

Re: Blocking social networking facilities

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<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Win2000/microsoft.public.win2000.networking/2008-04/msg00094.html>

- *From:* Philip Herlihy <thiswillbounceback@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 22 Apr 2008 17:37:28 +0100
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f/fgorge wrote:

On Tue, 22 Apr 2008 10:30:26 +0100, Philip Herlihy <thiswillbounceback@xxxxxxx> wrote:

Phil Cartwright wrote:

Philip Herlihy wrote:

I've been asked to block access to a range of social networking websites like facebook, MySpace, bebo, etc, and also to prevent users running Windows Messenger, MSN Messenger and Windows Live Messenger.

I'm finding this hard! The firewall I'm using (Netgear FVS338) will block keywords but not URLs (so a mention of facebook on an otherwise respectable site will mean it's blocked). Otherwise I have to block individual IP addresses, and some of these sites have quite a few (according to nslookup, anyway). I suspect these IP addresses will be subject to change.

I've looked at using registry keys eg:
DisallowRun in
HKLM\Software\Policies\Microsoft\Messenger\Client\
.. but I can't find a definitive account of this, and some of the PCs are running XP Home, which may make it difficult perhaps. Ideally, I'd want a scripted solution.

Time to ask for advice! Any suggestions?

Stop being a net nazi? :)

Re: Blocking social networking facilities

My advice was to appraise people's work based on what they achieved, and if they were pulling their weight, turn a blind eye to what else they might be doing at odd moments. However, this office has several young workers who seem unable to resist these facilities and despite discussion and eventually warnings continue to fall behind in their work. Your comment suggests you may be content to be a drone in an organisation too large to care, but this is a very small family business and it matters, not least to the people concerned who might end up losing their jobs if a solution isn't found.

Meanwhile, the Party knows where you live, and you can expect a visit very early one morning for your "re-education". This may involve extended travel, so have a toothbrush ready.

PH

My 'company' has almost 30,000 users and we have similar problems. There is almost one pc per worker, some have several pc's some have none. But what we do is the same thing as you do but have also added the ability to remote control desktops. That means they can also record that users desktop remotely. In a couple of instances they have done that and the user has changed their ways. In a couple of instances the user was fired because of how little work they were actually doing. It only took a few times before EVERYONE was aware of what was possible, the old "big brother is watching" scenario and most people now do what they were hired to do. In ALL cases the person was reported, and warned, before the IT people setup the recording. One person actually had a blog on his work computer and thought that it was 'cool' to do that all day instead of work. He is gone! He actually said "you can't fire me because it doesn't specifically say I can't host a blog". As I said he was fired for doing non work related stuff at work and the list of things prohibited at work was expanded to say no blogging at work allowed. We also block all streaming websites as they are found. Streaming, even radio sites, consumes a huge amount of bandwidth and as such slows down the people trying to work. Skype is another thing you may want to block. It loads wherever it can, no amount of admin rights can stop it, and uses huge amounts of bandwidth. We blocked the skype website itself and that seems to have stopped it. We are also progressively blocking all the internet sex sites as we find them. That seems to be another huge time waster for some people.

It's just too easy to look as if you're working! We have RealVNC on most machines, but I don't think that has the capacity to record – interesting idea. In a similar vein I'm investigating the logging capabilities of the firewall – a smaller one (FVS114, rather underpowered) would log every site visited, whereas its big brother doesn't (obviously) do this. Even then, if we can block the distractions we may be able to steer people away from being in trouble in the first place.

Sounds like you have to invest a great deal of effort in this. :-(

Re: Blocking social networking facilities

Phil

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