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Information Technology Services • Ithaca College

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On Line is published by Ithaca College Information Technology Services. It contains news and information of interest to the Ithaca College community relating to the use of today's technology in an educational setting.

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The Anatomy of Change

By Ed Fuller, Director, Information Technology Services

You may notice that this edition of *On Line* has a slightly new look. It is the first edition to reflect the new name of our organization, **Information Technology Services**. But there is far more than just a facelift and a new name to the transformation that is taking place within the former Office of Information Technology. The changes involve structure, philosophy and purpose.

In early 2002 I began thinking a great deal about the organization of the then Office of Information Technology. I had been concerned for some time over the apparent convergence of computing applications around the World Wide Web and our approach to it. We were developing many new applications for deployment over the Web. Most of the application systems we were purchasing were developed for deployment over the Web. Students, faculty, staff, all were looking to the Web for more and more information about their educational, intellectual, personal and business lives. The Web was the focal point for most of our activities. It is even a goal within the College Institutional Plan to "fully utilize Web technology to fundamentally change the way Ithaca College provides administrative support services." Yet I was concerned about our approach to the Web as an organization. We were divided in that approach, with individual divisions within OIT setting separate priorities for Web development and other activities, with little communication, collaboration and cooperation among them.

I've heard it said that many things in life are a matter of timing, and at about this time, I received an email from Kaludis Consulting (http://www.kaludisconsulting.com) advertising a white paper they had written entitled *Untangling the World Wide Web: How Colleges and Universities Can Develop a Strategic Approach to the Internet*. The white paper dealt with ways to align organizational thinking around delivery of information and services via the Web. But there was one paragraph in particular in the report that really grabbed my attention. It advised "... don't underestimate the impact that the existing organizational structure ... can have on an institution's ability to realize its Internet vision. For example, organizational structure can impede the proper alignment of human resources. This can occur in institutions where the information technology area is still organized around "academic computing" and "administrative computing" rather than around processes and their users." It seemed to me that the last sentence described the way OIT was then organized. So I contacted Kaludis Consulting and began a dialog around this one paragraph that eventually led to a consulting engagement to assess the organization of the Office of Information Technology and make recommendations for changes to better align the organization to meet institutional technology goals and priorities.

Over the course of the Fall of 2002, Elliott Haugen, a consultant from Kaludis Consulting, made several visits to campus to interview major IT stakeholders among the faculty, staff and administration and to work with the staff of then OIT to better understand our organization, activities and goals. The results of that effort were presented in a report in February of 2003 and included four major recommendations:

• Reorganize the information technology department.

• Re-create both the image and reality of a single information technology organization.

• Expect OIT directors to have as their highest priority promotion of cross-OIT solutions.

• Initiate a formal, integrated information technology strategic planning process.

During the Spring of 2003 the other directors and I worked with Mr. Haugen to develop a reorganization plan. Aside from the fact that reorganization was a specific recommendation of the report, it seemed essential in order to move forward with the other recommendations. We settled on a new organizational structure that, among other things, elimi-

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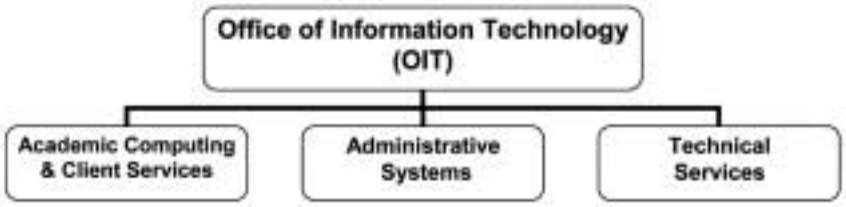

nated duplication and overlap of personnel with similar skills by grouping them into single teams where they could best serve the entire IT organization, not just the particular division to which they had belonged. This also promotes depth in certain key skill areas, flexibility in scheduling and coverage, and opportunities for standardization on tools and techniques to improve cost effectiveness. Where there had been three divisions within OIT each with its own separate identity and complement of technical, web development and administrative support staff, the new organization, **Information Technology Services**, would have four divisions with the fourth, Web, Systems and Departmental Services, serving as a resource for the other three as well as having its own set of specific responsibilities. This structure (shown below right) creates a balance among the four divisions within the new organization as they are all interdependent on one another since no single division has all of the elements required to operate independently. In turn, the new IT organization as a whole relies on the four divisions working together, sharing a common identity in order to achieve common goals.

