Web Access Patterns Across Your Organization

An Executive White Paper

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Introduction

A continuing and still growing concern by companies is the amount of time spent by employees every day surfing the web. Of increasing importance is what websites are visited and whether this is constructive use or abuse within the organization. Also you may wonder if employees are visiting sites that distribute viruses or spyware or are they taking up network bandwidth by downloading large files. Peer-to-peer file sharing is also another area that can increase your company's liability for pirated music, movies or pornography. According to a recent survey done by The ePolicy Institute (www.epolicyinstitute.com), 90% of employees admit to surfing the web while on company time. While news sites, investment and travel sites are up on the top of the list, so is pornography. A company can introduce an internet policy that outlines internet use while on the job, but there is no substitute for software that monitors web use. Instead of using software that blocks certain sites, a more modern approach is to allow your employees access, but at the same time, retain the option of seeing the websites they are visiting. Web access control software can hinder your employees' ability to get their job done, in particular if they must do daily online research or purchasing.

Sawmill can analyze your employees' web browsing.
The use of Sawmill on your web server will allow you to analyze your web traffic and help you maintain organizational compliance. If your company has a policy for Internet use, in particular a policy against visiting adult content sites, you can see if this policy is being adhered to. On a daily basis, Sawmill reports on events and this can be analyzed per user. Sawmill has advanced zoom capabilities and by using this feature, the administrator can see what website each employee has visited.

Common database models using Sawmill.
In order to analyze your employees' web use, you can set up your web server analysis in different ways:
- A single database: This will allow you to keep all of your data in one place, and is optimal for a fast computer with enough memory. You can zoom into particular parts of the data as needed, and update your information, most commonly at night.
- Two databases: This may be recommended if your log data is large. One database is used for the short-term, with a limited data set that is continually updated. The long-term database is updated, but never expired. Having two databases would allow less time to process the logs. Also recent data may be the most relevant to analyze.
- A collection of specialized databases: Some companies use a smaller database to focus on specific use of bandwidth, for instance, as in their employees' use. This will allow a much more focused data collection and can be especially useful for auditing an individual's use.

<u>Sawmill's Zoom capabilities.</u>
In the day-to-day capturing of events, the zoom capabilities of Sawmill allows you to zoom into a particular user and zoom deeper to see which sites they are visiting. The ability to zoom can also be used for a report of downloads. So if you want to see the number of downloads made per day, you can accomplish this by having a download zoom filter. This filter can be used to create a daily report of the number of downloads, and this can tell you if you are having employees using peer-to-peer file sharing.

<u>Summary</u>
A company can put into place a computer use policy and make it clear to their employees that the policy must be followed, but the current workplace computer use statistics shows that employees can misuse a company's equipment and network. Without going to extreme content filtering or website blocking software, Sawmill allows you the ability to audit your employees' use of the Internet, and you have the ability to audit or not a particular employees' use. You may not have a need to use Sawmill's data collection on a daily basis, but you have the satisfaction of knowing that you can analyze web browsing and downloads if needed. The ability to monitor web surfing in your organization with Sawmill is unobtrusive, can be kept confidential and also done in a manner that allows you to correct an individual employee's Internet behavior as needed. Sawmill will allow you to filter inappropriate Internet use, enhance overall network security and also promote employee productivity.