



Tulane University

Peer-to-peer (P2P) file trading had become a drain on Tulane University IT resources. The university was receiving several DMCA copyright complaints per week, which consumed several hours of staff time to resolve. Network performance was suffering. Even after the university doubled its Internet capacity, P2P applications immediately drove utilization to nearly 100%. After installing the CopySense® Appliance, Tulane is now enjoying much more effective utilization of IT personnel and Internet bandwidth.

“There’s a war on between students and the media industry and we’re caught in the middle. The CopySense Appliance helps us deliver the network performance expected of this kind of institution, and copyright infringement is significantly reduced without having to eliminate P2P entirely.”

– John Lawson, Vice President of Information Technology

Overview

Industry

- Education / University

Challenges

- P2P usage violated policies against trading copyrighted works
- On-going copyright complaints unreasonably consumed IT resources
- Network bandwidth was negatively impacted
- Bandwidth shaping failed to resolve the problem and contributed to performance frustrations

Solution

- Block illegal P2P content with the CopySense® Network Appliance

Benefits

- Blocks illegal file trading while allowing legitimate P2P use
- Can remove all P2P privileges from aggressive users
- Regains bandwidth lost to copyright infringement
- No performance risk to legitimate applications
- Frees staff from copyright complaint administration

Founded in New Orleans in 1834, Tulane University is recognized as a leading private research institution. Nearly 14,000 students pursue Tulane’s undergraduate, graduate and professional programs, including medicine, law, engineering, business and other disciplines.

Tulane’s network is spread across multiple campus locations, two in New Orleans and an additional in Biloxi, Mississippi. Wireless access is provided in all locations. Each branch of the network was experiencing substantial amounts of P2P trading. According to John Lawson, Tulane’s Vice President of Information Technology, “The lure of free music is overwhelming.” Although network use policy specifically prohibited infringement of copyrighted works, complaints continued to arrive from the media industry.

The university had attempted to control the problem with a packet-shaping device. While it helped to a degree with bandwidth management, it didn’t remove the problem. The in-line device added latency to the network. Further, because it was indiscriminate in throttling all P2P traffic, it interfered with the performance of legitimate P2P uses, including the distribution of Linux applications. This created the perception of inadequate network performance, which was contrary to Tulane’s objectives as a research institution. Ultimately copyright complaints were still coming in.

“Each time we got a copyright complaint,” said Lawson, “we would track down the offending port, shut it down and then wait for a user to surface. At that point we’d engage a dialog to educate the user and remove offending files. After all that, we still had to report back our actions on the complaint. None of this was a good use of network resources or staff time.”

Lawson’s organization was drawn to the CopySense Appliance because it recognizes the signatures of registered works and blocks P2P trading of those works. It also has no impact on network latency since it is not an in-line device. Lawson reports, “here we have a technology that can stop the trading of copyrighted music, but it doesn’t impact network performance in any other way. We deliver a higher standard of performance and remove ourselves from facilitating copyright infringement.”

Another CopySense Appliance feature provides for blocking all P2P trading at specific user addresses. “If we have an aggressive user, we can cut off all P2P privileges to just that individual.”

Lawson continued, “We’re pleased that the CopySense Appliance is low maintenance and it works. DCMA complaints have virtually disappeared. The technical staff is now refocused on higher priorities.”

Looking forward, Lawson believes that P2P is generally a technology that needs to be embraced. “Its users are making a statement and the industry needs to act upon this new model. I absolutely support copyright law and the rights of owners to be compensated. We do our best to educate students about respecting copyrights, but we’re caught in the middle. With the CopySense appliance we can focus our job on making the network better rather than enforcing copyright law.”

Audible Magic Corporation
 985 University Ave., Suite 35
 Los Gatos, CA 95032 USA
 telephone: 408.399.6405
 fax: 408.399.6406
 www.audiblemagic.com