Using Technology Productively

All e-mail, all the time

Sound like the slogan for a local radio station: All hits, all the time? You can easily turn off the radio, but it isn't as easy to turn down the volume on non-stop e-mail. Even though e-mail can be an effective tool for communicating, it can become counterproductive when you feel the system is beginning to control you.

If you feel that e-mail controls more of your time and energy than you'd like, there are ways you can manage it. Although everyone works differently, and you'll need to discover the methods that work best for you, visit http://www.udel.edu/topics/productivity to see some effective techniques for gaining control over your e-mail.

Create your own 'no phishing zone'

Who hasn't received an e-mail message saying that your "bank" needs you to authenticate your account information or risk having your access shut off immediately? Or e-mail requiring you to provide your password for your University e-mail account? These bogus e-mail messages are called "phishing scams."

Phishing is a criminal activity that uses electronic means to attempt to acquire private information such as credit card numbers, passwords, and Social Security Numbers by pretending to be an authentic organization. Many of these messages purport to be from popular social Web sites (e.g., Facebook, MySpace), online payment companies (e.g., PayPal), online banks (e.g., Wilmington Trust, Bank of America, Emigrant Direct), and Internet Server Providers (e.g., Yahoo, AOL).

The most important thing to remember is **NEVER** to respond to these fraudulent requests. Do not click on any part or link in the message and immediately delete it. A trusted bank, online retailer, or other organization will never ask you to verify any personal information through an electronic communication.

Visit http://www.udel.edu/topics/productivity to learn how to identify phishing scams, how to avoid being tricked, and how to report these scams so that your e-mail account becomes a "no phishing zone."

Planned Outages

UDSIS

The MIS-SIS group applied another round of UDSIS patches and fixes during the February 14 weekend followed by the application of a "critical" patch at the end of the month. Both sets of patches primarily impacted Financial Aid processing and were necessary for processing fall 2009 loans in time for freshman fall admissions.

Security, Privacy & Safety

Information Security Office Established

With the hiring of Scott Sweren as the University's Information Security Officer, IT has placed more emphasis and visibility on the importance of information security at the University. The new Information Security Office (ISO) will increase our ability to monitor security vulnerabilities, resolve security breaches, and train the campus community in ways to improve the security of their computers, networks, and information. As Scott builds the ISO, he will work with individual colleges and departments to develop institutional processes to safeguard both University and personal information.

Disaster Recovery Planning

NSS has received a final report from IT Evolution that provides a framework for a disaster recovery/business continuity plan for all major IT systems. Plans are underway to develop a backup computing facility with sufficient hardware to provide redundancy and business continuity.

Infrastructure

Network Upgrade Planning

NSS is working on an upgraded network design that will provide significant improvements in robustness and redundancy. The plan will be based on a 10-gigabit backbone and will provide network continuity even in the event of the loss of the Computer Center.

WiFi OnBoard

IT has installed 802.11g compatible wireless access points on four new UD shuttle buses. Students and staff using laptop computers with wireless capability can search for the "UD Bus" wireless network to use the Internet while riding around campus, turning travel time into productive time.

Administrative Refresh

Over the past several years, Information Technologies has funded the Administrative PC Refresh Program. Based on a four-year replacement cycle, IT staff would install new computers in departments and swap out the older equipment. This program assured that the important work that University staff do daily was being done on fully warranted, high-quality systems that met current technology requirements.

With the advent of Responsibility-Based Budgeting, these funds have been moved from IT to individual campus departments. Each department is now responsible for keeping its personal computers up-to-date. IT will still offer configuration standards to follow and consulting advice on systems to be purchased.

As a reminder, the University has signed a license agreement with Microsoft for Windows operating systems and the Microsoft Office Suite (including Word & Excel) for University-owned computers. When your department purchases a computer, you may purchase the most inexpensive Windows operating system and upgrade it by downloading the proper file(s) from http://udeploy.udel.edu. Microsoft Office is also available for University-owned systems from that Web site, so there is no need to include Office in the system purchase. If you have questions, please contact the IT Help Center at 831-6000.

Drupal Web Hosting Available

The production Drupal Web hosting service is now available. Academic and administrative units can now publish production sites on the central IT Drupal server. For more information, visit http://drupal.nss.udel.edu/udrupal or send e-mail to drupal-support@udel.edu.

Redundant Air Conditioning Installation

In March, work began on the installation of new, redundant air conditioning for the systems housed at the University Computing Center. This project, expected to be online in mid-May, is now 40% complete. The redundant air conditioning will allow IT to perform maintenance on the main cooling system to provide a more robust environment for all IT-managed servers and hardware.

