

# Employee Monitoring Solutions from Refog

Pavel Mikhailov [pavel@refog.com](mailto:pavel@refog.com)  
Refog Inc. <http://www.refog.com/>

## Abstract

*This article describes a computer activity monitoring approach as means to improve employee productivity in corporate environments, investigate fraud and collect evidence in a non-disruptive way.*

## Introduction

The widespread availability of new technologies has changed a modern workplace dramatically. The way we do work and the way we manage employees has changed with the use of new and improved information and communication tools. While offering the obvious productivity and cost benefits, information technologies bear a number of associated risks and concerns. Social networking and casual games lead to decreased employee productivity on Internet-connected workplaces, while companies dealing with trade secrets, intellectual property and sensitive information face increased employer risks related to employee misconduct.

Those same technologies, on the other hand, provide employers with more efficient and lower cost tools to manage the risks and address misconduct. Surveillance, monitoring and proactive data leak protection (DLP) systems are quickly gaining popularity. The availability of effective, inexpensive monitoring tools in a situation of increased risks and constant socializing resulted in increased use of surveillance and monitoring on computer-equipped workplaces.

This paper looks at ways in which the use of software-based employee monitoring systems affects employee productivity, the enforcement of corporate policies, prevention and investigation of employee misconduct and security breaches.

## Computer Surveillance and Monitoring Software

This paper is based on statistics collected by the use of two PC monitoring tools: Refog Employee Monitor and Refog Terminal Monitor. The tools are common representatives of their species, offering employers the ability to watch all or select employee activities such as communications with the outside world, launching applications or accessing files.

## Non-Disruptive Monitoring

A major difference between passive monitoring solutions and proactive data leak protection (DLP) systems is the way they handle potential threats. Heuristic analysis and proactive filtering may seem to create a technological barrier to prevent

