Coming Together: New Websites Strengthen UB Community

Published November 9, 2012

By Tom Furlani, furlani@buffalo.edu

Websites are too often overlooked when planning ways to improve communication and outreach. This is due, in part, to the effort involved in redesigning a website and how they typically evolve, with many contributors and limited resources to manage and organize the content.

In addition, like all other aspects of information technology (IT), the tools and best practices for websites are rapidly changing, and staying at the forefront of these developments can be challenging.

I am pleased to report that by leveraging UB’s new Content Management System (UBCMS) and a unique partnership between University Communications, the School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, and Computer and Information Technology, UB’s Information Technology website has been completely redesigned with an emphasis on better meeting the needs of the entire UB community. Similarly, the website for the Center for Computational Research has been redesigned and implemented in the UBCMS.

It’s important to note that the new websites are not merely the result of providing a “fancier wrapper” around the existing content, but rather rethinking the way we deliver content and optimizing it for dissemination on the Web. New features include:

- Dashboard view of UBIT’s critical service statuses, based on UBIT Alerts
- IT Tips tailored for students, faculty and staff
- Targeted, section-wide search engines can be easily added. For example, on the UBIT website, there is a search engine that only searches within IT Policy descriptions.
- Hosting sites in the UBCMS reduces the frequency of broken links. If the location of a webpage within the site changes, the system will automatically update all links pointing to it.

I hope you will find our new websites helpful and well-designed. While we have gone to great lengths to ensure all links are up-to-date, links outside the UBIT and CCR sites may need updating. Please let us know whenever this occurs so we can address it promptly. I also strongly encourage you to use the feedback forms on each webpage, which will help us continue improving our content and how it’s delivered to you.

While this effort involved many IT professionals, I want to especially acknowledge the efforts of Rick Lesniak, Linda Kingsbury, Dennis Reed Jr., Valerie Priester, Bethany Gladkowski, Kevin Kydd and Dori Sadjak.
Of course, improving our websites is not the only thing occupying CIT and the Nodes over the past several months. Indeed, as this newsletter shows, we have been quite busy working on virtual PCs in public labs, plans for IPv6, improvements in VoIP, and much more.

I hope you find the information in this newsletter useful. As always, we look forward to comments and suggestions for future topics, as well as feedback on IT services and initiatives.
UB's Innovative Instruction Technology Awards Announced

UB is well represented in the inaugural round of the SUNY Innovative Instruction Technology Grants (IITG) initiative, which funds campus-based “teaching with technology” projects. Five faculty and staff were awarded grants, while other UB experts on campus are assisting principal investigators on projects throughout the state.

“This new competitive grants program will enable partnerships across SUNY to leverage technology as a means to educate students,” said Chancellor Nancy L. Zimpher. “It serves as an excellent example of the power of SUNY to realize efficiencies through the sharing of resources and instructional partnerships within our system.”

Nancy Smyth, Dean of the School of Social Work, who has long advocated use of technology to support education said, “The effective and innovative integration of technology into instruction is one essential part of providing quality higher education in the 21st century. I appreciate the willingness of Dr. Lavallee, SUNY Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost, to invest in these initiatives and I’m excited that the School of Social Work received recognition as one of the six schools SUNY-wide to receive a top award amount. Dr. Waldrop’s project, Initiating Conversations about the End of Life: The Advanced Illness Decision Simulation Environment, will become an important tool in educating social workers, nurses, physicians, and other health professionals.”

IITG awards will foster study and development of educational gaming tools, e-textbooks, online classes, e-portfolios for lifelong learning and more. Several projects included collaborations by two or more campuses or with local organizations, vendors or external partners.

UB grant recipients include:

Deborah Waldrop, Professor, School of Social Work - awarded $38,883 for Initiating Conversations about the End of Life: The Advanced Illness Decision Simulation Environment.

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Lisa Stephens, Senior Strategist, SUNY Academic Innovation

Simulation Environment. Professor Waldrop's team includes:

Mary Ann Meeker, DNS, Associate Professor, UB School of Nursing (Co-PI)
David Milling, MD, Senior Associate Dean, UB School of Medicine (Co-PI)
Steve Sturman, Instructional Designer, UB School of Social Work
Karen Zinnerstrom, PhD, Coordinator, UB School of Medicine Clinical Competency
Tony Guzman, UB School of Social Work, Director of Online Education

Dean Hendrix, Assistant Director, University Libraries - awarded $20,000 for The E-Textbook Opportunity: The Time is Now for SUNY and is also serving as a Co-PI on another SUNY E-Textbook initiative along with Charles Lyons.

