



Concordia University - St. Paul, Minnesota

With students finding ways around previously installed network controls, P2P file trading was impacting the delivery of on-line education programs at Concordia University. Concordia now uses the CopySense® Network Appliance as their primary means of managing P2P.

“After installing the CopySense Appliance, we immediately regained half our network bandwidth, and that was with a Packeteer PacketShaper already installed.”

– Jonathan Breitbarth, Director of Computer Services

Overview

Industry

- Education / Liberal Arts University

Challenges

- On-line education programs impacted by P2P bandwidth usage
- Previously installed network device wasn't keeping up with rapid P2P evolution
- Budget limitations wouldn't allow servicing spiraling P2P bandwidth demands
- Illegal file trading on campus network caused concerns
- P2P use caused performance and reliability problems on student laptops

Solution

- Block copyrighted P2P content with the CopySense® Network Appliance

Benefits

- Blocks copyrighted content – the root of P2P problems
- Regains bandwidth lost to P2P use
- Less expensive than upgrading Internet connection
- Prevents illegal file trading
- Helps reduce P2P spyware impact

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Concordia University in St. Paul, Minnesota is a Christian liberal arts university affiliated with the Lutheran Church. There are nine other Concordia schools across the US. Best known for business and education curricula, Concordia St. Paul often places students in internships at companies like General Mills, Honeywell and 3M. The university is proud of its tradition of building strong personal relationships between students, faculty and community.

For the last six years, Concordia has been a “laptop” university, providing a standardized computer as part of each student's tuition. The campus network features 95 wireless access points. The school additionally provides an on-line education option, utilized off-campus by about 1,200 of Concordia's 2,100-student enrollment, including several students living abroad. Following a one-week residency, on-line students receive classroom presentations and submit assignments via the Internet. Instructors are available via on-line chat sessions.

Responsible for on-line education infrastructure, Concordia's director of computer services Jonathan Breitbarth was facing an on-going bandwidth battle with P2P file sharing. According to Jonathan, “It may have been only a dozen students, but they were getting around our firewall and Packeteer PacketShaper. Their P2P bandwidth usage was interfering with educational programs.”

Jonathan had been doubling his Internet connection speed every six months over the previous two years. With a limited budget, he knew he couldn't continue this trend. Certain students were experimenting to find out which P2P applications could get around the PacketShaper's imposed limits. Since new P2P applications are continually being introduced, it never took long for students to find one that could bypass PacketShaper's controls.

“The CopySense Network Appliance is different,” said Jonathan, “rather than just trying to throttle or block P2P applications, the CopySense box gets right to the real problem – the illegal file trading.” Concordia is using the CopySense Appliance in a mode where it senses illegal trades, matched to electronic signatures in a database of songs provided by the music industry. In this mode, when the CopySense Appliance senses an illegal trade, it blocks the transfer between P2P users. It has no effect on downloads which are purchased legitimately on the Internet.

Just by blocking illegal trades from a small number of students, Concordia regained half their network bandwidth. Jonathan was enthusiastic. “Administration immediately noticed a performance improvement. Our vice president presented the solution to the board of regents, who were very pleased.”

Concordia officials are also pleased that the university is doing its part to discourage illegal downloads. And with fewer reasons for students to use P2P applications, Jonathan expects fewer student laptops reporting performance and reliability problems caused by spyware so common on P2P networks.

Jonathan is impressed with the CopySense Appliance and further with the personalized attention he received from Audible Magic. “We're a small school pushing technology on a limited budget; the CopySense Appliance works terrific for what we're trying to do. Beyond that, we're a relationship-oriented school, and we appreciate the fact that Audible Magic is relationship focused in their customer service partnership.”