School Communicator – Company Security

The School Communicator is a simple desktop application that is used to keep parents in touch with what's happening at their child's school. News and calendar events, and a variety of other useful resources, are pushed directly to the parent's computer.

Requirements
The School Communicator is a relatively light-weight application. Depending on usage it requires between 10Mb and 50Mb of hard drive space. Cpu and memory usage is negligible.

The application uses port 80 to communicate with the update server (d6communicator.com). If the user is on a proxy network it will automatically use the settings specified in the Control Panel (or Internet Explorer).

Security
The School Communicator is configured to communicate only with the D6 server. It uses proprietary technology, including custom xml, to transfer information between the Communicator and the server.

To ensure that the School Communicator cannot be used to introduce viruses or malware every interaction is signed using public/private key encryption. The Communicator will only execute a command if it can verify that the instruction has in fact come from the School Communicator server. In addition, the School Communicator may only read/write/delete files in the ApplicationData folder into which it was installed. It cannot access or modify files outside of that directory.

Bandwidth
We have made every effort to minimise the bandwidth requirements of the School Communicator, and it should use no more than 30Mb of bandwidth in any month. Typical usage is even lower, but this depends on how the school uses the communicator and the number of documents they upload.

Privacy
We do not collect any information from users without their express permission (except very basic anonymous usage information). All data collected is the property of the respective schools and contractually we have no rights to that content. The only potentially sensitive information that is captured is the parent updates - this is a service to schools so that parents have a quick, convenient way of updating their personal details. Once the school has recorded this information on their own systems they can delete the information from our servers.

Our servers require authenticated logins (using certificates issues by Thawte) and are managed on our behalf by Hetzner, one of South Africa's most respected hosting providers.

Who's currently using it?
There are now approximately 100,000 people using D6 School Communicator, in a diverse range of environments, from dial-up home networks to large corporates. These include some of South Africa's top financial institutions, including Investec, Nedbank, RMB, Old Mutual, FNB and ABSA. We even have a number of users at the SA Reserve Bank (who assisted us with testing).

If you have any further questions please feel free to give us a call.