NORTH DAKOTA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

SYSTEM INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

December 2012

System Information Technology Services

System Information Technology Services (SITS) provides secure information management and technology services to North Dakota University System students, faculty, staff, and state residents. SITS links academic and business services with the NDUS community, connecting users to the information and educational resources they need to accomplish their goals.

Did You Know?

The North Dakota University System saw a 12.2% increase in the number of non-traditional students between Fall 2007 and Fall 2011.

INNOVATION

Windows 8 and Surface Tablets

Microsoft has been making headlines with its recent release of the Windows 8 operating system and the Windows Surface tablet. SITS staff have been looking at both the new software and the new hardware and will continue to evaluate their interoperability with NDUS applications.

The Windows 8 operating system offers an entirely new user interface that is built for the "touch experience." Tiles launch applications rather than icons and the tiles also display real-time information. The Start menu has also been replaced with a Start screen. However, Windows 8 continues to work with the keyboard and mouse. And for users who would prefer the more traditional desktop view, the Windows 7 desktop is available.

With the Surface Tablet, there will be two versions. The Surface Tablet with Windows RT is available now. It will only install apps that come from the Microsoft Online Store. It includes a scaled-back version of Microsoft Office and it offers separate Mail, Contacts, and Calendar apps. However, it does not include Outlook and it will not work with some SITS services.

The Surface Tablet with Windows 8 Pro will be released for sale in early 2013. It differs from the Surface with Windows RT in that it runs a full version of Windows 8, meaning users will be able to install any Windows-based software, rather than only those apps available from the Microsoft Online Store.

Internet Explorer 10 is the browser that is delivered with Windows 8. At this time, not all NDUS systems support Windows 8/Internet Explorer 10. Specifically: ConnectND systems are not supported and the recording capabilities in Tegrity lecture capture are not supported. Otherwise, the rest of the NDUS-supported technologies should work with this latest browser software.

ACCESS

Polycom Videoconferencing Expanding to the Desktop

NDUS SITS has adopted Polycom's CMA (Converged Management Application) as the preferred solution for desktop video connectivity with traditional IVN rooms. Currently, about 40 users have been using CMA during the Fall 2012 semester to connect to IVN classes.

CMA is high definition capable and readily connects to traditional IVN conferences and telephone/audio conferences. The desktop software is available for both Windows and Mac machines and the entire feature set is delivered by both platforms.

The software is similar to the Polycom room systems. In addition, it also includes desktop-specific features like availability status and the ability to interconnect with other Windows and Mac CMA users.

In the future, CMA will be expanded and incorporated with the Microsoft Lync client. Meanwhile, other desktop video applications will be phased out. Contact David Belgarde (701-777-4232) of the NDUS Advanced Learning Technologies for more information.

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EXCELLENCE

Successful Office 365 Migration

Over 11,000 e-mail accounts were successfully migrated earlier this fall when Microsoft moved the University System's faculty and staff email/calendar platform from BPOS to Office 365.

Despite the size of the move, users experienced little or no disruption in services.

The few technical difficulties that did occur were cleared within a week. They mostly involved the correct setup of some handheld devices and the adaption to a couple of new constraints of Office 365 (no more than 500 recipients per e-mail message; no more than 1,500 different mail recipients per day).

With Office 365, many users have found Lync to be a great new tool. It is a synchronous communication platform that replaced Office Communicator. Lync can be used for instant messaging; it can be used to create audio, video, or web conferences; and it will keep track of contacts' availability (see more on Lync in the Training Tidbit below).

Looking ahead to next year, most students will be moved to Office 365, creating a single, unified environment for NDUS students and staff.

CAMPUS CORNER

BSC's New CORE Portal

Bismarck State College recently launched the CORE Portal. CORE is short for Collaboration, Organization, & Reporting with Efficiency and is designed to meet an ever-growing need for shared information and collaboration at the campus.

Prior to launching CORE, much of BSC's communication and sharing of information was hindered by security restrictions. Now, all employees – whether on campus or off, full-time, part-time or adjunct – are able to participate in collaboration and workflows, access internal forms and processes, share information, review and generate reports, and more.

CORE is based on Microsoft SharePoint Enterprise 2010. Its user friendly interface is supported by a robust backend that shapes user access and security.

A single point of reference enhances access to timely information, both at the campus and department level. Viewers can subscribe to RSS feeds to ensure information gets to them more efficiently.

Cross-campus committees made key decisions regarding communication, design, strategy, training, data development, and support. The initiative is ongoing and the process of centralized reporting from data models, departmental onboarding, and project collaboration has begun.

Although still in its infancy, BSC's CORE strategy going forward is clearly defined and the solution is now in place.

Training Tidbit

Microsoft Lync

Lync is the new instant messaging system that is part of the Microsoft Office 365 service that the University System recently launched. It replaces Office Communicator.

Users may download the Lync software from portal.microsoftonline.com. It is available for Windows, Mac, Windows Phone, iOS, and Android systems, or through a web browser.

Be aware that if you had been using Office Live Meeting, you will need to reschedule those meetings in Lync.

More information can be found at sits.ndus.edu/O365.

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