



CASE STUDY

Otago Boys' High School

Liberation – for the ICT Manager, Student Boarders and Teaching Staff

Summary

Otago Boys' High School needed a stable firewall that integrated efficiently with Active Directory to enable the identification of individual users, support single student sign-on and apply policies by group. The ICT Manager wanted a robust product with proven support.

Linewize was up and running in an afternoon. User authentication created visibility across the network making possible a voluntary BYOD programme and enabling the school to manage the differing needs of the school's day students and boarders.

Otago Boys' High School has a student population of over 750 from years 9-13. One of New Zealand's oldest schools, founded in 1863, it offers modern facilities on campus and for boarders off-campus. The school had been using a 'big-box' firewall appliance essentially designed for the business world. The product's inadequate Active Directory integration meant that the school could not identify individual students on the network without expensive add-ons. As a work-around, ICT Manager Simon Wright adopted a manual registration process that is used by many schools in similar situations. Students completed a form to register their device with the school and receive a log-in. Students then had to log-in twice - once onto the BYOD wireless network and then again to identify themselves in order to access the internet.



The school sought advice from their IT supplier on a more appropriate solution to meet their needs. Linewize came highly recommended. Developed for the education sector, it could be easily integrated with the school's Active Directory, giving the school complete visibility over student activity and bandwidth use.

Linewize offered the school a one-month trial. This took a couple of hours to install and there was minimal disruption.

Liberating the ICT Manager

For Simon Wright, the ICT Manager, his life got a whole lot easier. Previously Simon spent much of his time fighting to make sure that the students were accurately identified and with no support from the 'big-box' firewall company. With Linewize, time spent on network administration became negligible. Simon only logs on to Linewize when he needs to see what a student has been up to or to make minor changes to policies.

On the rare occasion that Simon has needed input from Linewize, there has always been someone knowledgeable on the end of the phone able to help. Unlike the 'big-box' solutions, Linewize have also been responsive to suggestions for additional features.

“Not only is there no longer the burden of registering student devices, I simply don't have to mess with Linewize. With the old firewall, it had been a constant battle to keep it going. Linewize just does its job.”

– SIMON WRIGHT, ICT MANAGER, OTAGO BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL

Liberating the Boarders

Otago Boys' High School has an off-campus hostel over 800m away from the school. The school provides a dedicated high-speed wireless link for phone, internet and general network access. It is important for the school to provide a 'home' environment for the boys and the flexibility of Linewize enables this.

Linewize made it easy to schedule specific policies and firewall rules to be turned on and off as appropriate for after-school and prep times. Grouping the boarders by year and blocking Internet access at age-appropriate times also meant that the boys would not be on the Internet all night.

“Linewize gives us the peace of mind to be liberal with our boarders. We can provide a home environment and set age-appropriate filters and internet-access schedules whilst still covering the school's back.”

– SIMON WRIGHT

Liberating Teachers

Linewize has enabled the school to successfully roll out a voluntary BYOD programme. Teachers are comfortable in the knowledge that they will not have to deal with distracted students. Linewize allows the school to block applications or certain functions of these applications at different times during the school day, most notably social media applications.

Classwise, the accompanying classroom management tool for teachers, has also allowed staff at the school to tailor internet access for a specific lesson. Teachers can restrict access to a single site, or selection of sites or block the internet completely. They also have visibility over what every student is doing if required.



Life Post-Liberation

The feeling of liberation across the school is palpable.

- The ability to individually identify students on BYOD devices and having total visibility over what they are doing has relieved teaching staff of potential classroom management issues. For the student boarders, the school can provide a home environment but also meet its duty of care. And the ICT Manager has been released from a time consuming manual device registration process, not to mention constantly fighting firewall fires and instead gained complete peace of mind.

For Otago Boys' High School, life 'post-liberation' is all about concentrating on providing an IT environment conducive to learning.

"It has been fantastic for us – and especially for me. Linewize have a great deal of knowledge and are consistently helpful. They are geeks at heart which has made any back and forth easy and comfortable."

– SIMON WRIGHT

About Linewize

Linewize is passionate about making student internet management easy.

Learn more

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Document RevA

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