Mark Ludwig, Library Systems Manager, University Libraries was awarded $20,000 for SUNYport: Portfolio site for SUNY students and is working closely with A. Ben Wagner and Dean Hendrix at UB and Andrew Perry, from SUNY Oneonta.

Katharina Dittmar De La Cruz, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences - awarded $10,000 for Development and Assessment of Mobile Device Instruction in STEM Education at K-21 Level, which includes Bina Ramamurthy, from Computer Science and Engineering, and Jessica Poulin from Biological Sciences.

Robin Sullivan, Associate Director, Teaching & Learning Center - awarded $10,000 for Tools of Engagement Project: Discovery Learning On-demand Professional Development, which includes Cindi Tysick from UB Libraries and team members from other campuses:

Beth Burns, Buffalo State College
Kathleen Gradel, SUNY Fredonia
Shufang Shi, SUNY Cortland
Tom Sinclair, Binghamton University

In addition to the UB principal investigators, several other UB faculty and staff are serving as Co-PI’s or key partners on projects initiated at other SUNY campuses:

Bina Ramamurthy, Computer Science and Engineering, Co-PI on SUNY Co-laboratory on Immersive Virtual Environments for STEM Learning

Christine Kroll, Assistant Dean, Graduate School of Education, Co-PI on Development & Validation of SUNY Prep: Learner Preparedness Survey

Christopher Loretz, Biological Sciences, Graduate School of Education, Learning and Instruction. Creation, Implementation, and Assessment of Anatomy and Physiology Online Laboratory Modules

Sharon Raimondi, Director, Joint PhD Program in Special Education for 4C-CITI: Four-College Consortium for Innovative Technology Integration

Charles Lyons and Dean Hendrix from University Libraries are also serving as Co-PI’s on Geneseo’s SUNY Open Textbooks project.

UB has another connection to the new IITG program. Lisa Stephens (Computer and Information Technology at UB) was invited to lead this initiative as the new Senior Strategist for SUNY Academic Innovation. Once Provost Lavallee gave the “green light” for the IITG grant program, Dr. Stephens quickly consulted with many researchers on campus to help the IITG program meet the aggressive implementation timeline. “A team of distinguished SUNY faculty and members of Provost Lavallee’s FACT2 team collaborated to create, refine and adapt the request for proposals to an online application form,” Stephens explained, “The entire grant program was launched, reviewed and awarded in less than four months.”

A post-application survey received a 90% response rate, with feedback being incorporated into the next request for proposals round, tentatively slated for
announcement later this fall. All project outcomes will be openly shared in the new SUNY Learning Commons portal currently in the pilot stage. Projects that demonstrate potential for multi-campus production application will be eligible for additional funds in 2013.

A complete list of grant-funded projects is available at http://www.suny.edu/provost/IITG.cfm
The newly completed Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone system is a wonderful thing. All faculty and staff now have centrally-supported telephones with a consistent and rich feature set: touch tone, caller ID, call forwarding, voicemail, electronic directories, hands-free speaker, and more.

Although most departments no longer receive monthly phone bills for local and long distance usage, this does not mean that phone calls are free. UB must pay telephone service providers to support external telephone services, including local, long distance, and international phone usage. Unlike “free” Internet services like Skype, UB’s VoIP telephone system provides business grade call quality, voice mail, call center capabilities and other functionality required by the university.

From time to time our phone carrier brings to our attention long distance and international usage patterns from UB that have been determined to be anomalous, given the time, length and destination of the connections. Verizon knows these calls can be costly, so they’re looking out for UB’s interests.

As a reminder, UB’s Telephone Policy clearly restricts telephone use only for official University Business, and requires reimbursement for personal use.

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Virtual Desktop Initiative in UB Cybraries

A student uses a virtual PC (center left) in the Lockwood Cybrary.

