

MIS Tech Web Content Filter Product FAQ

Security

What do you do with my organization's traffic information?

Do you ever sell or make usage statistics available to outside sources?

- *Some information is stored in both the MISappliance and at Cerberian's secure Data Centers. This information is never sold or released to third parties.*

Usage policies and your organization's URL ratings requests are stored in the reporting database so you can generate and view reports on your users surfing patterns. Cerberian stores the username, the URL, and the action taken (allow, permit, or monitor). This information is never sold by MIS Tech or Cerberian.

Is your administration web site secure?

- *Only authorized users with the correct username and password can access your data.*

Only your authorized users (system administrators, administrators, and managers) have access to your organization data. Your users must first provide a valid login name and password before the Cerberian administration web sever grants access to your organization data. All connections to the administration web server use SSL encryption to protect your data.

Database Accuracy

How many URL does the Cerberian database contain?

- *3.5 million URLs.*

The Cerberian database contains about 3.5 million URLs. Because Cerberian rates sites at the domain or directory level, the database actually covers 400 to 500 million unique web pages.

How accurate is the Cerberian rating process?

- *Cerberian rates 93% of the URLs requested by looking up the rating in the database. The remaining requests go through the Dynamic Real-Time Ratings service, which generates the correct rating for 88% of the requests.*

Of all the requests received by the Lookup Appliances, the ratings database already has ratings for 93% of all requests. The remaining requests get rated on the fly by the Dynamic Real-Time Rating service. If end-users get blocked from accessing a page by the local policy, they have the option of requesting that Cerberian review the categories assigned to that page. Of the URLs reviewed by Cerberian's hand raters, 12% needed recategorization, or fewer than 0.01% of the overall rating requests resulted in incorrect ratings.

How often does Cerberian update the database?

- *Cerberian continuously updates the ratings database, but MIS Tech's outsourced model does not require customers to update a local database.*

Unlike other Internet content filtering solutions, MIS Tech's outsourced solution does not require clients to receive large database updates daily or weekly. Instead, MIS Tech customers all access the same ratings database. When a user requests a URL not contained in the database, the MIS Tech solution uses Dynamic Real-time Rating to assign a rating to that page. The database then stores that rating, which becomes immediately available to all MIS Tech customers.

Cerberian also continually validates the URLs in the database to ensure that when web sites change, the database accurately rates the new content.

How do you locate sites to block?

- *You select which categories of information you want to block. Cerberian provides only category ratings for Web sites.*

MIS Tech's service does not determine which sites to block. Cerberian assigns one or more category ratings to requested pages. Access to web pages then proceeds based on the policies you set for content categories.

Do humans review the web sites?

- *Cerberian uses expert raters to train the database.*

Initially, category experts create a list of URLs that represent good content for each category. The ratings database then uses this initial set of pages to recognize content similar to those initial pages. Through a process called Content Vectoring, the database learns to better categorize pages as it rates more and more user requests. The Cerberian staff also continually adds new pages to all categories and evaluates any pages that the rating process could not recognize. Users can request Cerberian staff to rate specific new pages or review automatic ratings assigned by the database. Through this process, the database becomes more accurate at categorizing future user requests.

Do humans review the ratings?

- *Cerberian's expert raters periodically review each content area. They also examine pages based on categorization requests from end-users.*

Cerberian periodically reviews certain content areas to fine-tune the ability of the ratings database to recognize specific types of content. Also, when users believe a page has received an incorrect rating, a Cerberian rating expert will review the categories assigned and make changes as necessary. Cerberian also uses the human-rated sites to further train and improve the content vectoring system.

How many and what categories do you provide?