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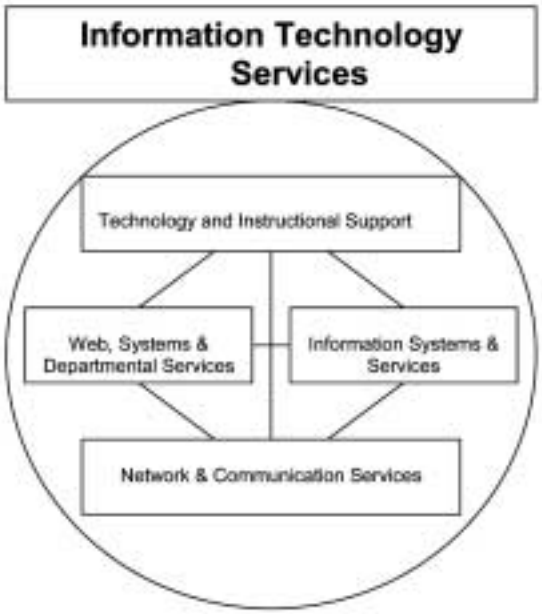

By the end of the Spring semester, 2003, the stage was set for the transition from OIT to ITS. In June we announced changes in reporting alignment to our staff and held a retreat to get re-acquainted and to meet for the first time under our new organizational structure. Finally, on August 18, we made the official transition from OIT to Information Technology Services (ITS) heralded by a series of announcements in *Intercom*, *The Ithacan* and on our web site at http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/ .

But making an announcement does not "make it so", nor can one turn a battleship on a dime. Since that initial announcement we have spent a great deal of time and effort working to make the transition more than just words and pictures on paper. In order for the reorganization to achieve its goals, we must make all ITS staff as well as you, our clients and those we serve, understand, accept and believe in the change.

Internally, we continue to incorporate the reorganization into our thinking, planning and interactions. We eschew individual division names preferring instead the common identity of Information Technology Services. We have engaged all ITS staff in team building and organizational exercises and are working on developing common vision and mission statements. We have also formed a "collaboration team" to facilitate communication about projects and other activities across all of the divisions within ITS. All of these things are essential in order to accomplish the consultant's recommendation, to create the image and reality of a single IT organization.

It is this notion of a single organization that will be most important to our future success. We are all first and foremost members of ITS preparing to work together toward technology goals and priorities estab-

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lished by the College. Which brings me to the other important piece of the reorganization.

You'll recall that the plan calls for the establishment of an IT strategic plan. That work is also currently underway. Elliott Haugen returned to campus this Fall at the invitation of president Williams to organize an institutional IT strategic planning effort. At the time of this writing, a committee is being organized to begin discussions concerning an IT plan. The committee will be modeled along the same lines as the facilities planning committee, which helped to bring about the campus master plan and continues to serve as a mechanism for vetting and prioritizing campus construction projects. It is expected that the IT strategic planning committee will function in much the same manner by establishing an overall IT planning framework for the College, then helping to set technology project priorities within that framework. We in ITS are anxiously awaiting the output of this effort and, in our new organizational alignment, are poised to work together to make the plan a reality. ■

Technology Renewal Update

By Irene Scott, Office Systems Coordinator

A year and a half ago the college launched a new program designed to manage the replacement of the majority of its 2,600-plus microcomputers and networked laser printers. It was a tremendous undertaking. After the conclusion of a college-wide inventory, Information Technology Services developed a comprehensive inventory management Web site. Then came the installation and removal of hundreds of machines over the course of the fiscal year. And while there were a few initial concerns, the response from the campus has been overwhelmingly positive. With the second year of the Technology Renewal program in full swing, we thought it might be interesting to share with you some interesting facts from year one.

ITS staff ordered, set up, delivered and installed a total of 956 computers during the first year of the program ('02-'03). More than 700 of these were completed over the course of the Spring and Fall semesters, and 200+ during the summer months. In addition, 26 networked laser printers were replaced. We also installed a total of 7,212 feet of Dell keyboard and mouse cables, 2,062 feet of Apple keyboard and mouse cables, and 11,472 feet of power cables. Of course, when you replace a computer system you have to take away the old one. We removed 55,000 pounds of old computers and monitors from faculty and staff offices during 2002-03. That's 27.5 tons – a lot of equipment!

The first year of the program targeted the slowest systems for replacement, and needless to say, a lot of faculty and staff were happy when our staff showed up with their new systems. Back in1997, the 'standard plus' PC computer included a 233 MHz Processor, with 32MB of RAM, a 15" Monitor, and Windows 95. This system was certainly good for its time, but in today's Ithaca College computing environment it can't be used for much, as the typical useability lifetime for a computer averages 3 years. During year one of the Technology Renewal program, the majority of the computers replaced were slower than 300MHz!

Computer technology can no longer be thought of as a one-time investment. Maintenance, support, upgrades and eventual replacement all need to be considered if that computer is to provide adequate service over its expected lifetime. By replacing existing standard-use computers and network laser printers on a regular basis through a coordinated program, the College is in a better position to negotiate vendor terms, facilitate hardware and software deployment, and maintain a high level of service and support. The Technology Renewal Program helps insure that faculty and staff will always have the technology necessary to support the mission of the College.

