



## UK College of Further Education Revitalises Performance of Web-based Administration Systems with Barracuda Networks

### About Dudley College

Dudley College, located near Birmingham in the centre of England, was established in 1936. The college provides a wide range of courses, from engineering and construction through to retail and public services, for around 27,000 school leavers and mature students each year. Its activities are spread across six main premises comprising four campuses, a work-based learning centre and a glass centre that has an international reputation for glass-making techniques and technology.

In common with many other education establishments, Dudley College has moved many of its administrative support applications onto the Web in recent years. This administration side of the network is used by 1,000 academics and support staff – about 75 percent of them full-time – and comprises 650 PCs and 30 servers (about a third of the PCs and half of the servers in the whole network).

### Spyware infections prove stubborn and impair performance

The student computer network is entirely separate from the staff systems. Student computers are re-imaged on a regular basis but it is not possible to do this for staff machines because they have all been configured differently according to individual tastes and requirements and it would be time consuming to re-image them all. The comparatively fast Internet connection, the number of users and the need to allow remote access for certain people meant the Dudley College IT department frequently had to spend time and money cleaning up spyware and adware that was being inadvertently downloaded on workstations across the network.

“We have a small team of just 12 IT people looking after 1,800 PCs and 60 servers across all six sites,” said Neil Marsh, IT manager, adding that administrators would regularly come across machines with poor browser performance resulting from the presence of spyware or malware.

“We cast around for suitable solution for about a year,” continued Marsh. “We mainly looked at client-based software but these all tended to be solutions based around the Microsoft Windows operating system.”

Since Dudley College operates in both a Novell and Microsoft environment, a solution was needed that would work with both technologies.

“None of the early solutions we looked at would allow us to do what we wanted, which was to simply update one central console and use that console to update the rest of the network,” said Marsh.

After a meeting with Dudley College IT supplier, Lucid IT Services Limited, who suggested an appliance approach, Marsh and his team were put in touch with Barracuda Networks and received a Barracuda Web Filter as part of a 30-day evaluation to see how well it would work with their environment.

*“Overall, we have been very impressed with the Web Filter appliance. We like the fact that it is a fit-and-forget box and the number of calls we get (from users) asking for help because their Internet performance has dropped right off is greatly reduced.”*

**-Neil Marsh  
IT Manager  
Dudley College**



### Barracuda Web Filter 310 Fast Facts:

- Completely eliminates spyware and other forms of malware
- Millions of URLs in 58 categories for comprehensive content filtering
- Customisable branding
- No per-user licensing fees
- Ideal solution for school districts and other educational establishments

### **Barracuda Web Filter teaches spyware a lesson**

"After a trial period lasting two to three weeks there was no real outward sign of change but we began to appreciate that the Barracuda (Web Filter) was doing its job behind the scenes when we received a few complaints from people who had been prevented from accessing blacklisted Web sites," said Marsh.

As the college moves more toward browser-based applications, many of its critical back office systems such as student records, student reporting, attendance monitoring and more, can now be accessed via the Web. In addition, there are plans to add more business process related applications, such as student enrolment, in the near future.

"We do not want people working on a business application then hopping off to visit a Web site, picking up some malware and slowing down application performance in the process," said Marsh.

The Barracuda Web Filter 310 has been customised to a degree with information about local network devices and servers.

"We are seeing fewer and fewer recurrences of spyware as we revisit PCs in the network," continued Marsh.

"We will soon have reached the stage where every single machine on the network has been checked so we can be sure that we are finally rid of everything that was there before the Barracuda arrived."



### **About the Barracuda Web Filter**

The Barracuda Web Filter combines preventative, reactive and proactive measures to form a complete content filtering and anti-spyware solution for businesses of all sizes.

The Barracuda Web Filter is designed to enforce acceptable Internet usage policies by blocking access to objectionable content and unauthorised Internet applications. At the same time, the Barracuda Web Filter's award-winning feature set enables the Barracuda Web Filter to block spyware downloads, prevent viruses, and stop access to spyware Web sites.

Unlike the widely available desktop software solutions, the Barracuda Web Filter is easily installed and does not require the additional time, money or resources necessary for downloading and maintaining software on each individual PC. Hourly Energize Updates are made automatically by Barracuda Central so that the Barracuda Web Filter can block the ever-changing virus and spyware variants, as well as maintain the most up-to-date database of the latest productivity-inhibiting Web sites.



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