Constituent Groups & Feedback

Active Directory Advisory Council

A group of CITAs formed the Active Directory Advisory Council (ADAC) and met for the first time on March 17. Jim Byrnes, Engineering, served as convener and George Mulford, CHEP, is serving as secretary. ADAC will allow Active Directory administrators in departments, colleges, and IT to collaborate on the deployment of a robust central Active Directory structure, including related Microsoft services. The group meets at 1:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month. For more information, visit http://blogs.oet.udel.edu/adcommittee.

Student Services Initiatives

IT has been working with staff in the Executive Vice President's office and with staff in units responsible for student information to improve the accuracy of student billing and to develop procedures for improved customer services for our students. The working group, coordinated by Drew Knab of the Executive Vice President's office, has identified 21 changes to student business processes that individual units and IT will implement over the 2009-2010 school year.

IT Customer Satisfaction Survey

More than 300 people responded to our first round of the IT Customer Satisfaction Survey. The dominant theme in the responses was a strongly positive attitude towards IT services and staff at the University of Delaware. However, many respondents also provided suggestions for improving the service IT provides. To see a summary report, point your Web browser at http://www.udel.edu/it-us/surveys/itsatisfaction/rpt1208.docx.

Teaching & Learning

Introducing Academic Technology Services

Academic Technology Services (ATS), a new group within IT, has been launched this spring. ATS incorporates the operations of the PRESENT, from IT-User Services, and those of the Instructional Television and Digital Media group, from IT-University Media Services. ATS will bring together outstanding IT resources and support for teaching, presentations, instructional technology development projects, and a faculty community of practice. The new home for ATS is located on the second floor of East Hall. Faculty members wishing to schedule a consultation should contact ATS via e-mail at ats-info@udel.edu or call 831-0640 to make an appointment.

Classroom Capture Pilot Update

The Spring 2009 Classroom Capture Pilot is off to a great start. Three rooms in Gore Hall have been outfitted with automatic capture appliances to record courses taught for a pilot group of faculty members. The system records audio from the classroom as well as the visuals projected to the class from the faculty member's computer. Students can then use the Internet to review recorded lectures at their convenience.

Initial faculty and student reactions are positive; a formal survey late this semester will gather detailed feedback that will help shape two more pilot programs in the summer term and the fall semester. For more information, including a sample classroom capture file, visit http://www.ums.udel.edu/coursecapture.

Summer Faculty Institute Registration

Registration for this year's Summer Faculty Institute is under way. This year's Institute, June 1–June 5, will offer five "tracks"—sessions that will meet all five mornings or all five afternoons during the Institute:

- Developing a Personal Learning Network (PLN) for you and your students;
- Creating your first Sakai@UD course site;
- Connecting real-life teaching applications using Second Life;
- Integrating a multimedia production assignment into your course; and
- Making the most of Microsoft Office.

Registration is currently open and closes on midnight April 15. To register for the Institute, or for more information, visit http://www.ats.udel.edu/summer.

Event Production & Media Services

Performance and Campus Events

During February and March 2009, the Performance Events unit supported 33 events in IT-UMS operated facilities. Included were four professional touring acts: Grammy-nominated performer Jazmine Sullivan, Regina Carter, Carlota Santana Flamenco Vivo, and Trio Mediaeval. The latter three marked the conclusion of the University's long running Performing Art Series.

Campus Events supported 15 events during the same time period—most notable was the sound and lighting for An Evening with Spike Lee at the Bob Carpenter Center.

Classroom Technology

The Classroom Technology unit responded to over 740 calls to the Room View Call Center. Over 60% of the calls were resolved in less than one minute using this system, allowing our staff to solve the problem remotely rather than requiring a Classroom Technician to visit the classroom.

Video Production

Major projects produced by the unit in February and March included a 10-minute video for Admissions titled *I'm UD*. The video will be used to encourage accepted students to choose Delaware. Additionally, the unit produced an opening video for the March 24 *Stronger Health-Based Partnerships* conference held in Clayton Hall. The video featured President Harker, Governor Jack Markell, and VIPs from Thomas Jefferson University, Nemours, and Christiana Care.

Training Opportunities

New IT Training Facility

A new IT training facility containing 12 dual-boot iMacs is now open in 010 Smith Hall. Hands-on training sessions, including many sequels to our popular lunchtime series, are scheduled for April and May. The room may also be used for computing workshops where UD staff can share technology solutions and best practices.

LearnIT@UD

IT-User Services continues to offer a wide variety of training. Most sessions are 60-90 minutes long and focus on specific tools. Sessions are customized for UD, often using PeopleSoft data with the personal information removed, to help participants apply what they learn to their specific business processes.

