

News from Campus
Technologies, September 2008



Welcome Back, Everyone!

What We Did This Summer: It's been a busy summer for Campus Technologies. Here's what we've been up to:

South Hall: Users began moving into South Hall a few weeks ahead of schedule. CT, in cooperation with Facilities, installed about 60,000 feet of communications wire during the spring term, and prior to occupancy, wireless capabilities were extended throughout the new building. A new telephone system was installed as well as a call-management system that allows Enrollment Services flexibility in answering incoming calls, also generating useful statistics. Five teaching spaces were developed for Psychology, including one large computer lab, and all with projection and cart systems. A large meeting space for Admissions received similar treatment. The building CATV distribution is based on data wiring rather than traditional coaxial cable; that portion of the project is still under development.

South Hall highlights several enhancements in technological direction for CT and the university. A far more robust network design, new voice-over-IP phone system and call-management system are harbingers of the next-generation of voice and data capabilities for the campus. The ubiquitous wireless technology the building employs is a system based on smart controllers and dumb

access points developed by [Meru Networks](#) and this concept ushers in a new era of lower-cost, more flexible wireless developments.

Classroom updates: Any large-venue classroom that had a cart system with a PC older than a Dell 370 has been upgraded. Several classrooms also received updated projection.

Blackboard One-Card: One-Card deployment for safety and security has been delayed somewhat by downstate red tape, but CT has installed the first Blackboard servers, and Dining Services has moved its operations to the new university system. A new card containing both magnetic stripe and bar codes has been issued by CCSI for student and employee IDs and may now be used for campus FLEX accounts as well as “Mountie Money”; a new feature combining the convenience of a debit card with the safety of pre-pay for purchase of items not covered by FLEX, such as book store purchases, coffee at the Night and Day kiosk in Alumni Hall, new snack bar locations in Cedar Crest and Retan, and an ever-increasing number of campus vending machines.

Please note: If you have money remaining on your current ID card, please see the CCSI office prior to October 1 to get that money transferred to a new campus One-Card.

The current status of the campus One-Card effort is found by going to the One-Card portal, located [here](#).

An Improved Web Presence: CT released a new web site for the campus this summer, and are working with various campus constituencies to bring their portions of the university web presence up to a common standard. Not only do the changes create a more uniform look-and-feel for our web site, a new content management system allows

much improved tracking of information contained within the pages, ensuring that when campus information changes, all instances of obsolete data are corrected, including such external factors as changed or 'dead' forwarding links.

“Smart” Boards: Promethius Boards, actually. Last spring, the Provost released funds to the Education Department to supply smart boards to three classrooms in Retan. These are now in-place and being used by the department for teacher education training.

Getting Off to a Good Start: OK, so maybe you're one of the lucky folks who came back to find a new computer atop a clean desk. The few pieces of paper to be seen are all organized and you know why each one is there. In fact, you know where *everything* is. You've got it covered, your classes are all prepared and you've got backup copies of everything that's of any import on your computer. And if in the extremely unlikely off-chance you've lost something, there's plenty of time built into your schedule to find or recreate it. You and your technology function as one solid, well-oiled machine. You've even got that "Plan-B" formulated in the event you get to a classroom and find something misbehaving.

Or... like most of us you came back and hit the ground running because you simply didn't have the time you thought you'd have to get organized prior to things getting crazy. You can't find your lunch under the paperwork! We understand. We've said this before, but it bears repeating:

Back up your important files! We've all experienced or had someone we know experience data loss. Just because you have a new machine does not mean something can't take out your information in an instant. Be sure you have backup copies of all your critical files. We suggest you make two copies and take one home with you. Don't be caught cold with a failed hard drive and lost data. Most desktop machines have DVD writers now, and

disks are dirt cheap. Always set your backup program to “check-read” the CD/DVD you’ve just written so you’re not stuck holding a worthless disk you thought was your data backup!

Flash Drives? USB flash memory dongles are a great way to carry your data but should never be relied on as a long-term storage medium or your sole source of backup data – they are simply too easily lost, stolen, affected by impact, water or static discharge. Their ability to retain data error-free under the best of circumstances long-term remains an unknown. Doubt what we’re saying? Ask a person who’s washed one! Data recovery organizations report a significant portion of their annual revenue now comes from attempts to recover data from damaged Flash media! So, while it’s great to have all that information in your pocket or purse, make sure you have your important data backed up by one or more secure and reliable methods, such as your hard drive or a CD/DVD. Or both.

How about data recorded on old diskettes? Diskette (and hard disks!) data storage is forced to comply with the same laws of physics as everything else: Data recorded on magnetic media tends to decay over time: The generally –accepted rate of loss for these magnetically-recorded media is about a 50% reduction in playback strength every 5 years. So, even a properly-stored diskette could become unreadable in 10-20 years.