- *Cerberian provides 52 categories.*

MIS Tech's Internet management software currently recognizes the following 52 categories:

Potential Liabile & Objectionable Content Categories

- Adult/Mature Content
- Alcohol/Tobacco
- Illegal Questionable
- Gambling
- Hacking/Proxy Avoidance Systems
- Illegal Drugs
- Intimate Apparel/Swimsuit
- Nudity
- Pornography
- Sex Education
- Violence/Hate/Racism
- Weapons

Potential Non-Productive Categories

- Abortion
- Advertisement
- Arts/Entertainment
- Brokerage and Trading
- Business and Economy
- Chat/Instant Messaging (IM)
- Computing and Internet
- Cult/Occult
- Cultural Institutions
- Education
- Email
- Financial Data Services
- Freeware/Software Downloads
- Games
- Gay and Lesbian
- Government/Legal
- Health
- Humor/Jokes
- Internet Auctions
- Job Search/Careers
- Kid Friendly
- Military
- MP3/Streaming
- News and Media
- News Groups
- Pay to surf
- Personals and Dating
- Political Activist/Advocacy Groups
- Real Estate
- Reference
- Religion
- Restaurants and Dining
- Search Engines and Portals
- Shopping
- Society and Lifestyle
- Sports/Recreation
- Travel
- Vehicles
- Web Communications
- Web Hosting

How do you handle sites cached at search engines such as Google?

- *Cerberian rates cached pages as unique URLs.*

The MIS Tech Internet management solution rates pages based on the URL. Since cached pages in Google have unique URLs, the ratings database stores ratings for these cached pages as if they were any other page on the Internet.

How does the MIS Tech solution handle dynamically generated sites?

- *MIS Tech uses Dynamic Real-Time Rating service to accurately categorize dynamic content.*

Because the Internet changes constantly, no URL rating service can ever hope to categorize every Web page. When users request a new URL that has not been rated in the Cerberian ratings database, the Cerberian service uses its unique Dynamic Real-Time Rating (DRTR) technology to retrieve the page from its host server for analyzation of it's content. The DRTR service looks at the words used, the context for each word and the formatting used on the page and responds immediately to pages with adult/mature content by categorizing the page for instant action of either block or allow. DRTR then moves the remaining new pages into Cerberian's holding file for human review, which upon completion get assigned to one of Cerberian's 52 content categories within days of it's finding. This process makes Cerberian's database not only one of the largest URL databases available but also makes it the most relevant database in the filtering industry, based on user traffic rather than key words or outdated URL lists.

Scalability

What size organizations can use the MIS Tech Web Filter?

- *Any size organization can use the MIS Tech Web Filter.*

Any size organization with a connection to the Internet can benefit from outsourcing its Internet monitoring and filtering with the MIS Tech Web Filter.

Can distributed organizations use the Cerberian Web Filter?

- *Distributed organizations can especially benefit from the MIS Tech Web Filter through central management and the Report Service.*

Yes. Each location would install an MISAppliance. Each MISa communicates with the nearest Cerberian Lookup Appliance to get URL ratings and to optionally access user policy information. IT managers can administer and monitor their organization's Internet usage from any location.

Reliability

What happens if the Cerberian servers go down?

- *The MISAppliance will attempt to contact a redundant server. After a certain configurable time period, the agent device will allow the user's request if it has not received a response from the Lookup Appliance.*

Does Cerberian have more than one data center?

Is the Cerberian Web Filter geographically load balanced?

- *Cerberian provides several, geographically distributed data centers.*

Cerberian has Lookup Appliances (the servers that communicate with customer MISAppliance) in three United States locations (each peered on four tier-one provider networks).

How does Cerberian secure the data centers?

- *Cerberian houses equipment only in secure, disaster-tolerant colocation facilities.*

Cerberian houses its data centers in highly secure, disaster tolerant facilities with redundant Internet connections. In addition, Cerberian services are hosted on IBM hardware and software for ultimate security, scalability, and reliability.

Can users ask Cerberian to review a rating?

- *Yes, customers can request an expert to review a page's rating.*

If users feel that a URL has received an incorrect rating, any Cerberian Web Filter user can request that one of Cerberian's rating experts review the rating for that page. Users can request a review either by clicking on the link provided on the blocked URL page or by visiting the Cerberian web site (<http://www.cerberian.com>).

Won't an outsourced solution increase my network latency for web requests?

- *Users typically see no increased latency for their Web requests.*

In most cases, the end user will not notice the difference between a request directly to an Internet site and a request processed through the MIS Tech Web Filter. The local device issues a rating request to the Cerberian data center and a request for the target page from its web server in parallel. Typically, Cerberian servers respond within 40 milliseconds—usually before the target web server's response. If the web page does arrive before the response from Cerberian servers, the device delays forwarding the page to the user until it receives the categorization response.

