



WEB MONITORING SOFTWARE

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Research indicates that the majority of Web traffic during working hours isn't business related. From online shopping to chatting with friends, valuable Internet bandwidth is being used on these destinations. Ashley McKinnon looks at two products that will help you enforce your company's Internet usage policy and remove any bottlenecks.

WEBSPY ANALYZER

Pros: Great reporting features; needs low system resources.

Cons: Minimal documentation.

Verdict: Detailed reporting will help enforce company policies.

WEBSPY ANALYZER PROVIDES detailed summaries and reports, giving you an overall picture of how your Internet connection is being utilised. Filtering through all this information will help you enforce any Internet policy you might have implemented.

The program opens and analyses proxy and firewall log files. Reports can be generated on specific information, such as users, groups and sites visited. As well as filtering log files, WebSpy Analyzer provides live data capture of Web and SMTP traffic. For it to be able to do this, it must be installed on a system close to your Internet connection. This needs to be at or near your default gateway. The WebSpy Sentinel continually watches and captures the IP traffic and works in conjunction with the reporting modules to provide an all-in-one Internet reporting tool. Sites visited are listed and can be viewed to check their content.

All Web activity via a server is logged and the software analyses this information to generate reports. Separation of reports is based on user, time of access, sites visited and size of downloaded files. All this information is presented in a clear and easily managed form, which can then be exported into Excel for further manipulation. Reports can also be exported into Word, HTML or various other common file types.

Navigating the interface is incredibly easy. Wizards and popup menus help guide you through all of its features. Its also light on system resources – a full installation accommodates less than 5mb of hard disk space. Of course, depending on the detail and quantity of reports you generate, you need to allow enough room for storage. WebSpy's reports provide more than enough detail for auditing requirements. It operates on systems running Windows 9x, ME, 2000 or NT 4.0.

As a reporting tool, WebSpy Analyzer provides you with a wealth of information. Most administrators don't like filtering through simple text log files and the ability to have these presented in a more detailed and user-friendly format serves only to bolster this software's appeal. Ideally, it would be used as an enhancement tool to your existing Internet Security software.

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