
FastTracker™ Overview

A General Guide to FastTracker



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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
More Information	3
Contacting Fast Data Technology, Inc.	3
FastTracker Features	4
Categorization and Blocking	4
Policy Management	5
Reporting	6
Daily Alerts	7
Employee Views	7
Browser Lockdowns.....	8
Support for Varied Hardware and Systems	8
How FastTracker Works	9
Flow of Web Browsing through FastTracker	9
Choosing the Appropriate FastTracker Solution	10

Introduction

Personal computers equipped with high speed Internet access have revolutionized how research, communication, and business are conducted.

In the workplace, the Internet has also changed the make-up of employee activities. Analysts estimate that in the future, employees will spend 30% to 40% of their workday online. This usage pattern, while often business-related, frequently affects productivity as employees may also shop, download music, search for jobs, follow sports teams, or in the worst case, gamble and visit objectionable sites. Large downloads of MP3 files, pictures, and streaming video can slow overall system performance to a crawl. Liability for objectionable material, such as pornography, in the workplace can leave a company vulnerable to legal action by affected employees.

Similarly, in libraries and at schools, community standards and laws often dictate that access to objectionable material must be reasonably controlled.

Management requires new tools to deal with this without invading the privacy of the individual. Some products gather little or no information about Internet use; they merely create "block lists," which are collections of URLs for web sites a particular organization prohibits its users from visiting. But advanced technology has moved beyond mere blocking and has actually become "intelligent," analyzing the actual content of web sites so organizations can use the information more effectively.

FastTracker™, available as a product or as a service from Fast Data Technology, lets you view Internet usage patterns and analyze relevant information in real time, all the while making more efficient use of bandwidth. In the workplace, FastTracker™ helps you make more intelligent, more informed decisions on how to improve your company's productivity. And in all environments, FastTracker™ protects you from unwanted exposure.

FastTracker™ is an essential tool for managing Internet usage.

More Information

Many other FastTracker documents, such as our **Legal Considerations Fact Sheet** and **FastTracker FAQs**, are available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/>.

Please visit our website at www.fastdatatech.com for more general information about FastTracker and other Fast Data Technology products and services.

Contacting Fast Data Technology, Inc.

The easiest way to contact Fast Data Technology is to email support@fastdatatech.com.

For other contact options, see the **FastTracker Contact Information** document, available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/fasttracker-contact-information.pdf>.

FastTracker Features

All the features that are necessary to filter Internet usage are available through FastTracker:

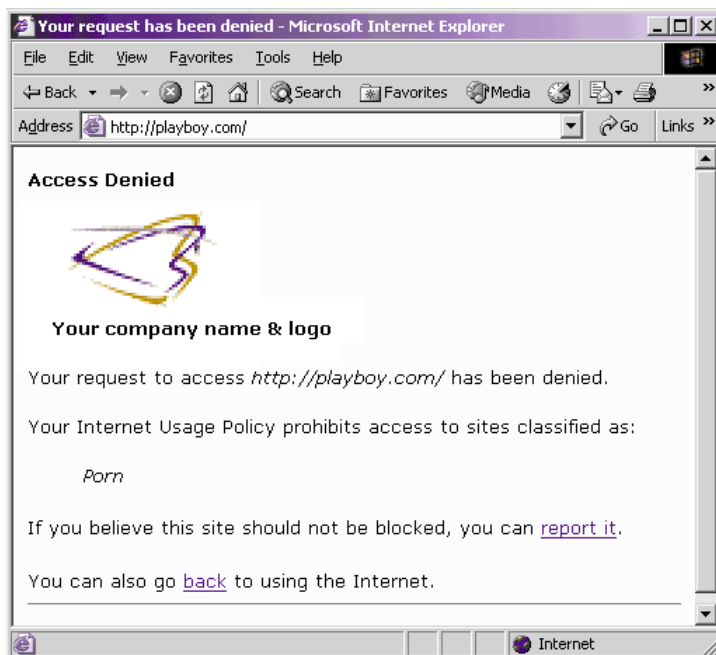
- Real-time **categorization** of web pages based on URL and actual text content, with optional **blocking** of objectionable content.
- Simple **policy management** that makes setting up an Internet usage policy a snap.
- Easy-to-use **reporting** that is accessible from any web browser.
- Emailed **alerts** that proactively inform you of Unacceptable activity
- Option for **Employee Views** that can allow every employee to police his/her own browsing.
- **Browser lockdowns** to prevent users from deactivating FastTracker.
- Support for **varied hardware and systems**, including remote laptops, VPNs, terminal server, and non-Windows platforms

Categorization and Blocking

Web page categorization is performed real-time by a combination of FastTracker's high-performance artificial intelligence engine, which looks at the content and context of a web page, and a URL list of known web sites. The artificial intelligence, which is concept-based to allow it to analyze text as the human brain would, assures that all pages get categorized, even those among the thousands of new pages added to the Internet each day.