Published November 9, 2012
By Rick Lesniak, lesniak@buffalo.edu

It’s not often that we can pull something over UB’s technically savvy students, but this fall, CIT replaced nearly 50 personal computers with virtual desktop devices in the 2nd Floor Lockwood Cybrary...and no one has said a word.

The Virtual Desktop Initiative is a pilot project to replace personal computer workstations in the computing sites with small “zero client” devices, specifically HP's EVGA PD02 model. The zero client box provides display, keyboard and mouse connectivity to a virtual workstation emulated on a server. The zero client also provides USB and headphone jack for remote storage and audio support.

Saira Hasnain, UB’s director of Enterprise Infrastructure Services, has been directing this pilot project. “We tried four different vendor’s devices, and selected one for its best performance and cost effectiveness,” she states. “Many vendors provide this type of technology. At the end of the day, big hardware is replaced by little hardware.”

The advantages of this pilot for students are the removal of the bulky desktop unit from under Cybrary tables, allowing more space for personal items, and significantly faster logins (10-20 seconds faster). The exact same software is available as on a regular Cybrary workstation.

“I think I didn’t notice the difference because we (college students; our generation) have become desensitized to technological changes,” said Anneka Cantone (Hutton), a senior studying Biological Sciences.

UB benefits from the zero client too. The devices cost far less than a PC to initially purchase, and use significantly less energy to operate. In fact the Virtual Desktop Initiative pilot works towards UB’s commitment to environmental stewardship. The zero client devices are expected to last longer than a typical PC too, further reducing future investment.

Faculty should have no concerns since exactly the same software is available. A potential advantage would be for these zero client devices to access multiple
virtual desktops so students could potentially mount specialty software from school or departmental labs.

Jason Distefano, a Junior studying Business Administrative, added, “I have been at UB for three years and use Lockwood all the time, and I didn’t notice any difference between the computers. Honestly, I didn’t even notice that the tower was gone.”

Remarking on the lack of student concern, Saira said, “It’s magic, as far as they’re concerned.”
In the Cloud: Medical School Computing

Ray Dannenhoffer, Associate Dean for Support Services, Pathology and Anatomical Sciences, demonstrates the CloudMed file storage and sharing solution.

Published November 9, 2012
By Diana Tuorto, dianatu@buffalo.edu

The School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences had a choice to make: keep up with the latest technology, or fall behind fast. They had a growing demand for cloud-based file sharing and storage options, without hassles or security risks.

“Our students, faculty, and staff wanted file access that was easy to use from their Web browser,” said Ray Dannenhoffer, Associate Dean for Support Services, Pathology and Anatomical Sciences, “They didn’t want to have to install anything or deal with overhead, like Citrix.”

Another challenge emerged as more students started using iPads and tablets for their course materials. “iPads are typically great for retrieving files, not for editing them,” Ray continued. “We needed more robust access.” Students needed the ability to download, edit, and re-upload their files easily.

EMC IOMEGA provided one solution, which was implemented for UB School of Medicine use by Eric Warner, Assistant Director of Medical Computing. In the summer of 2011, CloudDoc.Med.Buffalo.edu was launched, allowing students easy online access to editable files. The best part...no user ID or password is required, but files aren’t accessible by just anyone.

“If a professor makes an annotation to their class notes, they can send their students an email notification with a direct link for access,” Ray added. “Files can be edited and saved right from the link, based on permissions.”

Another tool launched by the school during Summer 2011 is CloudMed.Med.Buffalo.edu, which was provided by Element IT. While User ID and password protected, CloudMed offers a secure space to share and save files. “It’s very similar to Google Drive,” Ray stated, “But it’s hosted on the university’s secure servers, and has some additional features.”

One feature is the ability to email files directly from CloudMed. Each person can set up their individual viewing/editing permissions and generate encrypted links for file sharing. File access can even be given to those outside of UB, even the...
country, which is particularly helpful for faculty and researchers. Medical students, faculty, and staff can set expiration dates on each file’s access to another person, as well as determine the number of times someone else can download their file.

CloudMed is comprised of three main drives- a P drive, which is private to each individual, an S drive, comprised of shared network folders by class and department, and an all-person, “world” accessible W drive.