More information about the Technology Renewal Program can be found at: http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/assets/ ■

"...needless to say, a lot of faculty and staff were happy when our staff showed up with their new systems."

Takedown Notice (a.k.a. "Greetings from the RIAA") . . .

By David Weil, Director, Web, Systems & Departmental Services

"I am contacting you on behalf of the Recording Industry Association of America, Inc. (RIAA)…"

So starts one of the "takedown" notices received each month by the College regarding the sharing of copyrighted music and movie files over the Internet. The RIAA, MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America), and other organizations that represent copyright holders actively police the Internet to protect the value of their intellectual property and the College is obligated to respond to their complaints.

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) provides legal recourse for copyright holders if their property is shared via the Internet. It also specifies how an internet service provider (ISP) can reduce its liability for these types of infractions if it follows certain guidelines. These include designating and registering an individual with the US Copyright Office to receive infringement notifications (that's me), promptly removing or blocking access to the material identified in the notification, and having a policy of terminating access for repeat offenders. In this context Ithaca College is considered an ISP, since we provide internet service for our faculty, staff and students, and we follow the guidelines set forth in the DMCA when dealing with copyright infringements.

"As an ISP the college has an obligation to investigate and respond to the infringement notices."

Between the start of the fall 2003 semester and February 1, 2004, the College received 61 infringement complaints (DMCA notices) compared to 12 for the same period last year. Of the 61 notices, almost 20% were for people each sharing over 500 music files from their machine, and three involved the sharing of over 900 music files each. While the number of complaints is significantly up, anecdotal evidence suggests that the number of people sharing files on our campus is actually down – it is just that the RIAA and other organizations are stepping up their enforcement efforts, and we are "on their radar".

The RIAA and other organizations routinely search for computers on the Internet (and our network) looking for people running peer-to-peer (p2p) file sharing programs, such as KaZaA, iMesh, or eDonkey, advertising that they have music, movies or programs available to share. In order for you to download a song to your computer using a p2p program you type in the name of the song or artist you are looking for, and up comes a list showing places you can download it from – this is the same technique that the RIAA uses to identify people who are violating their property rights. Many people also do not realize that once installed, a number of these programs are setup to automatically share files from your computer – sometimes even after you have closed out of the program itself.

When the College receives an infringement notice we follow a procedure that adheres to the DMCA guidelines and the college's educational mission. First we lookup the location and guardian for the computer (the infringement notices identify only the IP address of the computer, so we must determine where it is). At the same time we block network access for that machine, effectively "blocking access to the material identified in the notification" – satisfying one of the requirements of the DMCA. We also write back to the complainant informing them that we are working on the case.

The next step is to talk with the guardian of the machine, which is usually done by the Office of Public Safety, since this activity is a violation of federal law. The nature of the complaint is discussed with them and the allegations investigated. If confirmed, the individual is referred for possible sanction under college policy. If the guardian of the machine is a student, his or her ResNet connection is usually blocked for a period of time, depending on the number of files being shared. If the guardian is a faculty or staff member, the case is reviewed with the appropriate administrative offices to determine the appropriate course of action.

Finally, a message indicating that we consider the matter closed is sent back to the complainant. It is important to note that at no time does the College release the guardian's name or other personally identifiable information to the RIAA or any other outside organization. However, please keep in mind the College would comply with a valid legally issued subpoena requesting that information.

The RIAA has made numerous headlines over the past year by issuing subpoenas and filing lawsuits against hundreds of computer users. While some of

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Takedown Notice...continued

the techniques that the RIAA has been using to obtain subpoenas to acquire the name of the computer owner have been ruled improper (at least for now), the basic premise that the RIAA and others have a right to sue people who share copyrighted material over the Internet has not changed. The RIAA is actively filing lawsuits and seeking compensation from those engaged in illegal file sharing.

As an ISP the college has an obligation to investigate and respond to the infringement notices. We have also been working to educate the community through newsletters, newspaper interviews, and in other venues, as to the issues and repercussions of these types of activities. Hopefully the number of notices will decrease over time as people become even more aware of the issues involved, and I can stop receiving those "greetings from the RIAA".

[Please contact David at dweil@ithaca.edu if you would like additional information regarding file sharing or related topics.] ■

What happened to my floppy drive?

By Beth Rugg, Student Employment & Computer Lab Coordinator

Have you had a chance to visit the Williams 210 or Smiddy 113 labs, or recently received an upgrade to your office computer? If so, you may have noticed something different and perhaps slightly disturbing. The new sleek, thin LCD monitors are cool and the new black Dells are fast, but where's the floppy drive? It's time to face the music; floppies are on their way out, like the beta tape and dinosaurs. Soon, you won't even be able to buy an external floppy drive!

