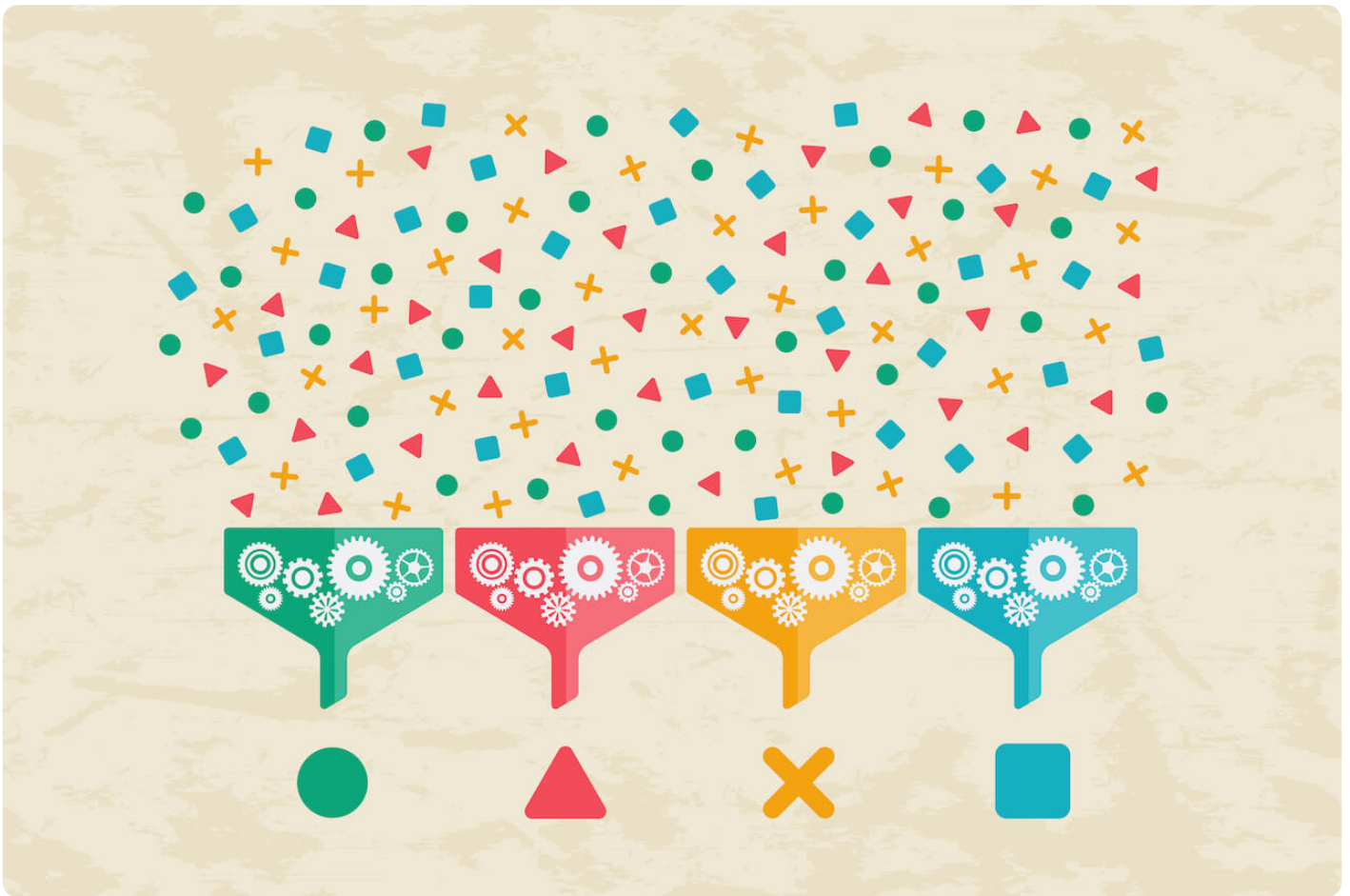


5 Benefits of Web Filtering for Businesses

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Web filtering is the practice of limiting access to certain websites based on their content. Businesses use web filtering to increase workplace productivity and protect their network security.

Larger companies are more likely to monitor their employees' internet activity. Around 96% of large businesses block access to at least one website. Yet the practice of web filtering has become popular among smaller companies too. Up to 92% of mid-size and small businesses supervise their employees' web access.

Still wondering whether you should start filtering web content? The benefits of web filtering for businesses are plenty. However, using unsophisticated filtering services can diminish these positive effects.

In this article, we will focus on helping your business get the most out of web filtering.

What are the benefits of web filtering for businesses?

1. Workplace Productivity

Workplace productivity is the go-to reason businesses use filtering software. It is not surprising if we say that [85% of employees](#) are not engaged or are actively disengaged at work. This results in \$7 trillion in lost productivity worldwide. Some of that disengagement can be attributed to numerous online distractions.