“I like to think of the W drive as the Wild Wild West,” Ray added, “Everyone in the school of medicine has read and write access to the W drive, and it’s unlimited in size. We use it only for temporary space, though. Everyone can upload or delete files and it’s completely wiped once a month. It’s good when you need to share a file quickly, but don’t need it long-term.”

CloudMed has been very helpful to researchers working on grants and is also widely used for reviewing resumes during job searches. Both CloudMed and CloudDoc are mobile accessible. For more information, email Ray Dannenhoffer.
Content Distribution Networks Give UB a Boost

Published November 9, 2012

By Diana Tuorto, dianatuo@buffalo.edu

Does streaming music, downloading files and surfing the Web seem faster on campus? CIT has recently implemented two new on-site content distribution networks (CDN), which offload university Internet bandwidth and provide faster response times.

CIT deployed two on-campus caching systems during summer 2012. Google Global Cache speeds up Google services, including news, maps and search. UB also recently partnered with the Akamai Accelerated Network, which provides content for many popular sites, including CNN. While each vendor maintains their servers remotely, UB provides space, cooling and power for the CDN edge servers in our data centers.

As a result of these CDNs, website response times at UB have significantly improved, with download speeds up by approximately 400%. Having an on-site CDN also allows Internet bandwidth reductions, providing savings over time as caching rates continue to increase. Through the caching initiative, UB is saving approximately 300Mbps at peak, which translates to 20% of the total bandwidth used. As demand for high bandwidth media grows, so does the benefit to UB.

The on-campus CDNs were recently put to the test on September 19, when Apple released their latest version of iOS software. Universities across the country saw their Internet bandwidth skyrocket, causing slowness and visible outages. During this timeframe, the cache at UB served close to 1Gbps, with the Internet link remaining unaffected.
TechQual+ 2012 Helps UBIT Measure Success

As the providers of Information Technology (IT) services at UB, we are interested in better understanding and improving the quality of the IT services we provide. To this end, as some of you who participated in our TechQual+ survey already know, we recently undertook an extensive survey of students, faculty, and staff.

The Higher Education TechQual+ Project

As a cooperative initiative of member institutions, TechQual+ provides IT leaders with the tools to assess, analyze and report on the effectiveness of technology services. The TechQual+ survey assesses objectively the key performance indicators that reflect high quality technology outcomes. The TechQual+ core survey contains 12 items designed to measure the performance along three core service vectors:

1. Connectivity and Access (WiFi, Internet, mobile access, mobile device support);
2. Technology and Collaboration Services (web sites, classroom technology, collaboration services); and,
3. Support and Training (support staff effectiveness, response to problems, communications, training offerings).

An added benefit of the TechQual+ Project is the comparative data made available by peer institutions. UB data can be compared to other institutions of the same “Carnegie Class.” With this comparison, we can find out how we’re doing compared to other colleges and universities.

UB’s TechQual+ 2012 Survey

CIT initiated the UB TechQual+ project during the spring of 2012. More than 9,000 UB faculty, staff and students were selected at random and invited to participate in the survey, answering the 12 items and providing open-ended comments to improve services. In addition, IT support staff, number over 400 individuals at UB, were asked to participate. The end result is that 2,082 individuals participated, a return rate of just over 23%.

UB Faculty and Staff Key Findings

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Faculty and staff expressed, on average that perceived levels of service did not exceed minimum expectations (where the green bar is below the red bar) on:

- Q5: Easy-to-use websites and services
- Q6: Mobile access to important websites
- Q7: Available collaboration services
- Q8: Available classroom technology
- Q9: Getting timely IT problem resolution

Themes from faculty and staff comments illustrate some of the deficiencies:

- A desire for universal Wi-Fi coverage on campus, and simplify UB_Secure
- Increased support for mobile devices and apps
- Provide mobile access to HUB and other key web services
- Address UB website organization and ease of use
- Build awareness of existing collaboration tools such as web/video conferencing
- Fully equip all instructional spaces with classroom technology on campus regardless of room ownership
- IT staff are highly valued, and are relied upon to be IT knowledgeable
- IT problem resolution and response time is inadequate
- Simplify IT messages conveyed to faculty and staff on campus
- Increase training offerings and self-help

Ratings and suggestions from faculty and staff reveal that they are genuinely looking for more and improved IT services in order to excel in their roles. The sentiment most negatively expressed by faculty and staff is their desire to have consistent access to classroom technology in all teaching and learning spaces regardless of space ownership.