Still the best long-term solution: A CD or DVD disk, check-read to ensure the data is reliably recorded, stored in a cool, dark and dry place in a proper sleeve to prevent scratches. They should hold data indefinitely. No other media can make that claim.

One Caveat: Ever hear the term BetaMax? Media is only good as long as there are machines that can read and write it! So if the data you need to restore was archived on 5 ¼” floppy disks, 8” floppy disks or punched cards, you may have a problem...!

Where do I find...? With lots of new folks on campus, we’d like to reprint the information we listed this time last year in the *News from CT*:

“Getting Started” information for students:

General information may be found here:

<http://admissions.mansfield.edu/info/generalinfo.htm>

IT-specific info for phones and voicemail, Account info, Blackboard, etc: <http://it.mansfield.edu/start.cfm>

Campus Wireless: <http://wireless.mansfield.edu>

Telephone and Voicemail User’s Guides:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/telecom/phoneoperations.pdf>

Voicemail Quick-Start Guide:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/telecom/voicemail.cfm>

How to place personal calls from campus telephones:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/telecom/otherinst.cfm>

Frequently called, hard-to-find numbers:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/telecom/stuorg.cfm>

University Telephone Directory for Faculty and Staff:

http://hr.mansfield.edu/directory/staff_fac.cfm

University Telephone Directory for Students who have provided a contact number (must login to my.mansfield):

<http://my.mansfield.edu/studir/default.cfm?>

University's Acceptable-Use Policy:

<http://it.mansfield.edu/policies/aup.CFM>

Do you know who your CT Technician is? CT is constantly re-creating itself to meet new challenges while continuing to deliver the services you've come to expect at your desktop or classroom location. To that end, we occasionally change areas of responsibility for CT's Technicians. To see who is responsible for various technologies in your area, check out the CT web pages, located [here](#).

Reporting problems with campus technology: The best thing to do is to *always!* contact the university help desk at x-4357. The help desk is staffed during normal university business hours and a call to that number ensures your problem will be logged and the most appropriate resource will be assigned to address your need, that is, if we can't fix it while you're on the phone. Over 70% of help calls ARE resolved during the initial contact. If you receive our voicemail, it is because all lines are busy – this is particularly true this time of year because of higher-than-normal call volume, and the fact that often most of our technical staff are out and about, or you've reached us outside normal university business hours. Please leave a message and we WILL get back to you!

Problems with our Help desk? Please contact one of the following people:

Connie Beckman, Director – x-4830

Alan Johnson, Associate Director – x-4835

Bill Phillips, Assistant Director – x-4010

The CT web pages, <http://it.mansfield.edu>, contain a lot of good information and how-to's for your perusal. You'll even find back issues of the "News" – there's a lot of good stuff out there, so have a look!

Datatel UI Users, Please Note: The Application Developers would like to remind faculty and staff to verify when starting Datatel UI they are logging-in to R18LIVE. A few people have reported problems that were caused by attempting to log in to the R18TEST or R18DEV environments. It is important to verify that you are logging in to the R18LIVE environment as any other environment is invalid for all end user purposes. The other environments are used for testing and development purposes only and do not contain current data.

Outlook contact lists: People keep asking, “Just how many recipients can be contained within a single Microsoft Outlook contact list? And the answer is....

...There is no “magic number”: The contact list is based on number of characters, not size. And the size of any single contact list may be as large as 8,192 characters. How fast we reach that limit depends largely on how much information is carried along with the Email address. 40 users is a generally-accepted safe number, but you may be able to build a contact list with as many as 100 entries before Outlook complains.

For those of you just dying to put a little more Microsoft-ese into your life, you can access the full text of their answer by clicking [here](#). Microsoft further recommends you break your contact list up into groups, then list those groups individually in the “To:” field of your message.

Change your voicemail greeting: Let folks know you care by occasionally re-recording your voicemail greeting. Change it up and make it current - It’s easy! Simply dial 4400, enter your password, then when listening to the next prompt, press 3132. You will hear your current recording, and be prompted on how to record a new greeting. And if you haven’t recorded a busy greeting, it’s a nice way to show folks you care. Enter the voicemail system and once you’ve entered your password press 3131. You’ll be prompted to record the message people hear when they try to reach you while you’re on the phone.

Remember, too! Voicemail only holds stored messages for 30 days.

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That's it for this month. Campus Technologies produces this newsletter on a monthly basis, more-or-less, during the fall and spring semesters. If you have suggestions for articles or any other feedback on the *News from CT*, don't hesitate to let us know. Email Connie Beckman: cbeckman@mansfield.edu – we'd love to hear from you.