



Overview

Industry

- Education / University

Challenges

- Needed system that would work with short lease times of wireless networks
- Needed system that would not impede legal usage of P2P
- Arm students with information before system was employed to foster understanding and support.

Solution

- Audible Magic's CopySense® Appliance with Graduated Response for wireless networks

Benefits

- Detect illegal file trading while allowing legitimate P2P use.
- Eliminates financially crippling settlements for students.
- Easy to use and manage.

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Morrisville State College

Thirty miles from Syracuse, on more than 800 acres sits Morrisville State College, part of the State University of New York (SUNY). This picturesque college of agriculture and technology has the distinction of being called "...a campus at the forefront of a technological revolution," by the New York Times. And there's little wonder why. Morrisville prides itself on being one of the country's most technologically advanced colleges.

The majority of the school's 3300 students use a laptop computer given to them by Morrisville at the start of their freshman year. Cell phones, also provided by the school, replace the traditional dorm landlines.

According to Jean Boland, Vice President Information Technology Services, "Our goal has been to create a highly mobile computing environment for our students and staff. Information access isn't limited to a single hard-wired space. Instead, you can be virtually anywhere on campus and connect to the network."

And it's not just any network. In 2007, Morrisville replaced its outdated network with an 802.11n network – the world's fastest wireless platform. In fact, theirs was the world's first enterprise-wide installation.

This open, anytime, anywhere access to the network came with a price, however. "Downloading and sharing music and videos in digital form has become part of the culture for this generation of students," says Jeff Gay, Assistant Director of Computer Services for the campus. "The wide reaching access we provided made it very easy for them to enjoy this form of entertainment but in many cases, they were unaware of the potential legal and financial repercussions."

It all came to a head when the university received a barrage of early settlement letters and subpoenas from the RIAA. The impact on the students was severe.

"The financial consequences on some of our students were so great that some of our students couldn't afford to stay in school and pay their fines, too."

-Jean Boland, VP Information Technology Services

"We felt we needed to do something to eliminate illegal downloads and keep our students safe, while still giving them access to the technology they need for both work and play," says Boland.

Boland and her team found the solution with Audible Magic's CopySense Appliance and Graduated Response System with Sanction Resets. The software enabled them to immediately detect illegal downloads across the wireless network while still providing access to legitimate P2P traffic.

"This was key for us," says Boland. "With the sheer number of settlement letters resting on our heads, we couldn't afford a long, drawn-out process. We also needed to insure that we didn't block access to music that was legally downloaded through our subscription to Ruckus."

The technical services team recognized that any attempt to manage P2P traffic might be met with resistance from the student body. So, before they installed the CopySense Appliance, Boland and Gay met with student leaders, members of the student press and other student groups to discuss their concerns.

"Some of our journalism students were particularly concerned about issues relating to freedom of speech and privacy," says Boland. "We very openly discussed the severe impact the illegal downloads had on so many of the students. And we talked about the rights of copyright owners as well. It was very important that our students understand the reasoning behind our decision. In the end, they not only understood, they fully supported our actions."

Since Morrisville has implemented the CopySense Appliance, the number of RIAA early settlement letters has dropped to zero. "We are very happy with the appliance," says Gay. "It does its job! And it facilitates our job of educating our students on the proper use of the Internet – by leveraging the teachable moment."

As Boland, Gay and their team continue to push the technological edge at Morrisville, they know that at least when it comes to copyright protection, Audible Magic "has their back!"