

Blue Reef Biz Talk

Guest Accountability – do you know what everyone on your network is doing?

How can my school provide guests, consultants, and temporary staff with internet access that is automatic, self-terminating and monitored for acceptable usage compliance?

Accountability of temporary internet users

Schools already provide internet access to students and permanent employees as part of their general services. These services are provided to students based on their year level and are conditional on a signature from both students and parents accepting the school's acceptable usage policy.

Internet services provided to staff are usually more extensive in nature and are based on employment contracts which often contain clauses addressing proper usage of internet resources.

However, the evolving nature of the internet and the dependencies of businesses on internet access, means many schools now face the need to provide temporary access to guests, consultants, contractors and advisors. These ad-hoc external agents arrive on school premises and need timely internet access to perform their job functions.

School principals are asking:

- Can we trust temporary guests on our networks in the same way we trust our staff?
- How can we empower a receptionist to provide this service without involving the IT Manager?
- How can we supervise and regulate what temporary users are doing on the school's internet?
- How can we provide a safe surfing environment to protect the interests of our guests?

Challenges

Schools face three primary challenges Governance, Policy Management, and Technology and they need to ask the following questions:

Governance:

- Should we require temporary guests to accept our Acceptable Usage Policy to cover the school from a legal perspective?

Policy Management:

- What type of access and usage limits should the school allow for temporary users?

Technology:

- Do we need to provide temporary accounts and passwords and then remove them?
- Does the IT staff need to be involved every time a new guest arrives?
- How can we align the internet access to the guest sign-in book?
- How do we remove the temporary access within a required time frame?
- Can we monitor compliance with our policies?

Blue Reef Best Practice Solutions

To effectively solve the challenge of temporary network and internet access the organisation needs to address the following points:

1. How automatically create temporary internet access accounts for guests and then automatically remove them?
2. How can the process of providing guest access be automated without involving the IT manager?
3. How can a report be generated, based on a temporary user name, that will allow both the user and the school to see what the usage was?
4. How can the usage report be sent to the temporary user once access has been terminated?

A best practice solution includes an internet management system which governs the internet usage and appropriate usage policies in the school by extending its capabilities to temporary users through metrics like content, policy, quota, and bandwidth. The system allows the point of entry (usually the reception area) to allocate temporary internet access to the guest, simultaneously providing them with an access code they can use over the wireless network or via a school computer to access internet resources.

Guest access will automatically terminate after a predetermined time and a usage report will be emailed to the guest user and/or admin, for compliance purposes.

The key to an effective solution hinges on enabling the reception area to do this easily and without the need for IT involvement.

About Blue Reef Pty Ltd.

Blue Reef is the first choice Internet Management Provider to over 300 educational institutions throughout Australia. We have been assisting schools achieve automation solutions to internet management and provisioning issues for over a decade. Our extensive experience in the development of tools, policies and technology to address these types of educational needs is unsurpassed.

Blue Reef's internet management solution includes a full guest management system which allows creation of an Internet Access Plan for guests which includes all content, quota, bandwidth and usage policies. The Guest Access Solution allows configuration of account expiration times to automatically terminate access together with a full reporting framework for management and guests.

For more information on our Guest Internet Management solution, visit our website on www.blureef.com.au or email: sales@blureef.com.au

About the Author

Guy Lupo, VP Products & Services, Blue Reef Pty. Ltd. has 20 years experience in governance, compliance and security in the enterprise and education spaces, and is continuously working with educational organisations to improve their processes and supporting technologies to achieve better educational outcomes.

Guy's career history includes strategic product and management roles with worldwide international leaders such as Check Point, CA, Microsoft, Cisco, BMC Software and other start-ups in the Governance, Compliance and Security space.