How could this be? Floppies are a cheap and easy way to store information. Well, yes, they *are* cheap, which means they break easily, are not reliable and typically offer only 1.44 MB of storage space. Newer storage technology has become easier and more sophisticated. In addition, digital audio and video files are now in common usage, and these types of files are huge. They cannot be stored on a 1.44 MB floppy drive.

When the college purchases new Dell and Apple computers, we purchase standard computers with only a minimal amount of customization. For the last several years, the major manufacturers have been phasing out floppy drives. Apple was first to implement this change several years ago and Dell has quickly followed. In general, all new computers come with CD burners and DVD players. As faculty, staff and lab computers are being replaced through the Technology Renewal process, the current standard specifications include a combo CD-RW and DVD player drive and a zip drive, but not a floppy drive.

For our student users, Friends 110 still has floppy drives. External drives are available for loan from the consultants in the Williams 210 lab and the CHS lab. But those are only interim measures. We all need to be thinking about newer ways to save our information. So, let's talk about the future.

All new computers come with CD burners. CDs can typically store between 650 and 800 MB of information. If you have never burned a CD, it's a simple process; insert a blank CD in the drive and the software walks you through it. ITS also has "QuickGuides" available in the Main Office and in the labs to help you, as well as on the web (see http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/quick_guides/). You can purchase CD-Rs or CD-RWs. CD-Rs allow you to save once to the CD. Once the CD is "burned", it can't be edited. CD-RWs are re-writeable and have the ability, much like floppies, to have multiple pieces of information saved to the disc at different times. In general, CD-RWs are more expensive than CDs. A pack of 50 CD-Rs costs approximately $20, while a pack of 38 CD-RWs costs roughly $40. Make sure you know what type of CD you are saving your information to!

"It's time to face the music; floppies are on their way out..."

USB memory devices or "flash drives" are rapidly gaining in popularity. They can hold large amounts of information, with storage ability ranging from 64

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Can That Spam!

By Leslie LaRocco, Systems Administrator

"It takes a fraction of a second for our server to pull apart a message, test it, reassemble it, and send it on its way to you—or reject it as spam."

Legend has it that unsolicited commercial email was nicknamed "spam" because of a Monty Python skit. A middle-aged British couple is ordering breakfast, but each and every item on the menu contains Spam.

"I don't *like* Spam," the wife complains.

In the background, a group of Vikings (this is Monty Python, remember) starts singing, "Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam…" drowning out everything else.
That's what unsolicited commercial email is like: it's in everything, and the nonsense noise drowns out all of the useful email in your box. Worse, the ads aren't limited to mortgage rates, but can be highly offensive—verbally and graphically.

How did they get my address?
One way spammers get email addresses is to buy them. Just like junk mail advertisers who buy and sell their mailing lists, some spammers do likewise. Your email address may be on one of those lists because you gave your address to the wrong web site. Always read a site's privacy policy. If they don't promise to keep your information confidential, either don't give the address, or use a "throw away" address, such as a free account from hotmail.com.
Spammers also get addresses from web pages. Using a program that automatically scans a web site—similar to the legitimate indexing programs used by Google and other search engines—the spammers can download each and every email address on a web site.

Recently, viruses and other computer infections have provided email addresses to the spam industry. An infected computer's address book is stolen, and the infected computer can even be turned into a "spam station," spewing hundreds of emails.

How can I avoid getting spam?
Avoid using your main work and personal email addresses to sign up for web site logins. While most are legitimate, and the owners won't sell your address, it's safer to use a free account that you can discard.

If your email address will be somewhere on your own website, you may want to create a graphic which the automated software won't recognize as an email address. Unfortunately, if the graphic is a "mail to" and clickable, this won't help. If your address is somewhere in the HTML, the scanning software will still be able to steal it.

Keep your computer's anti-virus software up to date. Once a week, scan your computer for viruses.

On a similar note, don't download anything or install any program on your computer that isn't from a legitimate vendor. This include popular peer-to-peer music and file sharing programs, like KazaA, which often come with "adware" (which creates annoying pop-up ads when you browse the web) and even dangerous viruses that can allow someone to control your computer remotely.

Use Ithaca College's Spamtrap
At Ithaca College, we provide a "spamtrap" to help you keep your inbox as free of spam as possible. We wanted to provide our community with a simple, but flexible way of choosing if and how to scan for spam. We chose *CanIt Pro* because it fits the bill for the education community. You can choose to have suspected spam rejected outright, so that you never see it. Or, you can also choose to have it "tagged," e.g. have the word SPAM inserted into the Subject line, along with a number of asterisks to indicate just how "spammy" the message is. You can even choose to "opt out" of spam scanning entirely—the default for our users.