Categories are placed into three **classifications** to represent three major uses of the Internet: **Business**-related categories, **Non-Business**-related categories, and **Unacceptable** categories. This placement can be customized for individual groups within your organization, allowing the tailoring of specific Internet usage policies for each group. These classifications are colored green, yellow, and red respectively in FastTracker reports. More information about FastTracker's 60 categories is available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/categories.pdf>.

You can elect to block content classified as Unacceptable. When content is blocked, an "access denied" page similar to the following is displayed to the user instead of the requested web page.



Policy Management

FastTracker's Policy Manager is a simple web-based application that allows you to view and change the key components of your Internet policy – adjust the classification of certain categories or URLs, turn Blocking on or off, and modify your organization's suggested browsing guidelines. More information about setting policies is available at

<http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/internet-usage-policy-fact-sheet.pdf>.

General information about the Policy Manager application is available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/using-policy-manager.pdf>.

The screenshot shows the FastTracker web application interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Go To: POLICY SETTINGS | GROUP SETTINGS | HISTORY' and 'HELP | LOG OUT'. Below this, a green banner states: 'The POLICY SETTINGS tab allows you to edit the Library - Child Internet usage policy. Note: Policy changes will take effect within 24 hours.' The main content area is divided into two sections. The first section, 'The Library - Child URL List', explains that this list allows classifying individual URLs as Business, Non-Business, or Unacceptable. It includes a dropdown menu labeled 'Choose a URL' with '- CHOOSE -' selected, and buttons for 'Edit | Remove' and 'Add New'. The second section, 'The Library - Child Category Assignments', explains that FastTracker categories are classified as Business, Non-Business, or Unacceptable. It includes a dropdown menu labeled 'Choose a Category' with 'Adult - Unacceptable' selected, and buttons for 'Edit | Restore Defaults', 'Update', and 'Update'. A third section, 'The Library - Child', explains that as part of your Internet usage policy, you can set a guideline for what constitutes reasonable Internet usage. It includes a dropdown menu labeled 'Choose a Category' with 'Adult - Unacceptable' selected, and buttons for 'Update' and 'Update'. At the bottom, there is a status bar that says 'Blocking is ON Turn Off'.

Groups and Administrators

Your organization can set up multiple administrator accounts for setting policies and viewing reports. Furthermore, each administrator can optionally be restricted to see and/or control the policy for only specific groups of users. FastTracker allows you to replicate your organization's structure within the user database. This permits you to set up administrators who can only see specific groups of users. It also allows Internet usage policies – for example, whether blocking is turned on or off – to be different from group to group.

In the FastTracker database, users and administrators are associated with groups. By default, one group is set up to represent your entire organization. However, you can add many new groups and subgroups. When you add new administrators for viewing reports or setting policies, you can choose what group they belong to. More information is available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/using-groups-fact-sheet.pdf> and at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/using-policy-manager.pdf>.

The screenshot shows the FastTracker web application interface for group management. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Go To: POLICY SETTINGS | GROUP SETTINGS | HISTORY' and 'HELP | LOG OUT'. Below this, a green banner states: 'You are currently viewing the group settings for: Fatlake * Knowledge' and a 'Remove Group' button. The main content area is divided into three sections. The first section, 'Add a subgroup called', includes a text input field and an 'Add SubGroup' button. The second section, 'Administrators', includes a dropdown menu labeled '- CHOOSE -' and buttons for 'Edit | Remove | Add New'. The third section, 'Users', includes a dropdown menu labeled '- CHOOSE -' and buttons for 'Edit | Deactivate'.

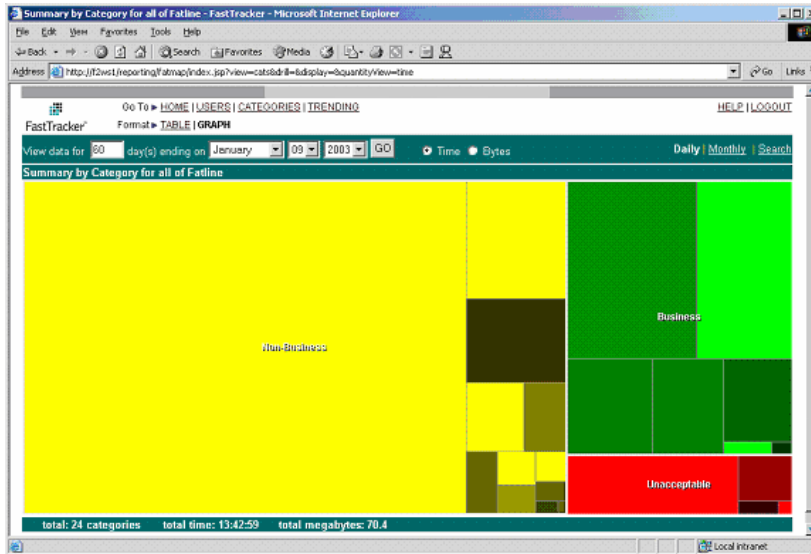
Log into the Policy Manager at <https://admin.fastdatatech.com/operations> or by clicking the Policy Manager link on the FastTracker Reports home page (ID and password are required).

