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# Sarcoxie R-II School District – Smoothwall Filter Case Study

Find out how Smoothwall helped this Missouri school district improve their web filter.

## What's the background?

Gerod Hall is the Director of Technology for Sarcoxie School District in Sarcoxie, MO. The district has 750 students Pre-K – 12th grade on its enrollment and 125 staff members.

Spanning two sites, the district handles all of its technology needs centrally, with a single point of entry for the network.

Though Sarcoxie focuses on windows devices, they have a variety of devices in their inventory to meet the range of needs across the student body. *"We have 75 Chromebooks, as well as some specialty tablets, such as the Kindle Fire and Nabi Tablets,"* Gerod explained about device diversity.

## What was the challenge?

When Gerod joined Sarcoxie, the web filtering solution at that time had serious issues keeping students safe online. *"Students could basically get anywhere they wanted,"* he said. There were also no user authentication requirements. *"It was open season."*

Gerod moved Sarcoxie over to the open-source Smoothwall Express and the web filtering which was provided through the ISP. "At my last district, we had several instances of Smoothwall Express running, so I knew how it worked," he recalled.

The only drawback was the lack of support. *"It worked, but there were a lot of things we had to get in place to make it work,"* said Gerod.

## How Smoothwall helped

After a little time shopping around, Gerod decided to upgrade to Smoothwall's Unified Threat Management solution. *"Since I was already familiar with the product, I thought it only logical to stick with it,"* he said.

Because of the unique needs of Sarcoxie's network, Gerod opted to use Core Authentication in order to differentiate a basic student policy from higher levels of access granted to teachers and administrators.

An elegant method of user grouping, Core Authentication is also one of the most user-friendly because it does not require a log-in for general use, only for permissions elevation.

But that doesn't mean students aren't tracked. Sarcoxie runs a Novell network for network authentication, with a script that generates behavior logs, connecting individuals with workstation IPs logged by the Smoothwall.

Gerod then receives a daily e-mail with attempts to access pornographic websites in the last 24 hours, and that report is checked against logs to identify transgressors.

By moving to the Smoothwall Unified Threat Management, Gerod also reduced his workload by managing solutions with a single box and a single point of support.

*"With our old solution in two boxes, I had to go back and forth between providers to figure out what the problem was,"* said Gerod. *"With Smoothwall, I've got everything all right there. It just works."*