Because no system is perfect, *CanIt* also allows you to tailor the settings, white- and blacklisting addresses and domains. For instance, many legitimate email newsletters contain certain spam triggers, like a lot of HTML and graphics, directions for unsubscribing, sales pitches, and so on. These may be mis-marked as spam. You can whitelist the sender so that it passes through the spamtrap.

CanIt works by subjecting each email message to hundreds of tests. The tests don't just look for "the seven dirty words," to borrow from George Carlin, but more subtle indications of spam, like a whole line of capitalized words, multiple exclamation points, whether the timestamp of the message is correct, and even how the remote sender contacted the local system. Each of these tests is associated with a

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score. Some indicators, like HTML within the message, add a fraction of a point to the score. Evidence of forgery in the header of the email will rack up over 4 points. A message with 5 points or more is marked as spam or rejected, as you choose.

It takes a fraction of a second for our server to pull apart a message, test it, reassemble it, and send it on its way to you—or reject it as spam. Each rejected message includes information on why it was rejected and the phone number of the Ithaca College HelpDesk. That ensures that even if a legitimate email is rejected, the sender will know why and can contact us.

We do not scan internal mail from one IC user to another, except mail going through our mailing lists (since spammers often target mailing lists and many of our lists are open to outside subscribers).

Unfortunately, the problem is getting worse rather than better. Statistics show that some 40% of all email on the Internet is spam (http://www.spamfilterreview.com/spam-statistics.html). While email might seem to be "free," the cost can actually be very high to an institution. The extra load requires more bandwidth, more servers, more disk space, and more backup equipment, not to mention the specialized software we've added to combat the problem. All of that hardware and software requires staff time to plan, build, and maintain. And then there's the time each of you spend at your inbox deleting the unwanted messages.

A couple of clicks will get you started with Ithaca College's spamtrap. Point your web browser at: http://spamtrap.ithaca.edu/ and login with your email username and password. The simple interface will allow you to choose "Tag suspected spam" or "Reject suspected spam." Click "Set spam-scanning level," and you're done. The two minutes it will take you to turn on your spam scanner will save you hours of aggravation down the road. ■

Wireless Computing on Campus

By Beth Rugg, Student Employment & Computer Lab Coordinator

Wireless computing has arrived! During the fall semester, the Library was outfitted with numerous wireless access points and ten loaner laptops. These Dell laptops have integrated wireless network cards so that faculty, staff and students can take them anywhere in the Library and get connected to the Internet. These laptops can be checked out (just like a book) from the multimedia desk and used anywhere in the library for three hours. If there is no one waiting, the laptops can easily be renewed and taken out for longer. Printing is not yet available from these machines but users can just email the document to themselves for printing at a later time. These machines are available on a first come first serve basis and cannot be reserved in advance. This service has been extremely successful and is in very high demand.

By the time you read this, we expect to have extended this wireless network service over Spring break to allow the use of personal laptops in the Library. Faculty, staff and students will be able to bring their own laptops into the library and access the internet and eventually, print services and the entire Ithaca College network and file servers.

Information Technology Services has been working towards bringing wireless networking onto campus for some time. A primary goal of ours is to provide a secure network for our community of users, whether it is through the traditional cable network or over a wireless signal. And because wireless networking is notoriously insecure, ITS has been cautious in rolling out and implementing this technology. To successfully deploy this type of network, much effort is devoted to configuring the software to allow secure communication between the wireless access points and the computer, and to make sure that only authorized Ithaca College faculty, staff and students are able to use the network.

Our long term goal is to have wireless technology available in all of the buildings on campus including the Snack Bar, Campus Center and all of the foyers and atriums where faculty, staff and students gather to learn, socialize and do business. Stay tuned for ongoing wireless developments on campus! ■

A primary goal of ours is to provide a secure network for our community of users, whether it is through the traditional cable network or over a wireless signal.

ePortfolios: Your (Career) Future is On Line

By Michael Taves, Director, Technology & Instructional Support Services

"We now have the technological methods and tools at the disposal of most students and professionals, why not use them...going beyond that static information to provide a richer view of individual progress as just that, learning and achievement over time."

I'm sure that most readers are aware of the general trend toward greater accountability for our activities and outcomes in higher education (and in other fields of endeavor as well). Everyone is talking about "outcome assessments"; i.e., how can we concretely demonstrate the efficacy of our efforts as both individuals and collective enterprises, and thereby know our strengths as well as our developmental opportunities. This movement makes many good people worry over the potential for unfair scrutiny of their work by others, or over the use of bad methodologies of assessment which trivialize or oversimplify complex learning processes, and wind up subjecting the teacher and/or the learner to equally oversimplified evaluative conclusions.[1] There is substance to this anxiety. We have all witnessed or experienced the negative outcomes of poor assessment tools and strategies. My daughter was an honor student in college. When she and every other honor student in one particular class in her sophomore year could not achieve better than 75% on an exam in this certain class they were all enrolled in, you knew there was something wrong with the professor's assessment methods. There was a disconnect between the professor's teaching methods and the students' learning experience on the one hand, and the exams as the assessment of their learning on the other. To one degree or another this is not an uncommon experience – we've almost all had at least one class like that – but that makes it no less frustrating for the learner, nor any less damaging for the individual who suffers a permanent mark on her record which is an inappropriate reflection of her capability and effort.

