

A black and white photograph of the Dubai International School building, showing the school's name on the facade and a sign for "DUBAI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL PRIVATE (BR)".

Dubai International School Delivers Optimal Network Quality and Performance with Hillstone NGFW

The Customer

Founded in 1985, Dubai International School is located in the heart of Dubai and situated in the Al Garhoud area. Together with its branch in Bur-Dubai (Nad Al-Sheba area), the school serves the most populated areas in Dubai and the Northern Emirates.

The Challenge

With approximately 3500 students who are part of a generation that is used to unlimited access to technology and information, Dubai International School was facing a daily challenge to deliver uninterrupted access to vital online educational resources, while preventing cyber threats and curbing inappropriate online behavior.

The IT team was having issues with their legacy network security solution, which faced performance issues as well as reliability in providing logs and reports. On a given day, students and faculty didn't always have access to critical websites and online services to be able to complete their tasks due to network issues. In addition, beyond access to authorized sites, some students would risk gaining access to inappropriate sites that were not permitted, or social media networks that were only permitted access outside of academic hours.

"It is a mandate that IT provide an online academic environment for students and faculty that is safe, secure and meets service level agreements," stated IT manager at the School, "And we were having challenges delivering on this mandate due to network security issues in our existing solution."

The Solution

After exploring several security offerings, Dubai International School selected the Hillstone Networks security solution, which consists of a Next-Generation Firewall (NGFW), and Hillstone Security Management (HSM). The School deployed four E5660 NGFW at the school's data center perimeter; two as Active/Passive at the main campus, and the remaining two were deployed as Active/Passive at the second campus. One HSM-50 has been deployed in the main campus. The Hillstone solution delivers NGFW features, including IPS, Anti-Virus, URL filtering and QoS, to ensure the security of the network.

Dubai International School Delivers Optimal Network Quality and Performance with Hillstone NGFW Solution

The NGFW delivers comprehensive and granular visibility, as well as control of applications – critical to the issues faced by the IT team. The HSM, on the other hand, segments networks into multiple virtual domains and provides the versatility and flexibility needed to manage the infrastructure while simplifying configuration, accelerating deployment cycles, and reducing management overhead. For the IT team at Dubai International School, the ability to easily manage and administer two branches, and have access controls for students, faculty, and domains was essential for the integrity and performance of the network.

hours, especially proxies or torrents.

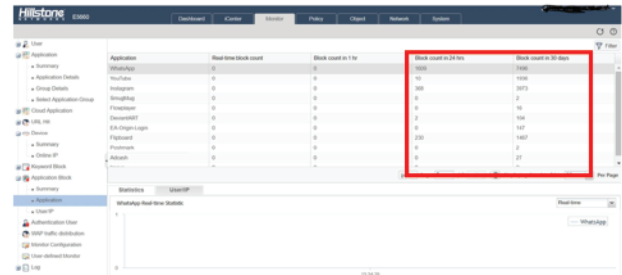


Figure 2: Applications access blocked by Hillstone NGFW

The Benefit

With the Hillstone Network platform, Dubai International School gained broad and deep visibility into their network traffic, along with reliable, accurate reporting. The IT manager stated, "With the Hillstone Networks solution, we have comprehensive visibility over the network activity, which allows us to quickly identify specific behavior such as students downloading excessive amounts of data, attempting to bypass blocked sites, getting on to social media or doing other non-permitted activities. The visibility helps us mitigate these activities and take action to improve network quality and security."

In addition to providing visibility, network performance improved significantly for the School. This was the result of firewalls being connected to the core switch from the LAN side. To each firewall, two WAN links are connected and traffic is load-balanced between these links, maximizing the load. Despite the taxed network bandwidth, by filtering and blocking specific URLs and bandwidth-intensive applications, the network is still able to serve all of the students and teachers with high-speed access.

Hillstone Quality of Service (QoS) helps school IT team control network traffic and limit upload/download speed to make sure that students and faculty can access critical websites all the time without interruption.

The Hillstone firewall is also used to protect and manage the ERP server - used by teachers to log their activity and to upload homework and other course related materials. The ERP server is critical to staff productivity for reliable, accurate reporting to ensure that faculty and parents as well as academic heads are being delivered accurate student records

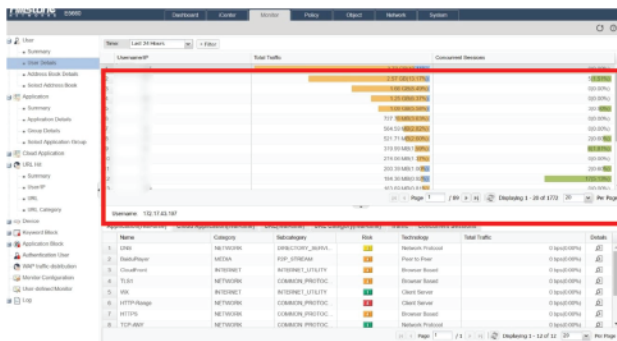


Figure 1: Comprehensive Visibility Provided by Hillstone NGFW

The firewall enables web filtering for students and staff traffic, as well as blocking specific applications, such as WhatsApp and YouTube, that are not likely to be used during academic

Dubai International School Optimizes their Network Quality

With the Hillstone Network platform, Dubai International School addressed the challenges they were facing. They gained broad and deep visibility into network traffic to ensure that appropriate sites were being accessed during academic hours, as well as to ensure that the faculty and students had access to the network to remain productive.