Reporting

FastTracker's reports provide you with truly useful information about employee web browsing, without forcing you to go through reams of meaningless data. An easy-to-use graphical reporting tool allows you to see browsing by user or category on the screen and zoom in on areas that interest you.

Your organization can be set up with multiple administrator accounts for viewing reports. Furthermore, each administrator can optionally be restricted to see only specific groups of users.

Note: If you opt for FastTracker's 'Blocking Only' solution, reports are not available.



Reports are accessible by logging into the reporting web site. Go to the Fast Data Technology home page, <http://www.fastdatatech.com>, and click the **Customer Login** button (ID and password are required). You may also go directly to the site at <https://admin.fastdatatech.com/reporting>. More information on the reporting system is available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/using-fasttracker-reports.pdf>.

Daily Alerts

Any administrator can turn on FastTracker Alerts to automatically receive daily email summaries of Unacceptable web browsing by users in their organization. This allows you to monitor a potential problem without logging into the reporting system every day.

This is your FastTracker report for **Unacceptable** web browsing activity from **Jul-09-2002 12:00AM** to **Jul-10-2002 11:59PM**. For more detailed information, please open the [FastTracker Reports](#). For more information about FastTracker, please visit our [web site](#).

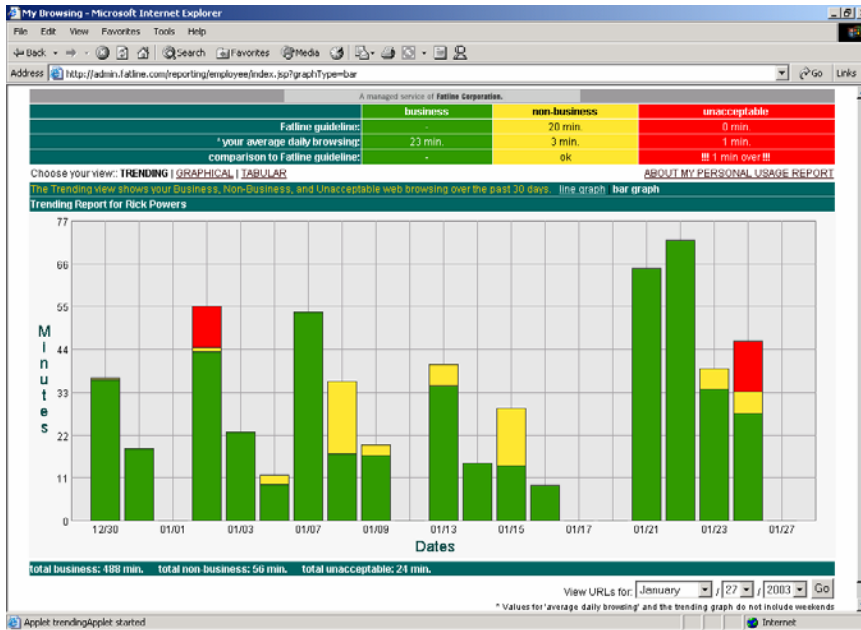
FastTracker			
Go To: Online FastTracker Reports			
Summary by User of Unacceptable Web Activity			
Jul-09-2002 12:00AM through Jul-10-2002 11:59PM			
name	group	time spent	attempts
Douglas Abbink	Engineering	00:01:52	1
Kathryn Burd	Fatline	00:00:00	91
Rick Powers	Knowledge	00:03:09	3
Stephen Youngs IV	Engineering	00:00:18	1
total: 4 users		total: 00:05:19	total: 96

More information about Alerts is available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/alerts-fact-sheet.pdf>.

