



CASE STUDY

Te Aroha College

LineWize supports Te Aroha College's vision of openness.

Te Aroha College are in the midst of updating the school vision for the community, school, staff and students. Linewize has become an important enabler for this process, making possible significant student empowerment over their own internet usage.

Transforming a firewall from blocker to enabler

Disillusioned with the school's existing firewall, Head of IT Operations Alex Daroux began to search for an alternative solution better suited to a college environment. Their current firewall was designed for small businesses and struggled with the demands of a medium-sized school. With staff and students facing repeated requests to login to access the network, Alex knew that it should be easier.

Having heard Co-Founder of Linewize Scott Noakes present at an education conference, Alex was impressed with the openness that Linewize potentially offered schools. Students, teachers, parents and IT support staff could easily monitor usage through automated weekly email reports. Alex describes his initial reaction, "I felt that Linewize would enable a fundamental shift in the College's approach to internet safety. We could move away from curtailing and blocking internet activity, to encouraging a sense of responsibility and ownership amongst the students. This would dovetail well with our new strategic direction."

Alex continued to shop around but could find no other company on a par with Linewize, "The IT team gets the Edgewize firewall, Classwize gives teachers the controls that they need for classroom management and everybody has access to the automated reporting. No one else was offering that complete package."

"We see Linewize as a tool for keeping reactive discussions about inappropriate usage to a minimum, preferring instead proactive discussion on how to use the internet before a situation develops. Our openness reflects real life in the digital world and prepares students instead of shielding them."

– ALEX DAROUX, HEAD OF IT OPERATIONS, TE AROHA COLLEGE.

Te Aroha College uses an external IT service provider and it was the first time that the provider and Linewize had worked together. "There were some teething problems integrating the two systems but Linewize's level of dedication and persistence impressed," recalls Alex.

Te Aroha College's new approach to internet security was up and running for the start of the academic year.

Teacher Control and Student Empowerment

Linewize offered Alex training but Alex found the product's straightforward design easy to navigate and he was able to roll out the Classwize teacher dashboard to staff during a single session on a teacher-only day. A few weeks in and Alex described usage, "Staff uptake has been great. Half the staff were regular users by partway through a busy term. I knew it must be good because I was getting pats on the back and that rarely happens to an IT Manager!"

Their comments? "Subject teachers describe how they like the control that it gives them. They are no longer powerless to stop a student gaming on their phone for example. Core class teachers are finding that the emailed weekly reports are stimulating informed conversations about what is and is not appropriate behaviour, conversations that just were not happening before." Alex also has a teaching role and has himself seen better focus in his classroom.

From an IT Management perspective, Alex has found access to data far easier using Linewize than its predecessor. "It was just too difficult to find the information previously which unfortunately means that it is difficult to compare the before and after." Alex's gut feeling is that the improved ease of access to the internet will result in increased usage and it may not necessarily all be learning-related. However he is comfortable with that because he will easily be able to see any issues. Teachers can then initiate conversations to counter excessive or inappropriate use of Snapchat or Facebook for example, "They can ask the question – are you getting any work done?" Or as the College has done already, "We can block social media for a couple of days to encourage student reflection on the impact that move had on the quantity and quality of study during those few days."

Tools for Digital Citizenship

And this is where Linewize is playing a significant part in the re-envisioning, "We don't want to be draconian and restrictive. Obviously the more dangerous sites such as YikYak are blocked but largely we aim to have students self-manage. We want them to assess their internet usage as part of their own time management." The College intends to use Linewize proactively rather than reactively, "We see Linewize as a tool for keeping reactive discussions about inappropriate usage to a minimum, preferring instead proactive discussion on how to use the internet. Our openness reflects real life in the digital world and prepares students instead of shielding them."

About Linewize

Linewize is passionate about making student internet management easy.

Learn more

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Document RevA

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