



## **District IT Departments Face Increased Internet Use and Security Threats While Short on Staff and Money in 2010**

**Lightspeed Systems' IT experts share the network security challenges and solutions that school and district technology directors can expect this year**

BAKERSFIELD, Calif. – Jan. 14, 2010 – The district IT challenges that have emerged over the past few years – increasing use of the Internet for instruction and a growing number of security threats – will intensify throughout 2010, according to network security experts from [Lightspeed Systems Inc.](#) The company is an education market leader in network security and management software, which is used by schools nationwide to protect more than 5 million students.

As schools strive to provide an online educational environment to improve student engagement and learning, more demands are being placed on the school network and IT staff. Among the concerns for network administrators this year are supporting 1-to-1 and mobile computing initiatives, and ensuring network performance to accommodate increased use of Web-based multimedia and applications, despite limited bandwidth. Additionally, they are concerned with protecting technology investments and keeping students safe amidst requests for greater access to Web 2.0 sites and a growing number of security threats. Cybercriminals are becoming more sophisticated, coordinated and targeted in their attacks, shifting their focus to file-sharing networks. Malware and virus attacks through mobile computing platforms and social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter are expected to increase dramatically this year.

Compounding network security issues, district IT departments are dealing with budget cutbacks and fewer staff members since local and state funding for schools has dropped significantly. Based on reports from the National Education Association, states' declining revenue will create even greater shortfalls in education funding over the next several years.

Faced with these challenges, district IT administrators are demanding consolidated, easy-to-use, cost-effective solutions that meet the evolving needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century educational environment. Topping the wish lists for many administrators are tools that allow safe access to [Web 2.0](#) and social media sites, and offer secure mobile computing.

Lightspeed Systems has experienced a significant rise in demand for its integrated, all-inclusive network security and management software, [Total Traffic Control](#), and increased use of its Educational Video Library feature. Total Traffic Control offers a full range of features in a single comprehensive application, including content filtering, mobile filtering, spam management, bandwidth management, antivirus protection, e-mail archiving, desktop and gateway security, and extensive reporting capabilities. The Educational Video Library enables educators to safely use YouTube videos for classroom instruction without exposing students to inappropriate content, and the network to security risks. Nearly 250 districts use the feature, accessing more than 70,000 approved online videos for instructional purposes since its release last year. Jonathan Foth, director of information technology for Bakersfield City School District in California,

shared one of the district's top priorities this year, and how they are solving network issues:

“We've had a huge increase in the number of teachers requesting access to Web 2.0 resources, primarily to utilize more engaging resources with the interactive whiteboards in the classroom. We've been testing Lightspeed's Educational Video Library as a way to bring more streaming audio and video resources into the classroom without allowing access to all the inappropriate content many of the multimedia sites contain. We're very excited about the customizable and collaborative nature of the upcoming product features that LightSpeed is developing. Our district already has groups of teachers by subject and grade level that work together on developing other educational resources. I can foresee our district leveraging these groups to help identify and share appropriate online resources that would otherwise be filtered. One of the primary reasons we chose Lightspeed is because it gives us a single point of administration for Internet filtering, email, antivirus, and spyware mitigation, enabling us to cut down on administration and better leverage our technical staff's time. We are excited that LightSpeed has continued to innovate and listen to their customers when deciding on feature changes. Integrating web 2.0 resource management and teacher collaboration into our current Lightspeed suite will allow us to continue to use a product that requires less overall management overhead from our IT team.”

In response to customer needs, Lightspeed Systems will be offering a new feature in its latest version of Total Traffic Control that enables schools to use educational content from Web 2.0 sites while mitigating the risks. Several school districts are piloting the new feature, which includes a content library for safe access and resource sharing, along with collaborative tools. The company has also assembled the Anti-Virus Strike Force to improve virus and malware detection and response.

“School and district leaders have told us that their biggest challenge in 2010 will be keeping their networks safe with a shrinking IT budget,” said Scott Garrison, president of Lightspeed Systems. “Our products enable them to manage their network efficiently and effectively, so they can continue to pursue their technology initiatives despite cutbacks. The new product enhancements we are releasing soon will help the smallest to the largest districts maximize the educational value of the Internet while keeping costs low. We are committed to providing a flexible, intelligent Internet filter that gives schools the level of access they need without the headaches and risks.”

For more information, visit [www.lightspeedsystems.com](http://www.lightspeedsystems.com).

### **About Lightspeed Systems**

Lightspeed Systems Inc., founded in 2000, develops comprehensive network security and management solutions for the K-12 education market. Lightspeed is committed to helping schools operate their networks effectively and efficiently, so educators can provide a safe online teaching and learning environment. The company's flagship product integrates content filtering, spam management, bandwidth management, antivirus protection, extensive reporting capabilities, email archiving, and mobile filtering into a single application. Lightspeed Systems software is used in more than 1,500 school districts in the United States, United Kingdom and Australia to protect more than 5 million students. For the past three years, Lightspeed Systems has been recognized on the Inc. 5,000 list as one of fastest-growing private companies. For more information, call 661-716-7600, or visit [www.lightspeedsystems.com](http://www.lightspeedsystems.com).

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