Employee Views

FastTracker's Employee View option allows you to have an open Internet usage policy that includes an element of employee self-policing. An employee can view information about his/her own web browsing in the Personal Usage report, which also compares browsing activity to management-provided guidelines. If you use the FastTracker agent (FPP) connection/authentication method, Employee View puts a FastTracker icon in the system tray on every workstation, which you double-click to display the report. If not using FPP, Employee View may optionally be accessed at <http://employeeview.fastdatatech.com>, depending on the connection/authentication method you choose.

Note: If you choose FastTracker's 'Blocking Only' solution, Employee Views are not available.



Browser Lockdowns

FastTracker includes browser lockdown capabilities that prevent employees from disabling Internet filtering if you use the FastTracker agent (FPP) connection/authentication method. Specifically, FPP makes it impossible for users to edit their web browser proxy settings.

Support for Varied Hardware and Systems

FastTracker supports many less-typical environments:

- If you are operating in a Microsoft Terminal Server or Citrix MetaFrame environment, see <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/terminal-server-fact-sheet.pdf> for more information.
- For deploying FastTracker to laptops, home users, and remote offices using VPNs, refer to <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/laptop-and-vpns-fact-sheet.pdf>.
- If your workstations use a non-Windows platform, refer to <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/non-windows-platforms-fact-sheet.pdf>

How FastTracker Works

This section highlights how FastTracker performs its monitoring, filtering, and reporting functions.

- FastTracker routes employee web browsing through the FastTracker Access Point, or **FAP**. For the FastTracker service model, this is one of our central FAPs; for the software/appliance model, this is the appliance behind the customer firewall.
- The FAP performs an analysis to categorize each web page, and uses the resulting category and your Internet usage policy to determine whether to allow the page through or to block it.
- Details about users' requests for web pages are logged to a database at a central Fast Data Technology server.
- When you use your web browser to log into the FastTracker reporting system, users' web browsing patterns are pulled real-time from this database and displayed on your screen in graphs and tables. The database also stores your organization's Internet usage policy, which you can edit at any time.

Flow of Web Browsing through FastTracker

1. Workstations are pre-configured to redirect web-browsing traffic to a FastTracker FAP.
2. As web browsing is attempted, FastTracker gathers user or workstation identification.
3. At the FAP, FastTracker checks the Internet usage policy that is applicable to that user.
4. FastTracker checks to see if the web page is pre-categorized on our **URL List**.
5. Unless the web page is known to be in a category being blocked for that user, the web page is retrieved (the copy in the FastTracker cache will be used if available and current).
6. If the category is not already known via the URL list, text from the retrieved page is sent to the **Content Analysis** engine for categorization.
7. If the web page is in a category being blocked for that user, an "access denied" dummy page is returned to the user; otherwise the actual web page is returned.
8. FastTracker's handling of the request is logged to our central Reporting database, which is used by the:
 - web-accessible Reporting application, available to authorized users
 - Employee View reporting
 - nightly Alerts email processing

Choosing the Appropriate FastTracker Solution

FastTracker can be provided to you via any of three solutions:

- as a Service, hosted on Fast Data Technology's central servers
- on our Appliance, pre-loaded with the FastTracker software
- as a Software Product for loading onto your own hardware

The following table will help to determine which solution is best for you.

	Service	Appliance	Software
Number of users	Most cost-effective for under 200 users	More cost-effective for over 200 users	More cost-effective for over 200 users
Security	Filtering is secured outside your firewall	Filtering is behind your firewall	Filtering is behind your firewall
Hardware costs	No hardware to buy, configure, or maintain.	Appliance is ideally suited and configured for FastTracker.	Intel-based servers that meet all the FastTracker hardware compatibility list specifications can be used.
Ease of activation	Instant activation; no network changes required.	FastTracker is installed and configured to your needs before shipment; plug-and-play.	FastTracker CD is provided for your installation/configuration on your own server; requires good technical expertise on part of customer.
Performance	Very Good – central FAP connects to 6 major Internet backbones and is a caching proxy server.	Best -- on-site caching proxy server.	Best -- on-site caching proxy server.
Customer IT infrastructure	Ideal if users are decentralized	Centralized infrastructure will reduce the number of appliances required.	Centralized infrastructure will reduce the number of servers required.
Hardware Support	Uses robust FAP infrastructure for load balancing, redundancy, and 24x7x365 hardware uptime	Customer is responsible for hardware tuning and support.	Customer is responsible for hardware tuning and support.
Network access to Internet	Latency is a potential problem only if customer network access is remote.	Eliminates latency concern due to remote network access.	Eliminates latency concern due to remote network access.

Once you have made your choice and receive your FastTracker activation materials, refer to the **Getting Started** document that pertains to your selection for more details about activating FastTracker for your organization. The appropriate **Getting Started** document will be provided among the activation materials and is also available at <http://www.fastdatatech.com/documentation/>.