Future sessions include the following topics:

- Office 2007: What's New, What's Different?
- Understanding Spreadsheets with Excel 2007
- Using Formulas and Functions with Excel 2007
- Creating Macros with Excel 2007
- Creating Charts with Excel 2007
- Using VLOOKUP and Pivot Tables with Excel 2007
- Understanding Databases in MS Access 2007
- Queries to Retrieve Data in MS Access 2007
- Queries to Modify Data in MS Access 2007
- Queries with Calculations in MS Access
- Using Mail Merge with Word 2007
- Using Outlook 2007 with Microsoft Exchange
- Alternate E-mail Tools
- Photoshop (Series 1-4)
- Hands-on with Excel 2007: Understanding the Basics
- Hands-on with Excel 2007: Creating Pivot tables
- Hands-on with Excel 2007: Creating Macros
- Hands-on with Excel 2007: Creating Formulas and Functions
- Hands-on with Word 2007: Mail Merge
- Hands-on with Access 2007: Getting Started

To view the calendar of classes and to register for a class, go to http://www.udel.edu/learn and select *Calendar and Class Registration*.

Internet Safety Outreach Program

IT-User Services is taking the message of responsible and safe computing to the community. Building on some of the "student-to-student" responsible computing training we've done on campus, we've sent some student employees, our Residential Computing Consultants (RCCs), to make presentations to students at local high schools.

The sessions cover topics such as phishing, personal identity protection, safe social networking, and illegally obtaining copyrighted materials. Our student employees create an informal, approachable setting by interjecting personal experiences, which allows the high school audience to feel comfortable asking questions and sharing experiences. Because feedback from participants of the program has been very positive, plans are underway to extend the program in fall 2009 to more schools in New Castle County as well as some in Kent and Sussex Counties.

IT Help Center

The IT Help Center reported 5,512 calls and e-mail contacts for the months of February and March resulting in 2,914 trouble tickets and 466 Network Services requests. Online documentation was accessed 18,233 times through the Help Center's Web page http://www.udel.edu/help during this period.

Call volume was heavy, in part, because spring semester began within this time period. In addition, we saw a rise in call volume compared with traffic during this same time period last year due to the following issues:

- We received more calls about the activation or deactivation of student e-mail accounts.
- We notified the campus of an emergency upgrade to McAfee virus protection software for Windows XP users.
- The campus was the target of a widespread e-mail "phishing" scam requesting personal information from the users.

Personnel

New Hires in IT
Scott Sweren has joined Information Technologies as our Information Security Officer. Formerly a member of the Fortrex Technologies team, Scott brings the necessary experience to handle the complex duties of an ISO. He will provide institutional leadership to develop, implement, and maintain a comprehensive information security and privacy program for the University.

Robert Mann has joined IT-Network and System Services as a Network Technician II. His primary responsibilities are network maintenance and installation. Robert came to us from private industry with 7 years of field experience in the installation of structured cabling systems and large project management.

Chris Clement has joined IT-NSS to assist with IT's support of Microsoft products such as Active Directory, Exchange, and SharePoint. Chris has been supporting these products for the past 10 years, while serving as a CITA in the Lerner College of Business and Economics. He is a UD alumnus, with both a Bachelor's of Music (1996) and a Master's of Information Systems and Technology Management (2007).

New Responsibilities
Kate Webster's job responsibilities in IT have changed; she is now managing human resource functions for the organization. In this role, she'll support management in all IT units. Her new duties will include work involving classification, compensation, organizational development, recruitment, performance management, professional development, and employee relations.

We've moved the three writers formerly in IT-User Services, **Ann Amsler**, **Richard Gordon**, and **Suzanne Nanis**, to a role more central to all of IT. The new IT Communication Group (ITCG) will collaborate with all staff in IT to help us meet three goals:

1. Communicate to the campus ways in which IT services add value to a department's activities or save money for a department;
2. Develop documentation and Web pages that help our users learn to use technology effectively;
3. Use surveys to incorporate feedback from our users and from constituent groups into IT services, and to assist colleagues who are collaborating with constituent groups.

Dennis Flockerzi (NSS) will be managing the newly formed Install Group that will be responsible for all installations, moves, additions, and changes to the data, telephone, and CATV networks. He will also be responsible for quality assurance and documentation on all infrastructure projects. This unit, which includes four technicians, will introduce better control, management, and functionality, allowing the Maintenance Unit, which formerly handled these tasks, the freedom to be more responsive to University needs.

The IT Activity Report is published 4-6 times a year. You can find archived reports at http://www.udel.edu/IT-activity. If you have comments, questions, or suggestions for future articles, contact the IT Communication Group: it-commgroup@udel.edu.