



## Case Study Houston Astros

### PROFILE:

COUNTRY: USA  
INDUSTRY: Sports & Entertainment

### KEY REQUIREMENTS:

- A cross-platform web security solution that's easy to deploy and manage, with no software needed on each client device
- Flexible controls that let IT managers set very granular policies for different types of employees
- The ability to decode, inspect, and filter SSL encrypted web traffic to and from any device

### MAIN BENEFITS:

- Unrivaled protection from malware, botnets, phishing scams, and other online threats
- Enhanced productivity among employees—and greater visibility into network use
- Highly responsive technical support with same-day resolution

**“With ContentKeeper, our employees can securely access company resources on their phones.”**

Chad Harvey  
IT Director



## ContentKeeper Shields Astros' Network from Internet Threats

### OBJECTIVE

Major League Baseball's, Houston Astros, wanted to safeguard their network against malware and ensure network resources were being used for legitimate business purposes only. A key challenge for the organization was that users — including scouts, coaches, and players — connect to the network remotely using mobile devices.

### SOLUTION

The Astros chose ContentKeeper as part of a multi-layered approach to Internet security. ContentKeeper's Secure Internet Gateway protects against malware and other web-based threats, while providing real-time monitoring and reporting of Internet activity. What's more, this monitoring and protection extends to remote users when they connect to the Astros' network using a smart phone or other mobile device.

### Background

A good defense is critical for success on the baseball diamond — and it's just as critical off the field as well. Like most organizations today, the Astros rely on a secure and dependable network for mission-critical functions.

With scouts who travel the globe looking for top talent, minor league affiliates across the United States, and a baseball academy in the Dominican Republic, the team has many people connecting to its network remotely through a secure Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection.

“We have a SharePoint site where a lot of our internal documents are stored,” said Systems Administrator Alex Shinpoch. “We have an internal video app that our scouts and coaches use. It's stored in Houston, and they access it through the VPN.” Off-site personnel also access centrally stored scouting reports and other sensitive information through the team's network.

The Astros already had several security measures in place, such as a two-factor authentication system that controls who has access to network resources. The organization was looking for a gateway product to defend its network from malware, botnets, phishing scams, and other online threats introduced inadvertently — or maliciously — by authorized network users.

### Why Choose ContentKeeper?

“The Astros found a perfect solution to their needs with ContentKeeper. The company's Secure Internet Gateway provides industry leading security for all web traffic to and from any device — even encrypted Secure Socket Layer (SSL) connections.

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ContentKeeper's proprietary in-line bridge technology decodes, inspects, filters, and logs the full URL string for SSL encrypted web traffic at multi-gigabit speeds — resulting in unprecedented visibility and control over website requests, with no noticeable network latency. This means that users can securely access either HTTP or HTTPS websites from any device and remain compliant with company policies.

With ContentKeeper, Astros IT managers can restrict or deny employees' connections to websites with self-signed or invalid SSL certificates; ensure that web traffic over SSL connections is legitimate, and not an attempt to circumvent normal web filtering policies; make sure information uploaded to the Internet is authorized and not confidential; and ensure that downloads don't contain malicious content.

"What we like about it is that it gives us a safer environment," Shinpoch said. "It blocks access to spoofing websites that are constantly being updated, and it gives us an inside look at what's happening with our network." IT Director Chad Harvey said ContentKeeper also blocks spyware, advertising, and other unnecessary content that can chew up bandwidth and hinder network performance. "It cuts down some of our traffic, while giving us more visibility," he said.

### Improving Productivity

ContentKeeper's flexible controls allow IT managers to set very granular policies governing web use for different types of employees. This flexibility has served the Astros well, enabling them to set policies designed to keep employees productive and on task. While this ability has been useful throughout the organization, it has been especially valuable at the team's Dominican baseball academy. The teenagers who attend this program go to school in the morning and play baseball in the afternoon. But Internet access is not as robust in the Dominican Republic, and any uses of the network that are not related to school or baseball cut into this limited bandwidth.

Before the team installed a ContentKeeper Secure Internet Gateway appliance at the academy, participants "were streaming videos and going to websites they shouldn't have been using," Shinpoch said. "ContentKeeper let us lock that activity down, and we've had such better results." Now, Dominican players and staff "are able to use the resources we have in Houston to be able to do their jobs properly."

### Supporting Mobile Users

Another advantage of using ContentKeeper is the company's ability to support SSL decoding and deep content inspection for users who log onto the network remotely with their mobile devices — without having to install software on these client devices.

"The biggest challenge with security is balancing ease of use with maintaining a secure environment," Harvey said. "With ContentKeeper, our employees can securely access company resources on their phones. We love the security aspect of it, while they love being able to do their work on their mobile devices."

### Easy to Use and Manage

This ease of use extends to managing the system as well.

"We're a small IT department, and we all wear many hats," Harvey said. "We love the ease of use that comes with administration. It makes our lives a lot easier. And the reporting feature is very rich."

As for customer service, "ContentKeeper is great," Shinpoch said. "Their service is very helpful. They have been willing to help us set up custom configurations to meet our needs, and they're quick with a response to any questions we might have. With a lot of large companies, you're looking at two to three days for a response. That's not the case with ContentKeeper."

## RESULT

The Astros have recorded a win with ContentKeeper's Secure Internet Gateway. ContentKeeper has protected the team's network from threats introduced by employees, while also ensuring greater productivity. As Shinpoch said: "It gives us a better peace of mind."



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