CyBlock® Manages Online Risks for Cottingham & Butler

Maybe it's no coincidence Cottingham & Butler's headquarters is located in Dubuque, Iowa's landmark Security Building — security is a top priority at the 117-year-old firm. Since 1887, Cottingham & Butler has earned a reputation as one of the Heartland's foremost commercial insurance brokerage firms. With a dynamic and innovative management approach, the firm has successfully adapted new technologies to offer the highest level of service and quality to its customers.

From online client services to state-of-the-art systems for insurance brokerage, property and casualty claims, employee benefits claims and coordinated care, Cottingham & Butler relies upon information technology to provide customers with faster, more efficient professional service.

CyBlock Web Filter from Wavecrest Computing helps them do it.

The Challenge: Managing Internet Access

Network security, performance and stability are critical at Cottingham & Butler — and with the majority of the company's clients located outside the Dubuque area throughout the continental United States, Internet access is "indispensable" in day-to-day operations, said Database Administrator/Network Administrator Phil Niles.

Like many companies, Cottingham & Butler faced the challenge of providing Internet access for its employees without compromising network security or workforce productivity. As a company specializing in risk management, they took a pro-active approach to Web-use management.

First, they implemented an Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) designed to prevent inappropriate use of the Internet in the workplace, yet allow employees flexible Internet access for business use. It's a policy that reinforces Cottingham & Butler's corporate values: 1) have the interests of your company at heart; 2) act with integrity; 3) tell the truth; 4) keep commitments; 5) treat people with dignity and respect; and 6) promote positive relationships.

"We needed a better idea of how people were using the Internet," Niles recalled. "We were moving over to ISA Server and were looking at reporting capabilities that would help us better manage Internet use."

After migrating to Microsoft's ISA Server 2000 last year, Niles began looking for an Internet filtering and monitoring solution that would help ensure compliance with the policy and manage Internet usage for the firm's 300+ employees.

Niles needed software that would integrate easily with ISA Server 2000 while providing clear, accurate, and customizable user activity reports on large volumes of data. Cottingham & Butler has doubled in size every three to four years for the past 20 years – increasing the need for a solution that was flexible, robust and scalable enough to grow with their company.

The solution was CyBlock Web Filter from Wavecrest Computing.

The Solution: CyBlock for ISA Server

CyBlock provided Cottingham & Butler with a total Web-use management solution that could do more than simply block access to "obvious legal liability sites." It was CyBlock's combination of flexible blocking and advanced reporting features that set it apart from the competition.

With CyBlock installed on ISA Server, Niles can now efficiently manage Internet usage – automatically blocking access in accordance with Cottingham & Butler's AUP, and generating comprehensive reports on large volumes of data quickly and easily.

"We store about 45 days of log files – that's 50 MB of data each day," Niles said, adding that before CyBlock, "it was impossible to create these types of reports."

Management can now review User Audit Summary and User Audit Detail reports on a regular basis. Reports can be scheduled to run automatically or can be generated ad-hoc whenever needed. In addition to CyBlock's 55 standard categories, Niles uses CyBlock's Custom Category feature (administrators can define up to 12 custom categories), tailoring the software to match Cottingham & Butler's specific needs.

CyBlock's clear, comprehensive reports allow management to spot potentially harmful Internet activity before problems arise – minimizing legal liability, controlling bandwidth costs and protecting the corporate network from security risks.

Together, CyBlock and ISA Server are helping one of the nation's leading commercial insurance providers do what it does best – manage risk.

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— Phil Niles, C&B