



Miles Community College

Founded in 1939, Miles Community College (MCC) is one of only three community colleges serving the state of Montana. The college is known for its liberal arts and sciences programs, its nursing curriculum and an award-winning faculty committed to meeting the academic needs of its constituents. In addition to meeting the needs of its students, as a community college, MCC must also comply with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) passed by Congress in August 2008.

Overview

Industry

- Education / Community College

Challenges

- Drain on network bandwidth caused by heavy P2P traffic
- Small IT staff tasked with ensuring appropriate network usage and complying with HEOA

Solution

- Detect and respond to unauthorized P2P content with the CopySense® appliance

Benefits

- Provides full HEOA compliance
- Automatically manages unauthorized file transfers while allowing legitimate P2P use
- Graduated Response™ software enables MCC to leverage the *teachable moment* to educate students
- Easy to configure, easy to use
- Generates comprehensive usage reports

When the financial director at MCC contacted IT Director Don Warner concerned that they might lose Title IX funds because of the HEOA, Warner was confident in his reply. "Because we already had the CopySense appliance in place, we were secure in our knowledge that we wouldn't lose our critical Federal aid for non-compliance! We were fortunate to not have to scramble to find and deploy a solution."

Warner heads up a staff of three that include Brett Bratland, network administrator, and Jay Wiebers, IT support specialist, who collectively oversee the college data infrastructure. When heavy peer-to-peer (P2P) traffic across the college network created a bandwidth bottleneck that negatively impacted network performance, Warner and his staff knew they had to find a cost-effective solution.

Faced with both a tight budget and a limited headcount, the group reviewed solution options that could meet their challenges given their specific parameters. Their choice -- the CopySense appliance from Audible Magic.

"Not only is CopySense appliance effective, but the team at Audible Magic is great to work with. Great product. Great Support. Great Company."

-Don Warner, IT Director

"We looked at other products, but the fact that the CopySense appliance was easy to set-up and easy to use really sold us," said Warner. "The product monitors and tracks unauthorized P2P traffic on our network and enables us to automatically communicate with offenders. Before using the CopySense appliance, our ability to reduce the drain on bandwidth resulting from heavy P2P usage was limited -- as was our ability to respond to infractions in an effective manner. Mostly we had to find the user and speak to him or her on a one-on-one basis. A very time-consuming and ineffective use of our time."

Using the CopySense appliance with its Graduated Response software, unauthorized use of the network is automatically detected and offenders automatically receive information regarding network use policies. At MCC, administrators take copyright infringement seriously. Unauthorized usage of the network results in increasingly more severe sanctions.

- First infraction: network usage is blocked for 15 minutes.
- Second infraction: network usage is blocked for three hours.
- Third infraction: network usage is blocked until P2P software is removed.

"We appreciate the ability to leverage the 'teachable moment' so we can educate our students about the legal use of the Internet. After reading our messages, they understand why their network access is being blocked and how to move forward to unblock it. As an academic institution, it makes perfect sense that we should help our students learn about the copyrights and intellectual property rights of others," added Warner.

"We have been very satisfied with the CopySense appliance. The combination of network monitoring and tracking along with the product's ability to automatically address infractions is highly effective," said Warner. "The very first week we installed the system, we had 24 sanctioned users -- the following week we had only six. While new students may bring old habits with them, it doesn't take long for them to learn about our network policies. We continue to see a definite reduction in unauthorized network usage. What's more, we are no longer constrained by bottlenecks in our bandwidth!"

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