However, at the most elemental level, we all accept the need for some degree of assessment. How else can we demonstrate that we have achieved a particular level of accomplishment or mastered a particular body of knowledge or range of skills? Over generations we have developed common methods for demonstrating and documenting the evidence for these accomplishments via the academic record, the résumé and the curriculum vitae. Recently, however, borrowing from the contributions of two bodies of literature, on multimedia development and on portfolio development, and based on relatively recent advances in digital technologies, a new approach to documenting learning and accomplishment has emerged called the "electronic portfolio," or ePortfolio. I think the promise and excitement around the ePortfolio approach is two fold; one, it provides for a multimedia enriched, self-reflective and more nuanced approach to assessing individual accomplishment and achievement, and two, it may be an "antibody" to the dangers of more oversimplified approaches to assessment. In other words, if assess we must, let's at least do it in a thorough and sophisticated manner that provides a more encompassing understanding of the individual. We now have the technological methods and tools at the disposal of most students and professionals, why not use them to be both inclusive of all the information traditionally provided by the academic record and the résumé, as well as going beyond that static information to provide a richer view of individual progress as just that, learning and achievement over time.

And that goes to the core of the ePortfolio approach; to demonstrate growth over time, often as measured against some standards or specific learning goals. The ePortfolio, as a method, can be applied to almost any student at any stage in their learning career, and to any professional at any stage in their vocational career, but the method implies the same understanding in both cases; that learning and accomplishment is a lifelong process. Therefore, it is in the nature of an ePortfolio that it is a living document, to the extent that it is expected to continuously change and update, and it may even take different forms, or be directed to different audiences, either simultaneously or at different points in time. An assistant professor using an ePortfolio to document his teaching and professional achievements toward the goal of achieving tenure as judged by his local peers and academic leaders, has a particular focus and audience. He may have a somewhat different version of his ePortfolio for review by professional colleagues elsewhere than on his campus.

Whatever the focus, every ePortfolio has certain elements in common, including the following.

• It has a purpose and an audience, which need to be explicitly understood. If your goal is to use your ePortfolio to achieve permanent certification as a high school biology teacher, then you know your purpose, and your audience includes your peers, your

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principal, and the state certificate granting authority. Construct your ePortfolio to provide the evidence to achieve your goal.

• It is electronic in form and provides a digital collection of artifacts which are linked to one another, and most often should be available via the Internet, though access limitations may be appropriate for some or all of the content where confidentiality concerns come into play.

• It should include multiple forms of media: text, images, audio, video and hypertext linkages among them. These will include all the summative information normally found in a résumé, but in addition may include full text examples of written work, images of completed projects, video interviews relevant to one's achievements, audio or video clips of performances, and so forth.

• It should include relevant critical reflections on the learning artifacts presented in the collection, and self-reflections and critical feedback from others on the work and goals presented. Again, there may be a need to consider confidentiality issues with regard to access to the feedback information, but as one author put it, "A portfolio without reflections is just… a digital scrapbook." [2]

• It uses a well-organized, logical presentation format to present all the elements of the portfolio in a fashion that is easy to navigate and illustrates academic or professional growth *over time.*

There are many different models of ePortfolio development and presentation methods available, as the approach is being customized to meet the needs of different learners and professionals. It is becoming especially "popular" as an approach for documenting learning and competency for elementary and secondary teachers, and my understanding of the trend in teacher education is that this will soon become *the professional standard* for documenting one's accomplishments and qualifications in this field. And there are already several pockets of active work in this arena on our own campus, including "Project Look Sharp" (contact Cyndy Schiebe in Psychology), the Center for Teacher Education (Tim Glander in The Center for Teacher Education), and in the School of Health Sciences and Human Performance (Dean Steve Siconolfi, and Professors Janet Wigglesworth and Deborah Wuest). In discussions with our Provost, Peter Bardaglio, I know that he is intensely interested in promoting developments in this methodology across campus, and I will be searching for every opportunity for the instructional support "arm" of ITS to do exactly that. The literature on ePortfolio development is vast, and this little article attempts only an introduction to the concept.[3] Suffice it to say that I believe, and rather sooner than later, that the days when a merely summative, hard copy résumé or curriculum vitae is considered sufficient documentation for one's record of learning and accomplishment are numbered. And if we are going to care about truly accurate and quality assessment, the ePortfolio approach at least has the potential for a more nuanced and sophisticated presentation of the truly *individual* nature of each person's learning odyssey, than does the outcome of the usual "test," or the mere presentation of a static record. ■

"...the days when a merely summative, hard copy résumé or curriculum vitae is considered sufficient documentation for one's record of learning and accomplishment are numbered."

