SOPHOS

CASE STUDY

In preparation for launching its
groundbreaking 1:1 project, Lafayette
Catholic School System turned to
Sophos UTM and Sophos Cloud to
provide all-inclusive, state-of-the-
art security that empowers students
and faculty, while offering highly
effective and flexible protection.

LAFAYETTE
CATHOLIC
School System
Preparing Students For Life

Customer-at-a-Glance

Lafayette Catholic School System

Industry
K-12 Education

Sophos Solutions
Sophos UTM
Sophos Cloud Server Protection
Sophos Cloud Endpoint Protection Advanced

Lafayette Catholic School System A customer success story

The Lafayette Catholic School System (LCSS) serves over 1,000 students from pre-school through high school in Lafayette, Indiana. Drawing students from six local parishes, LCSS schools include St. Mary's Cathedral, St. Boniface, St. Lawrence Elementary, and Central Catholic Junior-Senior High School.

Compared to many other school systems, LCSS is on the forefront of leveraging technology to give its students an optimal learning experience. In August 2014, LCSS launched its 'one student, one computer' learning initiative by placing a brand-new Macbook Air in the hands of every Central Catholic student. Altogether, about 420 notebook-equipped learners in grades 7-12. In addition, teachers in all grades were upgraded to Macbooks as well as Apple iPads.

"With Sophos' powerful security technology running in the background, we have peace of mind and the freedom to work on initiatives that will create the most effective learning environment for our students and prepare them for the digital world."

JOE WILLMANN
Director of Technology and e-learning Services
Lafayette Catholic School System

Challenge

The migration to an all-Mac computing environment coupled with the one-to-one project was not only a major cultural shift for Lafayette Catholic School System, but also presented technology challenges and opportunities. As director of technology and e-learning services for LCSS, Joe Willmann needed to ensure that the school's network would be able to support the new computing paradigm.

"Microsoft's retirement of Windows XP was a good motivator for us to migrate to an all-Mac environment, but we wanted to learn from the mistakes of other school districts in adopting one-to-one programs," Willmann notes. "That meant ramping up our infrastructure in advance and making systems as easy as possible for our small staff to operate and maintain."

To simplify the network, LCSS unified all four campus networks into a single domain for the entire school system. An important step in this effort was to adopt security technologies that would protect the network as well as students, without being overly restrictive or interfering with the classroom learning experience.

Technology Solution

A faithful Sophos customer, Lafayette Catholic School System began using one Sophos UTM to protect their entire environment. With the launch of the one-to-one project, LCSS expanded their Sophos deployment to meet their growing infrastructure needs. LCSS now has two Sophos UTM 430 devices installed in active/passive mode to provide reliable and redundant security along with Sophos Cloud and Sophos Cloud Server.

"As an all-in-one security solution, Sophos UTM is at the core of our network and gives us very comprehensive control over our environment," Willmann remarks. "With the UTMs in active/passive mode, we know we're constantly protected."

Flexible Security, Made Simple

"I came into this position with a background in technology education, not IT. Therefore, it was very important to adopt solutions that not only make the learning environment easier for teachers and students, but are also easy for me and my small team to set up and maintain," Willmann says. LCSS has been able to proactively adjust to their growing needs with Sophos. "Sophos UTM is not only transparent to our users, but at the basic networking and routing level, the system is so easy and flexible that we use it for a wide variety of tasks. As technology becomes a critical and creative part of learning, we require a security solution to support our vision. I know we will be able to scale and change with Sophos UTM," adds Willmann.

In one example of Sophos' flexibility, LCSS has set a policy for the students' use of the Macbooks that restricts their

Internet access more tightly during the day while on the school network, but loosens it somewhat off-campus. For instance, social networking sites are off-limits during the day but the students can access sites such as Facebook from home. Whatever their location, students are continually protected by Sophos UTM and Sophos Cloud from accessing content they shouldn't be exposed to, or bad actor sites that could introduce malware to the computer. "We have to protect our students, but we also have a role in teaching them how to use computers wisely and responsibly, which means not shutting them out from the real world. But while they are in class we want to ensure they are focused on learning," Willmann explains. "Sophos gives us the flexibility to achieve both goals."

Fostering Digital Citizens

Secured and empowered by Sophos UTM, the LCSS one-to-one project has given students a powerful new learning tool for researching assignments, collaborating on team projects, and supplementing their work by creating videos and other multimedia endeavors. At the one-to-one project's inception, a "Student Technology Team" of Central Catholic students was created, allowing knowledgeable and tech savvy students to train their peers. One of the key elements of e-learning was to ensure students understood the importance of an online presence.

"An important part of this training is a concept we call 'digital citizenship'. This goes beyond common-sense safety tips such as not sharing passwords, to a broader goal of creating a safe and appropriate digital presence that will not undermine our students' future endeavors," Willmann explains. "With Sophos UTM, we're able to provide a safe and controlled environment that allows them to learn, so that when they go out into the real world they'll be better prepared."

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Preparing for the Future

With the initial success of the one-to-one project, Willmann anticipates that the LCSS network will be supporting up to 1,500 devices within the next two years. In preparation, LCSS has migrated its end user antivirus control from Symantec to Sophos Cloud Endpoint Protection Advanced, and Sophos Cloud Server.

"Our environment has undergone a great deal of change recently, but one thing that has remained a constant is Sophos security," he comments. "With Sophos' powerful security technology running in the background, we have peace of mind and the freedom to work on initiatives that will create the most effective learning environment for our students and prepare them for not just the digital world, but the world ahead of them."

Start your free trial of Sophos Cloud today.

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