based on tiered levels of service.

Noting that bandwidth demands were large for the number of initial users, Adel upgraded Internet capacity. After upgrading however, network managers immediately noticed that P2P transactions expanded to fill available bandwidth. According to Bill Brown, Network Engineer, “the bandwidth was getting used up, but it didn’t match what we expected for the number of customers.” Additionally, support calls continued from customers complaining about slow network performance.

Meanwhile, Brown was also receiving up to six “take down” notices per month serving legal notice of copyrighted music, video or software piracy via P2P file sharing. Each notice required a manual process of tracking down a specific copyright-infringing network transaction, locating the user and following the user through the process of either ending the illegal sharing or shutting off their network access.

Wayne Taunton, Superintendent of Electric and Internet Services observed, “P2P was bogging down our operation, and we weren’t getting what we were paying for.” The team learned about the CopySense Appliance and brought it in for evaluation. “It showed us that P2P was peaking daily at three-quarters of our total bandwidth,” said Taunton, “and we also knew we needed to take a stand on the side of legality.” City Manager Jerry Permenter asked that action be taken to ensure the community was being provided with more of a “G-rated” network.

The team set the CopySense Appliance to block illegal, copyright-infringing P2P transactions as well as transactions containing illegal child pornography. In this mode, the CopySense Appliance filters out offending files in much the same manner as a virus filter. Taunton remarked, “Since implementing new rules with the CopySense Appliance, it’s been a night and day performance difference. Right away a department head told me, ‘I don’t know what you’ve done, but now the network speed is lightning fast.’”

“Not only are customers now getting the performance they paid for, we can also add 25% more customers at the same Internet capacity,” said Superintendent Taunton. “The legal notices have stopped, and our phones aren’t ringing as much. It doesn’t take long to see how strong this business case is.”

Network engineer Brown additionally enjoys the fact that the CopySense Appliance is simple to set up and maintain. “It’s a set it and forget it kind of box,” said Brown. “We don’t have many employees, and this fits that model.” Brown also has praise for Audible Magic support, “It’s one of the few organizations I’ve called where you only have to talk with one person and you either get an immediate answer or a call back right away.”

According to Taunton, “with all this, we’d say the CopySense Appliance is worth its weight in gold.”