



Optimal network settings for Firefly

Ensuring that a few simple things are set up on your network can make a significant difference to how much your teachers and students can get out of Firefly.

Several of the tips below require making changes to Group Policy. Make sure that you refresh the policy across all your client machines to ensure any changes are picked up, and be aware of different policies that might apply to different groups of users – e.g. staff, senior staff and pupils. You may have to change several policies to have the same effect for all users.

1. Adding Firefly to the 'bypass proxy' list

If your Firefly installation is hosted locally at the school, there is no need for users to pass through your school proxy to reach the Firefly server. Ensuring that connections are direct between your client computers speeds up Firefly and also prevents problems. You can add the Firefly server address to the 'bypass proxy' list in Group Policy if you have a Windows network.

<http://lantern.fireflysolutions.co.uk/lantern/hints-and-tips/adding-proxy-exceptions-via-group-policy>

2. Adding Firefly to the 'local intranet' zone

Because your Firefly site will have an externally accessible web address, your client PCs may not perform Active Directory single sign on automatically, prompting users for their credentials instead. It's a bit of a bore to have to type in your username and password all over again! You can enable automatic login from Windows domain machines by adding the Firefly site address to the local intranet zone. This can be done in Group Policy.

<http://lantern.fireflysolutions.co.uk/lantern/hints-and-tips/enabling-automatic-login>

3. Configuring Office to automatically authenticate with Firefly

Again because your Firefly site has an externally accessible web address, Microsoft Office applications may ask users to log in again when opening a document. Again, on Windows domain machines you can set up the machines to automatically provide the logged in user's details to Firefly so they don't have to be re-entered. This is configured by adding a registry key, which again can be pushed out by Group Policy.

<http://lantern.fireflysolutions.co.uk/lantern/hints-and-tips/prevent-office-from-requiring-credentials-when-opening-documents-in-webdav>

4. Map a network drive into Firefly

When users want to manipulate lots of files at once within Firefly it helps to be able to access them through Firefly's network drive. Individual users often find it tricky to map network drives themselves, so it makes sense to add it to the login script or profile, then it's there for them as the 'F Drive'. As long as the steps above have been followed, the user won't have to authenticate when the drive is mapped. If a login box does appear, ensure you have followed the previous tuning steps.

<http://archive.fireflysolutions.co.uk/manual/advanced/managing-resources>

5. Configure your firewall for Apple's push notifications

Firefly's mobile apps make use of Apple's push notifications infrastructure which require certain firewall/proxy settings to be in place to ensure reliable delivery of push notifications. The following article explains which ports need to be available and for what purpose:

http://support.apple.com/kb/ts4264?viewlocale=en_us&locale=en_us

6. Configure your mail server to whitelist e-mail sent from Firefly

Firefly sends e-mails through our own cloud e-mail service which we provide free of charge for schools. Sometimes e-mails sent from our service end up in school spam filters. To whitelist all e-mails sent through Firefly, please make sure the domains amazonses.com and ffmsg.com are whitelisted on your mail server.

7. Ensure Chrome or Silverlight is installed on school PCs

Internet Explorer does not allow users to drag and drop files to upload them out of the box. You either need to install Silverlight, which will allow users to drag and drop files in IE or if possible install Google Chrome. Google Chrome's performance is generally much higher than Internet Explorer. Google Chrome also supports automatic login based on the Local Intranet zone setting in Internet Explorer.