1 - This movement is complex and has a multifaceted focus, on both individual and organizational performance and outcomes. This brief article focuses only on issues that apply to the assessment of individual learning and accomplishment.

2 - Barratt, Helen C. *The Electronic Portfolio Development Process*, at http://electronicportfolios.com/portfolios/EPDevProcess.html .

3 - A good place to start is http://electronicportfolios.com/portfolios/EPDevProcess.html , and you can also see a good example of ePortfolio as applied to higher education at http://portfolio.psu.edu/ . Also, I have a short article on ePortfolio development as it applies to college faculty and teaching, along with a bibliography, which I would be happy to send to anyone on request (mtaves@ithaca.edu).

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MB to 1 GB of space. They are small, durable and easily transported in a pocket, on a key chain or in a purse. On newer computers, they plug easily into the front USB port. Flash drives tend to be more expensive, with prices ranging from $30 to $100, but many of the major stores – Staples, Best Buy etc. – often run specials and rebates.

So, when considering how to store your information, think about the size of your files, the cost of the storage device, it's durability and portability and it's ease of use and re-use. Try these different devices to see what you are most comfortable with and what works best with your work style. ■

The Way a Digital Life Should Be

By John Clisham, Web & eMedia Developer

"Plug in your digital camcorder to the computer and capture that video you shot last summer. Within a couple minutes you'll be cutting, trimming, and making your own film...."

Being a multimedia developer, I often field questions like: *How do I download the pictures from my camera? How do I edit digital video,* and sometimes, *How can I be more like you John and make nifty little multimedia projects the entire world can see from their computer?* The hardest part about answering these questions is there has never been a simple answer. It has always been, *well you could try this application for editing video, then use this application to edit your photos* – and it always took longer to explain than it should because there has never been one easy solution. But then something happened – something magical – Apple released iLife.

iLife is a suite of four applications – iDVD, iMovie, iPhoto and iTunes – that integrates all the tools you need to make a snappy presentation. Each application title corresponds to the function; for example: iPhoto is used to work with digital photographs, while iDVD is used for DVD authoring and creation.

The best way to think of iLife is to consider it the Microsoft Office for your digital life. Microsoft Office is a suite of software that – right out of the box – provides full business functionality (word processing, spreadsheet, presentation). iLife is analogous to Office – right out of the box it provides integrated digital lifestyle functionality (digital photo, digital video editing, jukebox, DVD creation). For example, the photos you brighten and crop in iPhoto are instantly accessible in iMovie. You can make a Ken-Burns-style video from your photographs or have them sit still on the screen. Plug in your digital camcorder to the computer and capture that video you shot last Summer. Within a couple minutes you'll be cutting and trimming, and making your own film from your snapshots and home videos.

After you finish editing your video in iMovie, pull a few songs from iTunes and voilá, your masterpiece is scored. With one click, you can send the project to iDVD where the video is burned to a DVD that you can play in most consumer DVD players.

There's probably someone out there right now thinking *"I can do all this on my Windows computer!"* Before you jump to conclusions, allow me to explain why I praise iLife. Apple's suite of tools is an all in one solution – everything you need to work with your digital devices is included in the suite. You don't have to use various pieces of non-integrated software – everything is here for you. It's easy to use, powerful and is very affordable. *But can I do this type of stuff on my PC?* Yes, you can edit video and crop your digital photos on your Windows based computer. Will it be as easy? In my opinion, no.

When I see people in the halls and they ask how they can edit the footage from their class trip, or how can they take all the digital photos on the computer and record to a DVD so their grandmother in Toledo can see it, I say iLife. Many have written the Macintosh computer off, but it is actually one of the world's best-kept secrets. The iLife suite is preinstalled on all new Macs and makes it easy to connect all the cameras, MP3 players, and PDAs to your computer and have them work. It's truly the way a digital life should be. ■

Video As An Instructional Tool

By David Coleman, Web & eMedia Developer

Have you considered using video as an instructional tool? In this article, we'll meet five IC faculty members who have used video to share real-life stories, perform sociological analysis, conduct psychological testing, add voice-over to existing video and incorporate video production skills into their curriculum.

Video has an effective appeal over other classroom media such as PowerPoint, over-head transparencies or still photography. While a photograph captures one moment in time, video allows for continuous viewing, creating a realistic experience for the student.

