CYBERHOUND

Melbourne High School Success Story

An esteemed Victorian high school has been able to take a highly innovative approach to teaching literature by making use of CyberHound's social media management technology. Melbourne High School relaxed its ban on the use of social media so English students could turn Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice into a series of Facebook posts. The inventive project successfully engaged students without compromising their wellbeing online because the school used CyberHound's unique ClearView technology to monitor and manage student use of Facebook and other social media platforms while they were undertaking the English project.

ClearView's unique pattern-matching technology monitors all social media communication and is used to identify and block racist, sexist and profane language before it reaches its intended victim. ClearView also delivered an important service to student welfare officers at Melbourne High School by identifying students at risk of self-harm and even ensuring they were protected from the influence of radicalization.

The Melbourne High School trial was so successful that the school is looking to extend the use of social media in the classroom, safe in the knowledge that communications can be monitored, inappropriate behaviour can be managed and at-risk students can be identified and helped.

The Situation

Melbourne High School is a selective government school for boys from Year 9-12. It has a proud academic tradition and seeks to remain at the forefront of Australia's education landscape by embracing the opportunities presented by technology. The school uses iPads in the classroom as a tool to aid learning – engaging students, offering opportunities for creativity, inquiry-based learning and differentiated instruction.

The school has used CyberHound's technology for many years to provide network security, content filtering and internet optimization, but had a ban on social media due to concerns that students would misuse it or be exposed to bullying, if given access.

This year, the English department was looking for a creative way to engage Year 9 students in Shakespeare. Staff planned an innovative project to modernize The Merchant of Venice using language that teenagers could easily understand – Facebook posts.

The Merchant of Venice project presented students with an important opportunity to make use of technology in a very innovative way, so the school decided this was a good time to trial social media in the classroom.

"We wanted to provide students with a unique and engaging educational experience without exposing them to the undesirable consequences of social media," Melbourne High School Student Welfare Coordinator, Jenny Mill says. *"There is a heavy responsibility that comes with providing access to information and we wanted to make sure we conducted the trial in a safe environment for students."*

"CyberHound has provided us with the tools to engage students in new ways of learning, while ensuring social media use is managed appropriately."

Jenny Mill,
Student Welfare Coordinator,
Melbourne High School
www.mhsviceduau.com

"The CyberHound solution has proven to be innovative, reliable, scalable and easy to use. I have also really appreciated dealing with an Australian company that really cares about its customers. CyberHound have proven that when we really need help, that the support from the entire team, technical support, through to the executives, all contribute to helping us - going above and beyond. We would have no hesitation in recommending them to other schools."

David Ball, ICT Manager,
Melbourne High School

The Solution

Melbourne High School used CyberHound's unique ClearView technology to provide the secure learning environment required while the Shakespeare project was completed. ClearView gave the school peace of mind during the trial because it monitored all social media communications, identifying inappropriate language. It also delivered the added benefit of being able to identify if any students became at risk of bullying, self harm, drug use and radicalisation. Regular reports gave staff the information needed to monitor student wellbeing and take action when needed.

"We saw an increase in reports of inappropriate and concerning language when we relaxed the ban on social media," Mrs Mills says. *"However, we were also able to see the context this language was used. When an inappropriate internet search is flagged on the report we don't get any of the wider picture. The reports on social media use give us more detail about the students' wellbeing and we can follow up with students that need attention."*

Communication related to self-harm came up regularly in the reports by CyberHound's ClearView technology. In some cases, reports flagged students that had not been considered at risk of self-harm by the school. Other students flagged by ClearView reports were already known to be vulnerable and the reports reinforced to staff the need to monitor those students and provide support.

"I find the reports very useful because if someone's name is coming up every week, then I know I have to find out why," Mrs Mills says.

The ClearView technology has also flagged cases of extremist language among students and provides the school with a valuable tool in the early detection of radicalization. It is also being used to detect racist language in online communications, which the school is able to act on, providing students who repeatedly infringe school standards with life coaching.

The Results

Melbourne High School is considering rolling out the ClearView technology across the school as a result of the highly successful Year 9 trial. With the help of CyberHound, Melbourne High School was able to harness the power of social media and bring Shakespeare to a modern audience, without exposing students to the many risks of online communications. It brought the added benefit of helping to identify students at risk of dangerous behaviour to ensure the school can provide support when needed.

"CyberHound has provided us with the tools to engage students in new ways of learning, while ensuring social media use is managed appropriately. The Year 9 group found creating a modern adaptation of Shapespeare tremendous fun and beneficial to their learning. ClearView has been a tremendous enabling solution for Melbourne High School," said Jenny Mill.

Student Welfare Benefits:

- *The School is able to enforce the principles of student respect and support for each other – even across the use of social media platforms.*

- *All social media communications are monitored so inappropriate language is blocked before it reaches its target.*

- *Perpetrators can be identified and misuse can be managed.*

- *The School is able to manage internet use on school-owned laptops whether they are on the school network or outside the network (i.e. at home, on the bus or elsewhere).*

- *ClearView can identify unusual patterns of communication that may indicate a student is in need of support.*

- *These evidence-based triggers are crucial for welfare staff to act quickly to quickly identify and assist at-risk students.*

SIXTH SENSE TECHNOLOGY