LinkWall Suite - Competitive Analysis

Feature	Connectotel LinkWall for Novell BorderManager	CyberPatrol/ SurfControl for Novell BorderManager	N2H2 / Bess Sentian for Novell BorderManager
Uses public domain site blocking lists?	**Yes**	No	No
Low initial cost of software licence?	**Yes**	No	No
Requires expensive ongoing subscription to download updated site lists?	**No**	Yes	Yes
Allows viewing/editing of site list contents?	**Yes**	No	No
Additional off-box server hardware required?	**No**	No	Yes - requires additional server to run
Native NetWare-based solution?	**Yes**	Yes	No - runs on Windows or Linux only
Number of categories	**64 / 32 ***	30	42

Explanation of the "Features" shown above

Uses public domain site blocking lists?

Both CyberPatrol/SurfControl and N2H2 require an expensive subscription to download updated site lists. The Connectotel LinkWall Suite allows the use of free public domain lists such as the squidGuard Blacklist and DMOZ Open Directory Project (ODP) lists. From LinkWall Suite version 2.00 onwards, Connectotel offers the free option to use the LinkWall Blacklist, licensed by Connectotel from urlblacklist.com. LinkWall Suite 3.00 onwards provides tools for automating the download of updated lists.

For information about using public domain lists see the Novell Application Note "Using Public-Domain Site Blocking Lists with Novell BorderManager", February 2003, available here:

http://developer.novell.com/research/appnotes/2003/february/03/a030203.htm

and the Novell Cool Solutions article "Using DMOZ Open Directory Project (ODP) lists with BorderManager" (April 2003), available here:

http://www.novell.com/coolsolutions/bordermag/features/a_dmoz_lists_bm.html

Low initial cost of software license?

The Connectotel LinkWall Suite costs a fraction of the price of the yearly subscription for the competing products. Furthermore, no ongoing subscription is then required, as the license fee has already been paid. By contrast, CyberPatrol/SurfControl and N2H2/Bess require an ongoing yearly subscription for the software license to remain valid.

Requires expensive ongoing subscription to download updated site lists?

CyberPatrol/SurfControl and N2H2/Bess are priced based on the purchase of a subscription which allows the periodic downloading of updated sitelists. Connectotel charges only for the initial purchase of the software licence and does not charge for an ongoing subscription. The first year of software support and maintenance is included in the price of the software license. Annual support and maintenance (ASM), if required, can be purchased for 20% of the initial purchase price, after the first 12 months.

Allows viewing/editing of site list contents?

Both CyberPatrol/SurfControl and N2H2/Bess consider their site lists to be company proprietary information whose contents can never be revealed outside the company. By contrast, Connectotel LinkWall uses text-based site list files which can be viewed and edited by the Administrator at any time. For example, if a site should not be in the list, for whatever reason, then it can be removed by the Administrator.

Additional off-box server hardware required?

Connectotel LinkWall and CyberPatrol/SurfControl are native NetWare solutions which do not require additional hardware. N2H2/Bess requires the use of an additional server, running Windows or Linux, to manage the filtering functionality. This additional requirement also creates a potential bottleneck and point of failure, as all filtering requests must pass twice across the network to another machine, before being allowed or denied.

Native NetWare-based solution?

N2H2/Bess runs on Windows or Linux, which require additional administration resources to manage. The Connectotel LinkWall Suite and CyberPatrol/SurfControl run natively on the Novell NetWare platform.

Number of categories

CyberPatrol/SurfControl imposes a fixed limit of 30 categories of site which can be blocked using their product. N2H2 imposes a fixed set of 42 categories. Connectotel LinkWall allows an unlimited number of sites and up to 64 categories, as defined by the Administrator. * Please note: Certain versions of the Novell ACLCHECK.NLM allow only 32 categories. LinkWall is part of a suite of products including AdWall (blocking of advertising), FileWall (blocking of file types) and LinkWall (blocking of undesirable sites).

Conclusion

The LinkWall Suite represents an effective and inexpensive solution which will cater for the requirements of any organisation requiring filtering of undesirable sites, using public domain site lists.