If the URL requires real-time rating, how much of a delay will end users see?

- *Dynamic Real-Time Rating takes only a few seconds.*

The Dynamic Real-Time Rating service, which categorizes URLs on the fly, usually takes no more than a few seconds to rate the requested page and get a response back to the end-user. However, with Cerberian's existing URL database of more than 3.5 million URLs, DRTR is utilized on a small percentage of page requests, keeping the service running quickly.

Management/Administration

Who decides what content to block?

- *You select which categories of information you want to block.*

An administrator at your site sets up the policies that determine what material to block. When an end-user requests access to a URL, your local edge device requests a rating for that URL from a nearby Cerberian lookup appliance. The lookup appliance returns the rating categories to which the URL belongs. The MIS Tech service will compare the ratings to your local policy for that particular user. If your policy allows the content categories for that page, then the end-user gets to view the page; otherwise, the user sees a block page letting the user know that the page contains material against local policy.

Can I have different policies in effect for different times of the day or week?

- *Yes, for each group you can have up to three different policies in effect at different times.*

You can create policy profiles to allow different types of access at different times of day and for different days of the week. For example, you could allow more restrictive access during regular business hours, but grant a wider range of access after hours and on weekends.

Can I assign various administrators over my organization's groups?

- *An upcoming enhancement to the MIS Tech Web Filter will provide this feature.*

With an upcoming version of the MIS Tech service, you will be able to assign as many administrators as you need to delegate management of users and associated policies. Each administrator can manage users and policies and view reports. You can also create managers who can only view reports about user access and policy violations.

Can administrators manage policies remotely?

- *Administrators can manage your account from any computer with Internet access and the Internet Explorer Web browser.*

Administrators can manage users and policies from any workstation with Internet access. Administrators simply log in to the user-friendly administration site located either on Cerberian's servers or a local web server, depending on the solution installed at your location.

Do you require a dedicated management console or software package?

- *No, you manage your account through a Web Browser.*

No, administrators can manage Internet monitoring and filtering from using any workstation with a web browser and an Internet connection.

How many policies can I create?

- *You can create as many policies as you need.*

You can create as many policies as you need to manage your users and groups. You can assign up to three policies to each group. For each policy, you assign a policy profile that defines the day of the week and time of day you want to enforce a policy.

Can I create policies for groups of users?

- *Yes, you assign policies to groups of users.*

Yes, you can create a policy and apply that policy to any number of users on your network. For example, you might want to create a fairly liberal policy for your Marketing department, but a more restrictive policy for your Shipping department.

Can I create a policy for single users?

- *Yes, you can create a policy that controls the access for just a single user.*

You can apply a policy to just a single user. Because you apply policies to groups, you would have to create a group that contains just the one user to whom you want to apply the policy.

Can I create my own categories?

- *No, you create your policies from the 52 categories Cerberian provides.*

The Cerberian review database currently assigns one or more of 52 categories to requested URLs. We feel that these categories enable you to maintain good control over the types of material you will allow and block for your organization. We do have the ability to add additional categories if necessary, but user feedback has shown that too many categories creates an unreasonable burden on managers who have to decide what material to permit or block.

Can I override (block or allow) certain URLs regardless of the rating?

- *Yes, you can create overrides that supercede the ratings in the Cerberian database.*

Yes, administrators can choose to create lists of URLs that you will always allow or block from your location regardless of the categories those URLs would receive from the ratings database.

Reporting

Do you have any predefined reports? Can you segment reports by users and groups? Can you generate reports by time and location?

- *MIS Tech provides numerous user-configurable reports.*

The MIS Tech Internet management solution provides numerous predefined reports, such as Problem (Violation) Reports, Global Reports, Group Reports, Location Reports, Single User Reports, Top User Reports, and Category Reports. You can generate each of these reports for specific periods of time from just today up to the past 90 days.

Is reporting web-based?

- *Yes, you access reports through a secure Web interface.*

Yes, you generate and view reports using a web browser on a workstation connected to the Internet. Any users classified as system administrator, administrator, or manager can generate reports.