Marilyn Kane, Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, has developed a series of videos for the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration with a grant from the American Occupational Therapy Association. She conducted several interviews with older drivers who express in their own words what driving means to them. Testimonial videos like these allow students' access to real-life people telling stories in their own words. Marilyn has also worked with ITS to produce over seventeen process videos demonstrating testing procedures for elderly drivers.

Performing analysis of people within a video is another great instructional use of video — take Signe Kastberg for instance. During a lab exercise, students in Signe's sociology class were broken into small groups and assigned a team-building activity. The activity was video taped, converted to time-lapse, posted to the web and analyzed by each student who studied both verbal and non-verbal communication. This exercise allowed students to view how they behaved in groups.

Nancy Rader, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology, is also using video for behavioral research and analysis. With the help of ITS, she used blue screen video techniques to perform testing with infants. Nancy's project, "Learning What Words Mean: Talking Heads with Gestural Variation" is a video viewed by infants on a 42 inch plasma television screen. Nancy's video simulates a young woman teaching a baby to associate words with objects, such as a toy. The blue screen background is then removed so that the woman's head can be superimposed within each test—like a weatherman on the evening news. As the baby views the tests, a small camera tracks their eye movement. This project required special effects and a bit of trickery one might expect to see in a Hollywood production.

Another excellent use of video is to help prepare students for complex lab exercises. For example, Terri Hoppenrath, Clinical Assistant Professor and Clinic Director in the Department of Physical Therapy (PT) uses short video clips to simulate lab procedures. These clips provide a rich context for students to learn terminology and common PT procedures. Terri has taken existing video developed by the PT Department over the years and provided her own voice-over. Re-using existing video is a great way to expand upon the success of older video projects.

Finally, Lisa Sykes of the Occupational Therapy Department uses video production skills as a way to give her students hands on experience with their subject matter. Lisa had her students break into groups and plan, shoot and edit short videos relating to various Occupational Therapy training topics. Her students produced five videos entitled Safety First, Workplace Stretching, Fall Prevention, Fitness for Life and Occupational Hazards.

With a little planning and access to tools such as iMovie, videos can be an effective instructional technology choice. Visit our Instructional Support Services website (see http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/iss/) to learn how other faculty members are incorporating video and other multimedia technology into their teaching. ■

"While a photograph captures one moment in time, video allows for continuous viewing, creating a realistic experience for the student."

Fix-It Fridays

By Ed Fuller, Director, Information Technology Services

Effective Friday, March 19th, Information Technology Services will be implementing a "Fix-It Fridays" policy to establish a weekly window of time, from 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Fridays, to perform necessary maintenance on computers and network systems. During this time frame important production systems (to include email, file servers, Parnassus systems and others), and/or network communications may be unavailable. While there has always been a need to perform regular updates and maintenance on our systems, in today's increasingly hostile network environment it has become even more critical that we perform these updates on a regular basis.

"The idea is to create a regularly scheduled maintenance interval that the campus community can plan on..."

We will not use this time every Friday, nor will we take down all systems and the network on any given Friday. The idea is to create a regularly scheduled maintenance interval that the campus community can plan on, and our intent will be to provide information in advance about exactly what systems and services will be affected. Whenever possible we will post an announcement on the computing status page (see "System Notices" on http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/) by Noon on Wednesday of each week listing those systems and services that will be down during the upcoming Friday's fix-it window. In urgent cases effecting the security of our systems we will update the message and do it that Friday without the usual notice. Also, it is important to understand that this will not completely eliminate the need for other down times for more complex upgrades or for emergency actions required to maintain the function or security of critical systems. However, we will always make every effort to see if the work can be done in the "Fix-It Friday" window.

If you would like email notification of all planned system outages and other important system status information please subscribe to our Helpdesk Alert email list. See http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/helpdesk/ ■

Quick Guides

PDFs available at http://www.ithaca.edu/computing/quick_guides/

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Image Editing
- Using Photoshop Elements

Using a Listserv
- Using Majordomo Lists
- Managing Majordomo Lists with MajorCool

Office Productivity
- Using Microsoft Press Interactive Training
- Using Adobe Acrobat 5.0
- Using Excel
- Using Powerpoint
- Using Word
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Online Courseware
Operating Systems and Computer Tips
- CD Recording for On-Campus Computers
- Using Windows XP Support Site
- Using OS X Quick Guide
- Using OS X Support Site
- Tips from the Helpdesk
- Your Computer

Spam Management
Web Publishing
- Getting Started on the Web at IC
- Information Sharing in an Electronic Community
- Dreamweaver Quick Guide
- Dreamweaver and Online Forms
- Dreamweaver: Creative Website Navigation
- Creating Forms for the Web
- HTML Reference
- HTML Quick Guide
- Creating Imagemaps

Web Browsing
- Using Netscape Navigator
- Using Microsoft Internet Explorer
- Using Events Calendar