For both faculty and staff, there is a strong desire to have easy access to official university information through the web, with an emphasis on that information being timely and accurate. Some negative sentiment for UB’s web information could also be due to dissatisfaction with the changes involved with the introduction of HUB, and their struggle with understanding how to proceed with their work using the new system.

Faculty and staff truly appreciate the efforts and assistance provided by IT supports staff. They want more access to IT staff expertise directly, and especially clear communication regarding IT matters that affect them.

**Peer Comparison**

When comparing UB’s combined data to the combined data from other institutions of the similar Carnegie Class, UB’s performance profile is nearly identical. UB, like our peers, is challenged with the same issues of size, technical complexity and breadth. UB’s similarity provides validity that our IT services reflect current, mainstream operations, and effectively address the appropriate issues. UB compares favorably on networking and connectivity, with Wi-Fi provisioning better than our peers, access to technology for teaching and collaboration, and the effectiveness of IT support. We can improve the organization of our websites and
online services, to which our faculty and staff concur, and improve how information about IT services and facilities is communicated to campus audiences.

**Next Steps**

Assessing performance effectiveness is the first step in the improvement process. UB’s IT leadership is already taking action to address the issues revealed by the TechQual+ process, with some new initiatives already underway:

- Release of a new UBIT website, redesigned based on audience needs, that is aligned with UB’s overall web communication strategy
- Development of new mobile web apps and content designed specifically to serve the needs of our mobile faculty, staff and student audiences
- A plan to expand Wi-Fi coverage and quality on campus
- Improvements to the HUB to address usability and functionality issues
- Development of a new comprehensive classroom technology plan that addresses fundamental issues of access, uniformity and support, led by the office of the Provost
- Implementation of a new problem ticketing system within CIT to unify communication processes for customer problems and requests

**Want to know more?**

A complete UB TechQual+ 2012 Report, including analyzes of IT staff and UB student data and much more, is available at:

http://www.buffalo.edu/ubit/services/scoreboard/surveys.html
Today, you hold your life literally in the palm of your hand—on your phone, tablet, or laptop. While this makes your life easier, it also presents problems. What happens when your devices are lost or broken? What about when you upgrade? How do you safely delete all of your information off an old device?

While it may not seem simple, there’s three things to keep in mind: back up your data regularly, have the ability to restore it when needed, and be able to delete it when you upgrade to a new device.

**Backing Up and Restoring**

Depending upon the type of device, it may be easy, or not-so-easy, to back up your data. On a typical, newer smartphone, you’ll be asked if you want to backup using a cloud service. If you get a replacement phone, you’ll be asked to restore a previous backup. Tablets generally work the same way. Most laptop operating systems, however, don’t come with a backup application that is as easily (or cheaply) configured: you may have to install your own cloud back-up solution (such as CARBONITE or CRASHPLAN), or you may need to plug in an external drive (for example, Apple’s Time Machine or Windows Backup). While you’re thinking about backing up, don’t forget about that thumbdrive on which you’re carrying important files—back it up too!

**Safe Deleting**

An often overlooked task is properly erasing your device when you’re going to upgrade it. You might be tempted to just recycle the phone or laptop...but don’t! Most phones and tablets have a built-in erase function, available under their “Settings” menu. That option will safely, and completely, destroy the phone’s contents. Be sure to do that before recycling or selling your phone.

Even more important is erasing a laptop, which you may use to do all of your banking. Generally, a laptop’s operating system won’t allow you to erase the drive that it’s running on. Simply dragging your files into the trash can and selecting “empty trash” isn’t good enough either. Be sure to use a program like “Darik’s Boot and Nuke” (dban.org) to erase the computer’s contents. This type of program can be burned to a CD. Simply reboot your computer using that CD and it will erase your computer completely. Only then can you safely recycle that old device.
Welcome Subbiah Mantharam

Familiar face, new role: Subbiah Mantharam becomes Chief Information Officer and Associate Dean for External Affairs for UB School of Architecture and Planning.

