

CHALLENGE

- Increase Visibility Into the Network
- Manage Traffic Flows to Maximize PowerSchool Performance
- Minimize Slow Response Times

SOLUTION

- ClearWidth Optimizer

BENEFITS

- Improve View of Network Traffic Flow
- Bandwidth Optimized for Mission-Critical Applications and Services
- Unwanted or Undesirable Traffic Contained
- Minimal Impact to Budget
- Easy Integration with Existing Network Infrastructure
- Future-Proofed Solution

ABOUT CLEARWIDTH

ClearWidth enables organizations of all sizes to keep their networks running at peak efficiency by providing instant insight and control over traffic within the LAN. ClearWidth's affordable, high-speed appliances enable users to maximize the value of their networks without performance degradation or infrastructure changes.

Using the patented TruPerform technology, ClearWidth appliances can transparently inspect and manipulate packets at gigabit speeds, providing administrators with the ability to monitor and manage complex network environments without worrying about decreased network performance.

Optimizer's small footprint, low power consumption, flexible configuration, and simple and nonintrusive deployment add up to a solution that pays for itself quickly and provides a foundation for future change and growth.

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Gilmer County Schools is the operating school district within Gilmer County, West Virginia. It is governed by the Gilmer County Board of Education. It operates four elementary schools, which serve students through grade 6, and one high school, which serves students in grades 7-12.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Gilmer Schools' network administrator was spending a sizable portion of his day responding to user complaints about slow response times. Specifically, e-mail delivery and a software application at a computer lab at the elementary school were slow. Additionally, administrators wanted the ability to prioritize traffic to the PowerSchool student information system, which teachers and administrators rely heavily upon.

Attempts to troubleshoot these complaints were ineffective. With diagnostic tools limited to bandwidth utilization per link, the network administrator simply didn't have the visibility into the network to identify the specific causes of the slowness and correct them. What he needed was a way to analyze and manage traffic flows—without breaking the budget.

CLEARWIDTH SOLUTION

Gilmer Schools found ClearWidth Optimizer, a high-performance appliance providing increased visibility into network traffic flows with the capability of immediate traffic management.

Optimizer is the only solution for academic institutions that provides cost-effective traffic management and monitoring at true Gigabit speeds and in the most compact form factor. Institutions can translate their organizational priorities into traffic shaping policies that optimize bandwidth for mission-critical applications and limit unwanted or undesirable traffic on the network that can impact response times. More significantly, with its cost-effective price point and power efficiency of 15 Watts, Optimizer can be deployed at multiple points within the infrastructure for maximum control of the internal network.

Gilmer purchased three Optimizers for its network. Each Optimizer is deployed inline, monitoring all the data that passes through it. This data is sent to the reporting application, which provides a graphical user interface to view network activity. From general network trends to individual session information for each host, Optimizer provides the network administrator extensive visibility into all traffic traversing the appliance.

Now, when the system administrator receives a complaint that e-mail delivery is taking too long, he can use Optimizer to examine flows to and from the e-mail server and determine whether the problem is network or server related. He can also prioritize e-mail traffic over other types of traffic on the network, ensuring that messages are delivered within an acceptable interval.

Optimizer appliance's small form factor and portability enabled the Gilmer to deploy one of the devices directly in front of the elementary school computer lab to analyze each flow in detail. If warranted, the Network Administrator can create a group of high-priority applications or services that receive a predetermined portion of available bandwidth.

All non-essential applications and services are limited to the remaining bandwidth. If, for example, students are playing bandwidth-intensive video games, or downloading music or movies, Optimizer can limit their impact on the network.

BENEFITS

Optimizer provides a cost-effective and efficient way for the Gilmer School System to monitor its network and ensure the performance of critical applications and services. The nonintrusive, transparent, inline deployment requires no infrastructure change or upgrade. And, Optimizer supports monitoring network flows at gigabit throughput while maintaining line quality and low latency, providing a future-proof solution that can meet Gilmer's needs for years to come.