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Weber State University's IT'S NEWS

a monthly publication of the WSU Information Technology Division

UPDATE



IT Strategic Planning

By Jean Fruth, CIO Office

What information technology issues and emerging technologies are of top concern to WSU administrators and faculty today? Are the Information Technology Division efforts aligned with the campus strategy? What is the role of electronic and digital technology in achieving the WSU 2030 Vision?

The Information Technology Division has embarked on a strategic planning process. A strategic plan is necessary to be sure Information Technology has the right combination of tools, skills and supportive processes in place to provide a robust, secure, stable, scalable and productive environment for our campus community's current and future needs. One of the problems the WSU IT Division must address is coping with the phase out of older systems in order to provide for emerging technologies and the rapid growth of systems, applications and acronyms. Information technology is not a single entity; it is a complex array of services and systems which requires constant care, planning, support and education of our staff in order to ensure the topmost levels of success.

The IT Division strategic planning process began in February. Discussions have been held with over 50 deans, directors, department chairs, faculty and staff representing a wide array of colleges and administrative departments. The discussions have exposed frustrations as well as encouraging and positive observations. They have prompted open discussion of the technology services higher education faculty and students need to provide the best possible academic

experience and to provide the education that students must have to compete successfully in the work force.

The Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC) has been formed to assist the IT Division in navigating through the campus needs and expectations. The Council is composed of a diversified group of academic and administrative electronic and digital technology users appointed by President Millner. The ever-growing demand and conflicting priorities for information technology initiatives make the discussions and recommendations of this council imperative to our operations' success. With concern for the mission of the University, and the needs of the administrative, academic and research campus communities, they will develop a campus-wide strategic plan for information technology systems, network, infrastructure, support and training. Drafts of the Information Technology Division Strategic Plan, as well as the driving mission and vision behind it, will be circulated for campus input over the upcoming months.

WSU has come UNZIPPED

By Stephen Cobb, Network Systems

? Zippidy do da zippidi Aay, my oh my, what a wonderful day...?

In the antiquities of Systems and Network Management a decision was once declared, "WSU shall accept no email with 'ZIP' files attached." This, decree was taken with heavy hearts across the campus; it was based on the fact that, at the time, we had no consistent virus protection, and no front end email protective systems. The particular offending virus was able to unzip itself and then propagate to other

like files, causing a big mess that we needed to protect WSU against. Things have changed.

After careful consideration, review of the policy, comprehension of the impact on security, and space issues, the IT Division has determined that it is no longer a potential hazard and holds no particular impact to continue the elimination of "ZIP" file attachments to emails. A few words of caution for those who like this change:

- 1) ZIP items are not scanned for viruses upon entry into our email system, your desktop will perform that function upon opening the "ZIP" file.
- 2) Understand that space requirements for the unzipping and storage of these files will be the burden of your desktop.
- 3) Know that when you send "ZIP" files to other emails systems, those systems may not be as kind as WSU is toward the treatment of "ZIP" files.

System and Network Management hopes this improved email service will be useful to everyone on campus. As our systems improve and develop greater capabilities we will continue to expand the services we provide. ENJOY!

Facilities Management Reports

By Shawna Rowley, Facilities Management

The Facilities Management department has been working to improve the way inter-departmental billings for chargeable work requests are submitted to Lynx. Our favorite feature of the new billing process is the ability to submit partial charges to Lynx each month.

This will allow our customers a timelier accounting of the services FM provides. The new process began in July 2007.

What is partial billing? In the past, Facilities Management would wait for all work to be completed and the work request closed, before posting a financial transaction in Lynx. This process of a one-time billing would take weeks or even months to complete. The new partial billing process will post financial transactions at the end of each month for the charges posted that month. As new charges are incurred, subsequent partial billings will be posted until the work request is closed. Our software automatically tracks each monthly billing and deducts that amount from the accumulated total before it is sent to Lynx.

Where are the Reports? The folder for the report in Crystal Enterprise Reporting is called "FM Customer Reports." The folder will contain two reports, which can be run at any time. One report is a summary of all posted and pending charges for each work request and is sorted by Lynx Org numbers. The second report is a detailed breakdown of the charges for any single work request.

What if I have questions? The Facilities Management department will provide one-on-one training regarding this new process on an as-needed basis. In addition, detailed instructions are available on our website at weber.edu/fm. If you would like to schedule training or have questions, please contact FM at 626-6331.

If you do not have access to the Crystal Enterprise Reporting, complete a Lynx Security Request through Lynx Self-Service under Personal Information.

What is a Strong Password?

By Julie Park, IT Security Office

Your WildCat Username and password give you access to many information technology resources at Weber State.

Therefore, it is important that you create a strong password and keep it secure to prevent someone from "hacking" into Weber State's information technology infrastructure.

The University's Information Security Policy (PPM 10-1) provides strong password requirements for the Wildcat Username password. Please follow the policy requirements when prompted to create or change your WildCat password.

It must be at least 8 characters in length (a longer password is best). Use upper and lower case letters and a number. Do not include phrases, names, or other types of dictionary words. Passwords used to access University technology resources must be different from your personal account passwords (i.e. banks, g-mail, and credit cards). These guidelines are appropriate for all electronic passwords, not just your Wildcat password.

Create a strong, memorable password in 3 steps:

- 1. Think of a sentence that you can remember.** This will be the basis of your strong password. Use a memorable sentence, such as "Coming up with new passwords is sometimes difficult to do"
- 2. Convert it to a password.** Take the first letter of each word of the sentence that you've created to create a new, nonsensical word. Using the example above, you would get: "cuwnpisd2d".
- 3. Add complexity.** Mix uppercase and lowercase letters and numbers. Using the example above, you could get a password like: "cuWnPISd2D"

Password strategies to avoid:

- **Sequences or repeated characters.** "12345678," "222222," "abcdefg," or adjacent letters on your keyboard do not help make secure passwords.
- **Symbols are not allowed in WSU passwords (post April 2008).**
- **Using your login name.** Any part of your name, birthday, social security number, or similar

information for your loved ones constitutes a bad password choice.

- **Storing passwords in online files.** If malicious users find these passwords stored online or on a networked computer, they have access to all your information.

For more information, please contact the IT Security Office at security@weber.edu.

Opt into the new Emergency Notification System

by Dane LeBlanc, Chief of Campus Police

Weber State University's emergency planning committee recently took two important steps to improve the university's ability to notify students, faculty and staff in times of crisis.

WSU is currently finalizing a contract with Send Word Now, a company that specializes in on-demand alert and response in emergencies, which will enable the university to deliver voice and text messaging at a moment's notice. The emergency planning committee is tentatively planning to call the new messaging system "Code Purple."

Since there is a text messaging aspect, students, faculty and staff will need to opt in by submitting their cellular phone number to receive these messages. "The success of the emergency notification system will hinge on campus participation," LeBlanc said. "The more people who sign up, the more people we can relay potentially life-saving information to."

Sign up for the voice and text alerts at weber.edu/CodePurple. In the coming months the emergency planning committee will publicize the alerts to current and future students.