Published November 9, 2012
By Diana Tuorto, dianatu@buffalo.edu

The School of Architecture and Planning’s new IT Director, Subbiah Mantharam, is hardly a stranger to UB. A Buffalo resident for over 30 years, Subbiah started his relationship with UB as an undergraduate. He later returned to earn his Masters in Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

Subbiah’s career with UB started 13 years ago when he provided IT support for the Regional Institute and Millard Fillmore College. During his time with the institute, Subbiah worked to establish a robust computing infrastructure that supported and enhanced the center’s public policy and research initiatives. In time, Subbiah was promoted to Director of Operations, where he oversaw and managed the institute’s budget, finances, human resources, facilities and information technology.

In Summer 2011, the Regional Institute was realigned and became a part of UB’s School of Architecture and Planning. The new connection with the school soon led to Subbiah’s current role as the school’s Chief Information Officer and Associate Dean for External Affairs. In addition to leading the school’s information technology efforts, his focus also includes alumni relations, communications, continuing education and liaison to Development.

“Thanks to the vision and leadership of Dean Robert Shibley, we’re taking things to a new level,” Subbiah added. “We’re committed to enhancing our capacities and organizing a cohesive plan that advances all of the Dean’s mission areas. We have ambitious goals, but I am confident we can get there thanks to our Dean’s focus and character, combined with the wonderful work ethic of our staff.”

A key component of the Dean’s plan is the creation of an Office of External Affairs, with a primary charge of expanding the School of Architecture and Planning’s communications and outreach efforts. Subbiah added, “Thanks to a great team at the school, we are advancing on many fronts. We launched a new magazine this past spring for students, faculty, alumni and friends, which tells our story and celebrates our achievements. We’re making a difference in the Buffalo region and the magazine showcases the great work of the school’s family: our students, faculty, staff and alumni. We’re currently putting together the next issue and working with University Communications to completely revamp our website, which

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will be launched in the near future."

One of Subbiah’s key roles is determining the best technology solutions for Architecture and Planning. “We have to advance the research and academic goals of the school in a world of increasingly limited resources,” he continued. “But you can’t stand still when it comes to technology; you need to move forward while being strategic. Our main priority is streamlining the efforts of the school, as outlined by the Dean, and tailoring our IT resources to the needs of our faculty and students.”

Subbiah continues to explore new ways for the school to partner with CIT, as well as other schools and departments within the university. He added, “A solution isn’t one unless it solves your problem. Assessment of current infrastructure and determining if there are any gaps for students and faculty is the first step.”
SIP Trunking Promises to Lower Telephone Costs

UB has spent the past few years converting our campus telephone service to Voice over IP (VoIP). Any phone calls made internally (from one university office to another) are transported over UB’s data network, which doesn’t incur telephone company charges.

External calls utilize antiquated technology for connections to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) via Verizon, however. This results in more expense for each outbound call and service recovery from outages is more problematic.

But UB has big plans. CIT is replacing its method of connecting to the PSTN by using IP-based services for these connections with a technology called SIP (Session Initiation Protocol) Trunking. Because of the way SIP Trunking is regulated by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the cost structure for making calls to the PSTN is much simpler and less expensive. In the event of a major outage, SIP Trunking will also provide much faster recovery time: connections can be re-routed from multiple points rather than a single hub.

CIT team members Dennis Powell, Tom Maniccia, and Tom Jauch have been working on the project since 2010. This past summer, CIT conducted a limited trial with campus Internet provider Level 3. The goal is to incrementally migrate to the new service, but SIP Trunk technology should be fully in place at UB as early as 2013.

Powell added, “We are currently preparing a Request for Proposals package for service providers to bid on to supply SIP Trunking to the university. The best outcome we can hope for in moving to SIP Trunking is that no one but the UB staff paying the telephone bill will notice the difference.”

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Could the Internet run out of space? UB, along with the rest of the world, is quickly running out of IPv4 (Internet Protocol version 4) IP addresses, which enables computers and mobile phones to connect to the Internet. Current projections are that half of the world’s unallocated IPv4 addresses will be used by mid-2013, with the remainder taken up within a year.

But don’t panic. UB, along with the rest of the world, is taking steps to introduce IPv6 (Internet Protocol version 6), which will replace the current IPv4. Developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), IPv6 implements a new IP address system, which allows a much larger pool of addresses to be assigned. However, IPv4 and IPv6 are not compatible, so careful planning needs to happen before making the switch.

