A News & Events Summary for IT @ Murdoch - June 2004

Current News...

iT Service Desk!
The consolidated iT Service Desk went live on May 10. There were a number of "teething" problems with the system and processes. John Dakin and his team have been working hard to listen to feedback and address each issue, but we ask for your continued patience. For example:

- Refining automatic email notifications - incidents emailed to the Service Desk no longer require the phrase "New Incident:" in the Subject line, although you can still use this method.
- Working on the ability for customers to view their requests in the system via the Web.
- Working with WebCT to become their point of call.
- Resolved the licence situation.

One of the objectives of the Service Desk is to try to resolve your problem when you call. The team is working on gathering data so that it can answer questions and resolve problems quicker and at the first point of contact (this will take some time). Their ability to do so will grow if you use the service correctly as they can access details of past calls and re-use the solutions stored in the knowledge base. Some of the useful information gathered from the Service Desk system is shown in the spreadsheet below.

Final Stats.xls

2005 Budget Guidelines
The 2005 budget is being prepared for IT Services. A memorandum will be sent to all Administrative Heads in the next few weeks to provide guidelines on budgeting for IT costs in 2005. IT Services are also in the process of detailing service level documents that identify the services you require and when you expect them to be delivered. I will be discussing this process with a number of you shortly.

Callista System & "Backing Australia’s Future" Legislation
Murdoch is on a very tight timeframe to implement all the changes required to Callista to support "Backing Australia's Future" (Nelson reforms legislation package) aka "HEIMS". Although there is uncertainty if the vendor (CSS) can deliver the necessary changes, all Callista customers have banded together to work cooperatively with CSS to achieve the outcomes. The Callista system
will need to undergo several upgrades this year for the changes to be introduced (by the Student Management Systems Group).

**Implementation of MurdochNet Policy**
The Vice Chancellor recently approved the introduction of Murdoch’s new Internet-related policy, the "MurdochNet Policy". The policy applies to all computer networks, web servers, networked computers, FTP sites and web sites at the University, to all content accessible via web servers on the Murdoch University network, and to any University content hosted off-campus.

The Policy can be found at [https://www.murdoch.edu.au/admin/policies/murdochnet/](https://www.murdoch.edu.au/admin/policies/murdochnet/)

The sections of the policy are Word documents at this stage.


Over the next six-to-nine months, an implementation and dissemination plan will be developed and promulgated so that all members of the Murdoch community have an understanding of what the Policy means for them and their roles. Subject to provision of appropriate funding, IT Services will be initiating projects to provide web infrastructure, content management, site development, and content maintenance to support the implementation of the policy, and to improve the standard and quality of Murdoch's web presence.

**iLecture Expansion**
The ITSC (IT Steering Committee) has committed funds for the expansion of the iLecture system to provide recording facilities in ECL3, LAWLT, LBLT, SS136 and F1.09 (Vet) for Semester 2, 2004. Funds were made available to purchase recording equipment, upgrade multimedia compression processors, purchase test and backup servers to improve reliability and provide extra resources to cater for the expansion.

**We are Connecting to "GrangeNet"**
The ITSC has also committed funds to connect to the "GrangeNet" network for 12 months. GrangeNet is a high-speed research network that allows subscribers to transfer files over the network without having to pay download charges - costs are fixed and paid annually. The service will be assessed over this 12 month period to determine if it is to be made a permanent service. The connection to the service was sponsored by Professor Matthew Bellgard and will be available shortly.
**PC Laptop Scheme for Students**
A scheme is being considered to provide laptop computers to Students under a buy, lease or rent plan with no liability to the University. Information is being gathered to present a proposal to Administrative Heads. Any feedback on the suitability or potential take-up by students of this scheme is welcome.

**Projects...**

**Business Continuity**
38 interviews have been held with 89 Murdoch staff members to document the IT dependence of University business processes. A Business Impact Assessment Report is being prepared that shows we are fairly resilient in some areas, but that a significant proportion of the University's activities could be seriously impacted by IT problems. The report will identify the greatest risks and outline a process for continuing improvement in our disaster recovery and business continuity processes.

**SAN (Storage Area Network) Pilot**
A Storage Area Network (SAN) project has been running for the past 20 months under the sponsorship of the Director of IT Services and approval of the ITSC. A SAN is a collection of centrally-managed storage arrays, a set of computers using those storage arrays, and the means by which the computers are connected to the storage. A SAN is expected to deliver more reliable and faster disc storage, more efficient storage management, server consolidation, disaster recovery and ultimately lower IT costs. After considerable research, negotiation with vendors and running of a proof-of-concept SAN pilot, the SAN Project Steering Committee has recommended a SAN solution to ITSC for consideration.

**Wireless Access to Murdoch Network - in selected Locations!**
A project to explore and trial wireless access to the Murdoch network is in progress. Wireless points (with a range of approximately 80m) have been installed in Bush Court (East), Refectory, ECL Lecture Theatre 1 (which also provides coverage to ECL Lecture Theatre 2), ECL Lecture Theatre 3, Veterinary Library and Mandurah. As part of the wireless project we are also in the process of upgrading all existing WLAN (Wireless Local Area Network) to bring them up to the same standard as the newly installed access points (Library South, TLC, Rockingham Library).
We are also progressing well with streamlining of software and procedures which will enable staff to access network services over wireless with the same ease and security as they would from their fixed workstations. You can borrow wireless cards that insert into laptop computers from the Library.
**Peel Project**
The Peel project is progressing well with detailed planning of IT requirements for the new building underway. This includes provisions for PCs, Servers, Communications equipment, wiring and audio visual equipment. It is also intended that the new Peel campus will be the first campus to incorporate Voice over IP (VOIP) telephone technology, instead of a telephone system based on conventional PABX technology. This will keep costs down without sacrificing existing telephony features.

**New Voice Mail System**
The contract for the replacement of the ageing Voicemail system will soon be finalized. The old voicemail system will be replaced by a Unified Messaging system which will provide the current Voicemail facilities, but in addition will enable clients to also manage and play back their voicemail messages from their PC workstation, in the same window where email messages are viewed.

**Computer Room Changes to Cater for more Servers**
The consolidation of IT support at Murdoch University has yielded the opportunity to reduce the number of computer sites around the campus and to move servers into the high security and environmental support offered by the purpose-built IT Services computer room. To accommodate the expected influx of servers, more shelving, Ethernet connections, and power outlets are being installed. The job is expected to be completed in early August.

**Office Space Changes**
With the necessity of locating more staff, some changes are being made in the IT Services office, computer room and workshop areas in the S&C building over the next few weeks. The familiar Computer Operations reception area with its bank of pigeon holes on the left and the hatch on the far wall will soon be a thing of the past. The room will be used for the storage of receipted goods. However, there will be a new hatch in the external wall next to the door to that room for personal interaction with Computer Services staff.

**Staff Changes...**

**Peter Sumner - Retirement**
After 24+ years of service, the former Director of IT Services, Peter Sumner, retires from Murdoch on July 2. Peter has presided over dramatic changes in IT at Murdoch during this time, from our first Interdata minicomputer and manually-switched VDU terminals to the advent of PCs and our modern network and computer equipment. A farewell party has been organised for 4.30pm,
Friday 2nd July, in the Murdoch Guild Tavern. We wish Peter every success with his ventures outside Murdoch.

**New Staff (Contract)**

David Farrell - Field Support Officer (Rockingham)
Matt Green - Service Desk Assistant
Arie Kusuma - Service Desk Officer
Bill Sorensen - Service Desk Officer