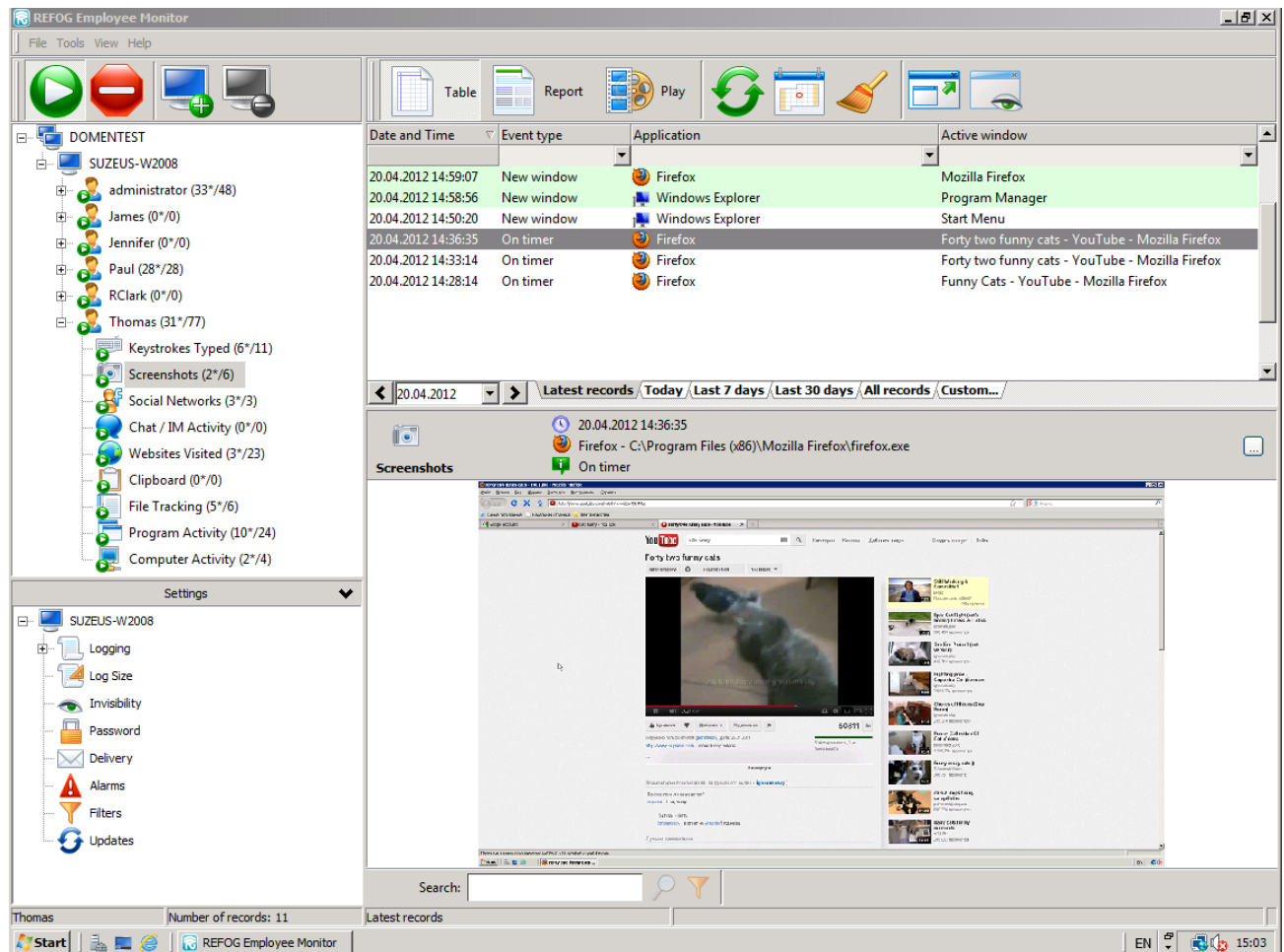


data leaks, stop employee misconduct and combat fraud. In practice, proactive solutions are likely to introduce more disruption in the work process, intimidate employees and do little to actually prevent fraud.

Passive monitoring, on the other hand, helps collect information about employee activities without stopping or preventing them. Collected information helps employers give quick feedback or investigate security incidents with hard data.

## ***The Use of Proactive DLP Systems vs. Passive Monitoring***

Refog only uses passive monitoring in its computer surveillance products, the most ‘proactive’



action being an instant alert sent to a designated security officer in a case of potential breach of security. Here in the company, we're convinced that this approach works smoother and more effectively while providing considerate cost benefit compared to heuristic-based DLP systems (up to 80% savings based on recent market research).

## **Single-Point Employee Monitoring**

Refog products are designed to be used on Windows desktops and networkd (Refog Employee Monitor), while Refog Terminal Monitor is designed to monitor terminal server clients. All user activities are centrally available via convenient administrative interface. Flexible filters and search functionality are available. All collected information is stored locally securely encrypted.

## ***Surveillance Helps Enforcing Corporate Policies***

Surveillance helps enforcing corporate policies by its very existence. The many logs and monitors implemented in Refog Employee Monitor and Refog Terminal Monitor help administrators and corporate officers to ensure employee compliance with corporate policies. By monitoring how employees handle information and controlling their communications such as chats and social networking, administrators are able to keep track of employee activities, provide instant feedback and prevent potential misconduct before it's getting out of control.

## ***PC Monitoring Improves Employee Productivity***

Employees perform better under when being watched. Instant, real-time feedback from their supervisor helps stop the time waste caused by casual games ("office killers"), uncontrollable chatting and socializing. Knowing exactly what, when, and for how long employees do goes miles in improving employee productivity. Knowing they're under control, employees spend less time chatting while concentrating their efforts on doing their paid work.

## ***Tracking Employee Activities Helps Prevent Misconduct***

Simply logging keystrokes and saving screen captures for future analysis is not enough. A certain level of interaction and feedback is vital for tightening discipline and improving performance.

Letting your employees know that managers and supervisors can see what is happening on their computers in real time even from remote locations provides the necessary feeling and improves discipline and productivity.

Refog Employee Monitoring Software allows managers and supervisors to monitor multiple employees remotely in real time. There is no need to leave a comfortable Executive chair in order to check each employee's PC for unauthorized activities. Capture the action and see what your employees are doing while they are still doing it, and provide immediate feedback on their activities!

## **Technical Specifications**

Both products, Refog Employee Monitor and Refog Terminal Monitor, can capture a wide range of activities occurring on employees' PCs.

- Keystroke logging
- URL monitoring
- Application monitoring
- Screenshot captures
- Invisible mode
- IM & Facebook chat interception
- Email and FTP delivery
- File tracking
- Alarm keywords
- Real-time network logs

Additional features available in Refog Terminal Monitor include the ability to run on the Terminal Server while tracking, logging and reporting all or select activities of connected employees.

## **About Refog Inc.**

Founded in 2002, Refog Inc. develops the complete range of employee monitoring and parental control solutions for Windows PCs. For the past six years, the company's products have been installed on more than 12 million computers in 196 countries. Its business customers range from small companies to large enterprises in financial, IT and industrial sectors.

The company's flagship desktop product, Refog Employee Monitor, has become an acknowledged solution for the financial sector for its unsurpassed logging capabilities and maturity. Refog Terminal Monitor offers the same level of functionality while providing the convenience and simplicity of operating from a single terminal server.

The company's mission is providing reliable and feature-rich solutions for corporate employee monitoring, helping our customers secure their trade secrets and intellectual property without oppressing employees or disrupting their work, while enforcing policies by monitoring, not filtering or prohibiting.

## **About the Author**

Pavel Mikhailov is an expert in IT security, electronic surveillance and computer monitoring. Pavel is the Founder and CEO of Refog, Inc.