“We are strategically considering the placement of this effort in our project queue,” said Mark Deuell, Director of Network & Classroom Services. “The IPv6 implementation project will require a significant investment of staff time and we have a number of other competing priorities. We hope to balance our approach so that we maximize the benefits to the university with the available resources and make the transition just ahead of demand.”

Look for more details on UB’s transition to IPv6 in future UBIT newsletters.

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Welcome New Staff to CIT

New CIT faces (L to R): Diana Tuorto, Rob Schulz, Karen Xia Gong, Brendan Reen, Smita Thaker, and Jake Mabee

Published November 9, 2012
By Diana Tuorto, dianatuo@buffalo.edu

We’re always excited to welcome new staff members to CIT and UB. As new people join us, we strengthen our team and the university.

Three new Application Developers have joined Enterprise Application Services since January. Away from UB, Smita Thaker enjoys dancing, cooking, and playing tennis. Jake Mabee loves cooking, American history, hockey, and music and stays busy backpacking. Brendan Reen is a fan of pub trivia and also likes exploring nature, as well as writing, playing, and listening to music. Karen Xia Gong also recently joined Enterprise Application Services as a Developer. She loves to travel and is an avid reader, staying active playing badminton and doing yoga.

Enterprise Infrastructure Services is pleased to welcome Rob Schulz as Client Technologies Technician. Away from UB, Rob enjoys photography and music, and also loves playing the piano.

IT Policy & Communications’ latest addition is Diana Tuorto as IT Communications Specialist. Diana is responsible for CIT marketing efforts, including social media and the UBIT News. An active animal rescue volunteer and horse owner, Diana has published several children’s novels about horses.

“CIT staff members bring top-notch expertise to UB,” said Mark Deuell, Director of Network and Classroom Services. “We pride ourselves in balancing innovation with dependability.”

Did You Know?

Computer Repair Available

VITEC Solutions services both personal and department-owned computers and iProduct devices; visit their drop-off depot in the Lockwood 2nd Floor Cybrary or call 800-333-1075. You can also request office pick-up for UB-owned equipment. Track your repair status.

UB’s Website Named Best in Nation

UB’s top-level website, Buffalo.edu, was recently given the gold award in the 2012 Circle of Excellence competition sponsored by the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education. CIT was a key partner in the development of the underlying CMS system.

A Look Back: Computer Services Newsletter

Computing and Information Technology at UB is more than 40 years old. Here’s a look back at the Interface newsletter from June 1970. (Please note: this PDF file includes perturbations natural to the duplication process at the time.)
Illegal downloading of media files and software places the university community at considerable risk. This year, in an effort to raise awareness of the dangers surrounding illegal downloading and sharing, a UB-wide digital copyright awareness campaign is underway.

The copyright awareness campaign coincided with October’s Cyber Security Awareness Month. The Higher Education Opportunity Act requires UB to have an actionable communications plan in place, so this year’s plan included bus headliners, campus cable ads, and email notifications from Dr. Thomas Furlani, UB’s Chief Information Officer. Our goal was to inform and protect all members of the UB community from potential legal actions.

The Keep-It-Legal campaign, which was designed with assistance from students, features flyers and bus headliners with a provoking message: “How much would you pay to see a movie?” The campaign’s slogan and visual materials were created by Dennis Reed Jr., IT Policy & Communications Webmaster.

In the Fall 2012 Student IT Experience survey, students indicated their preferred method for accessing media online (music, games, etc.) was using Streaming Services, such as Spotify and Pandora (72.3%), followed by stores such as Amazon and iTunes (15.4%), with peer-to-peer apps accounting for 5.2%. Last year, students indicated their preferences at 56%, 25% and 10% respectively. So the trend towards safe, copyright aware practices continues to improve.

UB Computer Discipline Officer Michael Behun added, “Each individual is their own best protection against a copyright complaint. If you’re offered a free download of a movie or song, avoid it. Using a paid service like iTunes is the best way to go to ensure you’re not breaking the law.”

To learn more about digital copyright compliance at UB and the law, check out:
U.S. Copyright Law

U.S. Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)

Legal Alternatives