ABSTRACT
A method of introducing new students to the computing resources during the mandatory New Student Conferences the summer before their first semester at Texas A&M University.

Keywords
New students, resource table, slide show.

1. SYNOPSIS
To welcome and orient the nearly 10,000 incoming students, Texas A&M University's (TAMU's) Department of Student Life hosts almost 20 New Student Conferences (NSC). Because each student must attend a NSC as a part of their acceptance to TAMU, these conferences are an excellent opportunity for students to learn about the numerous organizations, services and resources at TAMU.

Computing & Information Services (CIS) has several opportunities to inform the participants of these conferences. One of our staff gives a short, 5-minute speech to all of the parents, in which a brief overview of CIS' resources is given, as well as whether or not each student needs a computer and what must be done to prepare personal machines for the campus network. Later that day, all of the conference participants spend 90 minutes in a meeting hall, and can visit resource tables. On the final day of the conference, one of our staff hosts a 45-minute session on computing that takes the form of a presentation and question-and-answer time.

The audience is very diverse, and is composed of people who have never used a computer, people who have used computers and dislike them, and people who spend most of their day on computers. CIS' goals for each conference are:

1. Inform each incoming student (and their parents) about available computing resources.
2. Make each person's first computing experience at TAMU a positive one.
3. Break up the beginning-of-semester rush on the helpdeks by spreading the influx of new students over three months, leading to better-informed customers and shorter waiting times during August and September, our busiest time of the year.

To maximize the impact of our, the same visual format was used several times. Information was broken up into 3 tiers of ascending detail.

1. The first tier of information was composed of 6 main points. Presented in PowerPoint style, this entire first tier took about three minutes to present and was ideal for the panel discussion.
2. More detailed information comprised the second tier, and built on the first tier by providing detail. For example, while the first tier listed all six of our Open Access Labs, the second tier of information included a map to the labs and a list of the common peripherals available in each lab. This presentation lasted about twelve minutes, and was a continuous slide show at our resource table.
3. The third tier added detail to the second tier of information. Presented in a linear fashion, it would have taken more than 30 minutes to present. It gave a list of all the software running in our labs, for example, and the procedure for requesting new software be added. As a user-directed "kiosk" this third tier of information provides a framework for the Q-and-A of Day 3.

In addition to the continuous slide show, the CIS resource table included a lit, three-sectional display board. This board provided a map to the Open Access labs and a list of available computing resources. We also offered flyers, maps and bookmarks at the table. It was during this event that much of our 1-on-1 interaction with students occurred, so 4 employees staffed the table to answer questions, offer information, and clarify misconceptions.

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