How do things work out in companies that don't restrict any internet activity? [Data says](#) that more than half of the employees spend around four hours per week on non-work-related sites. A quarter of them spend almost an entire day each week on non-work-related sites.

This is why most businesses use some form of web content filtering. Web filters block access to

social media, entertainment sites, and inappropriate content. Filtering software enables them to keep employees on work-related websites.

Most commonly restricted websites and web pages are:

- Illegal websites
- Inappropriate web content
- Online dating sites
- Social media channels
- Personal instant messaging services

Web filtering reduces time spent on non-work-related websites, thus increasing employees' productivity. Productivity seems to be the main reason for using web filtering. However, it is only a side-effect of more important consideration.

2. Increased Network Security

Network security is the single most important benefit of web filtering for businesses. Educating employees about responsible Internet use is the first line of defense against cyberattacks. However, it cannot be the only one. Cyber-attacks become more and more sophisticated on a daily basis. It receives help from web filtering software to fight the latest viruses and malware.

Employees don't have to be on illegal or inappropriate websites to catch malware such as exploit kits. Exploit kits are all-in-one tools that exploit vulnerabilities in popular software applications. These include web browsers, add-ons, and other apps. All of them can turn into a vehicle for Trojans, spyware, and other malicious software.

Exploit kits evolve as browser vulnerabilities are discovered and addressed. However, it takes time

for anti-virus software to catch up. Web filtering is a quicker solution to prevent exploit kits from reaching your company network.

3. Blocking Phishing Attacks

Companies often miss opportunities to strengthen their network security. For example, only a fifth of companies restrict personal webmail services. This weak point can become a channel for phishing attacks.

Phishing is a practice of collecting sensitive information by deceiving users. One example of phishing is impersonating a credible organization to obtain login information or encourage file sharing.

By using high-quality web filtering service, you can easily prevent access to personal webmail services, which often fall prey to phishing attacks. By using web filtering, you can keep tabs on the company's webmail service. It will allow you to scan the content of emails or block access to suspicious links.

4. Faster Connection

Bandwidth boost is one of the benefits of web filtering that few very businesses use. Most companies do not block access to popular video streaming services such as YouTube or Netflix. Apart from hindering productivity, these websites can be terrible bandwidth cloggers.

Small and mid-size businesses often struggle with demanding connectivity requirements and limited bandwidth. Solid networks require a significant financial investment that is not always possible. Web filtering is a great solution in these cases.

5. Controlling Company Liability

Unfortunately, sometimes the greatest threats to your business come from within. Employees can use the workplace network to download copyrighted content or access inappropriate websites.

In these situations, legal protection is an overlooked, yet important benefit of web filtering for businesses. Web filtering reduces the risk of ending up in situations that could tarnish your company's reputation.

How badly does filtering software harm your business?

The benefits of web filtering for businesses can be canceled out by using a basic URL filtering service.

Many web filtering tools have **issues with differentiating between allowed and banned content**. Entire websites may be blocked based on one out-of-context, seemingly inappropriate word or image. This way, your employees may be prevented from accessing even important, work-related websites. This could result in frustration and decreased productivity.

Bad web filtering software often **lacks features that enable scanning individual web pages or parts of them**. This also happens when filtering services ban sites based only on domain names.

An incomplete database of malware and dangerous websites is also an issue for basic web filtering solutions. Most systems don't have access to all of their existing records. They also lack the means to quickly catch the latest threats.

When businesses have a limited scope of filtering options, there are two possibilities. Some go with more lenient customization. This means allowing banned content and malware to slip through,

thus endangering network security. In other cases, they opt for strict customization. This customization blocks more content than it should, resulting in employees' frustration and hindered productivity.

Why web categorization is the best web filtering option?

A prerequisite to high-quality web filtering is knowing who is who on the Internet. [Whois XML API](#) became the go-to address for identifying dangerous web content. [Website Categorization API](#) is a tool that branched out of this database. It was created with the goals and needs of both enterprise and small businesses in mind.

So how can website categorization guarantee the benefits of web filtering for businesses? This process is based on a sophisticated analysis of web content. It doesn't work on random automated triggers.

Instead, it combines advanced machine learning and human assistance on three levels:

- Investigating website response
- Analyzing information and keywords based on natural language processing
- Authentication of results through human supervision

Websites are assigned to 1-3 out of 25 different categories. You can set which combinations will be accessible to your employees.

This way, you can be sure you are receiving all the benefits of web filtering for businesses. Allowed and blocked content won't be a result of some highly-automated yet primitive process. Web filtering through website categorization analyzes entire domains and individual page content.



With website categorization, you will be sure that everything you need for blooming business is available – and that everything harming it stays out. [Click here for a free demo!](#)