

Summary IT Transition Team Meeting

June 10, 2008

Attendees:

Karl Kowalski
Mike Brase
Kelly Gitter
Julie Larweth
Curt Madison
Jamie Schwartzwald
Douge Toelle
Bryan Uher
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Public:

Jeff Yauney
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Agenda:

10:00 am	Welcome and Introductions
10:15 am	What we hope to accomplish Setting the Ground Rules
10:30 am	Comments from the Public
11:00-11:30	Current and Future States
11:30-11:50	How do we get to “Yes”?
12:00	Next steps-Next Meeting Adjourn

Began the meeting with an exercise in which each participant wrote one or two success and one or two frustrations with IT at UAF and posted them on a poster sheet anonymously. They are listed below in no particular order.

IT Successes

1. OIT Help Desk
2. Generation of Positive rapport with several remotely located UAF departments with Regards to functional needs and responsiveness

3. Students are very receptive to MyUA Portal so that we only have one username and password. Most rural students are migrating to it.
4. Conscience efforts to improve security
5. Improved held desk service, i.e faster response for trouble tickets(SC&Desktops, etc)
6. Email spam filtering improved via proofpoint
7. Using 2% network fees for some specific responses to student needs/requests
 - a. Wireless improvements in residence halls & SAC/Cuttler
8. Service Center response to classroom support requests. In general routing calls through Service Center has been a benefit.
9. Received funding to provide shared software to the campus
10. Reduced ticket resolution times for desktop related tickets.
11. Quick response to solve issues/problems/complaints for students and teachers.
12. Improved communication/collaboration between select OIT departments.
13. Significant reduction in resolution times for trouble tickets on UAF campus post OIT consolidation.

IT Frustrations

1. regulating bandwidth/file sharing/bit-torrent downloading/hosting. Student to student networking.
2. To many labs on campus, every lab has a different “look and feel”
3. Lack of Cohesion/single direction, reporting structure of distributed technical staff.
4. Leadership, both at the MAU and system level
5. Severe lack of fiscal resources specific to UAF campus/community campus IT projects
6. My UA, confusing and frustrating for students and staff.
7. More distance classes are going towards online delivery, leaving rural students unable to take the classes(Internet availability)
8. Changing passwords every 6 months for accounts I only use once every 6 months(and all the complex restrictions on those passwords)
9. Slow internet at peak times in dorms.
10. Lack of continuity in classroom technology. Room A has different technology than Room B
11. Lack of My UA adoption or no need for it because of UA online service duplication. What is My UA value?
12. Not enough money to centrally fund academic software.
13. No central storage to store user data.
14. No encrypted file storage to get confidential data off of a workstation and onto a secure location.
15. Too many IT shops on campus. Only limited cooperation
16. No way to centrally fund some critical services at UAF for everyone. It budget requests often flounder because they are viewed as administrative.

17. Widely used technology is not always intuitive or properly rolled out with training.
 - a. Blackboard, UAKJobs, Roxen
18. Limited Communications from IT.
19. Web email services. Squiremail stinks. Limited features etc.
20. So many requests for new things. So little time! Requests are often applicable to siloed departments, we don't see many noticeable efficiencies across UAF.

We set the stage for what we hope to accomplish by viewing the video clip: Digital Kids @ Analog Schools and gave each person the opportunity to identify issues that they were aware of that needed addressing at UAF. After a great deal of discussion, the following 10 items arose as key issues:

1. Internet Access: The speed and availability of internet bandwidth seemed to be a key issue at least for students. For many students, recreational use of the Internet is just as important as instructional. Internet access to the dorm is seen as slow and inadequate. Some students report moving off campus for this reason. Along with availability, there appears to be a need for policy and direction for prioritizing traffic by user group, building, time of day, or content. Those decisions are often made by necessity rather than governed by a policy or procedure that is in place.
2. VPN and Bandwidth Access to Rural Sites: Interior-Aleutians was represented and voiced concern over providing service to its remote campus sites. A change in VPN/Citrix implementation has made administrative work and access to Banner difficult. Bandwidth issues to villages make instructional opportunities for students more difficult especially where IAC does not have physical buildings.
3. Smart Classrooms: Concern was expressed for the standardization and consistency across smart classrooms on campus. Simplification of processes and equipment may be necessary to reduce complexity and confusion. Room builds need to be similar and function in the same manner. Increased training needs to be provided to support faculty in the use of these classroom technologies. A petition was received by the Chancellor's, President's, ASUAF's and OIT's offices in the Spring of 2008 requesting that all classrooms on campus be made smart classrooms.
4. Technology for Faculty: It was generally agreed upon by the group that to advance technology on campus, that technology needed to be budgeted for and provided to faculty (i.e. laptops or tablet pcs) with adequate and appropriate training to integrate technology into teaching. For example: with tablet pc technology, faculty could receive papers from students electronically, mark them up electronically as if writing on them, and transmit them back to students without ever having to print them out.

The group talked about the need for incentives for faculty to use technology and a need to make it easier for faculty to get on the technology bandwagon.

5. Unified Login ID: Overwhelmingly, the group saw the plethora of ids and passwords with varying requirements and expiration dates as a hindrance to the use of technology.

- Efforts should be made (and currently are at OIT) to reduce the number of login ids. The student representative noted that students would use MyUA if it truly meant a single logon. The IAC representative said they had a focus group of rural students who also said they would use the portal if it meant single sign on.
6. Improve/enhance Instructional Experience: There was a lot of discussion around increasing creativity in instruction and the use of more instructional tools, social networking tools and various technologies such as podcasting, wikis, blogs, etc. But there was agreement that faculty need to be trained to know when to use technology and when NOT to use technology. We also need to be conscious of faculty prep time. Some faculty can teach the same course they have been teaching for years in their sleep, why would they take the time to incorporate technology?
 7. Proprietary Software Limiting: When we standardize, we gain efficiency, but at times we also limit creativity. There was no consensus on solutions, but the group identified this as a potential limiting factor in technology growth and innovation.
 8. eMail: Another group consensus item was the need for a new email service. They expressed the need to streamline email, make it more attractive with more features and options. We discussed the debate of @alaska.edu or @uaf.edu and the benefit of @alaska.edu being that you could be assigned a single email address for your entire relationship with the University of Alaska that would be role and location independent. Many saw that a benefit. The potential outsource was discussed with all responding favorably. The possibility of subdomains in the email scheme came up and we discussed the pros and cons and the limitations if subdomains were chosen as an option in the configuration.
 9. Long Range Plan for Technology: There is a need for UAF to have a strategic technology plan that guides the campus use of technology as it relates to instructional and administrative use. The plan should be incorporated into or along side the campus strategic plan. It should set a vision and direction for technology growth and innovation at UAF.
 10. Analyze us of Labs: UAF is not lacking in technology, but is it the right technology. The student rep reports hardly using a lab other than the journalism lab that has a specific software needed. Would combining and adequately configuring fewer labs free up resources to be spent on new technologies? Would changing the way tech refresh works allow for newer technologies in different areas?

Socializing Technology Refresh-explore looking at different ways to fund technology and keep it up to date. One idea is to have each department contribute centrally to tech refresh. \$200 per employee would generate nearly \$1 Million. This could put every department on a 4 year rotation cycle for upgrade and could be all managed centrally. Just one example.

We wrapped up by having the group describe the current state of technology and how they would like to be able to describe the future state.

Current State:

1. Behind the times
2. Static
3. Groovey
4. Random
5. Inconsistent
6. Massively underfunded-distributed funded, need to reallocate
7. Siloed
8. Leaderless
9. Unreliable “untrusted”

Future State:

1. Simple
2. Easily adopted
3. Benefits the University
4. Fluid/Advancing
5. Wanted
6. Funded
7. Resilient/reliable
8. Uniform
9. Standardized, Process, project and Support Structure
10. Have a plan.

Next meeting date: Tentatively June 24th 10-12.