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New products to control Internet access

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MALAYSIA has been picked to try out a new way of policing Internet access and keeping out undesirable websites. It is based on technology that can recognise images in addition to text.

The country became the choice following Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call for greater network security, in view of the rising number of cyber crimes and the increasing use of the Internet for misinformation.

Communication technology products supplier Biodata Information Technology introduced two new content filtering and security software products - Biodata OrangeBox Web and OrangeBox Lan - in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Both software products are designed to protect companies, the Government and home users from unsolicited information from both foreign and local websites.

They employ new image recognition and text filtering technology to block pornographic, violent and extremist sites.

Cobion chief executive officer Joerg Lamprecht said while OrangeBox Web blocked access to websites and categorised pornographic and extremist materials, OrangeBox Lan scanned all general access areas of the Internet directories for inadmissible or unwanted contents. Cobion is Biodata Information Technology's subsidiary.

"Until now, corporations, parents, schools and institutions of higher learning do not have tools to manage sites visited by surfers," said Biodata AG senior vice-president Leonard Oh.

"Biodata-Cobion's latest products hand the reins of control back to the administrator with regards to web surfing," he said.

The cost of the OrangeBox Web hardware is about US\$5,000 (RM19,000). The OrangeBox Lan, meant for large corporations, costs about US\$50,000.