

User Support Advisory Committee Report to IT Council – October 02, 2018

Committee Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Committee Role</u>
Kevin Piercy	Committee Chair
Robert Martin	Information Security Officer (ex officio)
Kelly Dalton	Manager, Accounts Payable and Budgeting (ex officio)
Joseph Hughes	Faculty Senate representative
Michael Hammond (currently vacant)	Faculty Senate representative
Heath Lair	West Plains representative
Tom Peters	Provost representative
Angela Strider	Student Affairs representative
Allen Kunkel	Research and Economic Development and International Programs representative
Ben Utne	Centralized IT Support representative
Angela Barker	Distributed IT Support representative
Gabrielle Fields (currently vacant)	Student representative
Seamus Shannon (currently vacant)	Student representative

Committee Workgroups and Partners

<u>Workgroup / Partner</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Student Computer User Experience workgroup	Angela Strider
Lifecycle Management of Hardware and Software workgroup	Kevin Piercy
Configuration Management workgroup	Robert Martin
Server and Application Hosting workgroup	Ben Utne
Campus User Support Committee (CUSC) partnership	Angela Barker

Section 01: Major Accomplishments

Services and Support

A project to migrate files from local file servers and workstations to the Office 365 environment has been initiated. This large-scale migration will provide increased storage, security, and reliability, while reducing operational and support costs, and providing new capabilities for collaboration. This migration project is a joint effort between Computer Services, the distributed IT support staff, and the IT Services departmental staff on the West Plains campus.

The Learning Management System (LMS) support role of distributed IT staff was increased. As part of the transition to the Software as a Service (SaaS) hosting solution for the Blackboard LMS, the role of distributed IT staff was expanded, resulting in increased support resources available for faculty.

Fiscal Improvements

The process for disposing of surplus IT equipment has been improved, resulting in extended service life for certain IT equipment that would have previously been disposed of, and an overall greater return on previous IT investments. These improvements were realized by a collaborative effort between Property Control, Computer Services, the distributed IT support staff, and the IT Services departmental staff on the West Plains campus.

The recommended hardware configurations for IT equipment have been reevaluated and more closely mapped to specific use cases and needs. This has resulted in an approximately 15% overall decrease in the costs of frequently purchased IT equipment.

Infrastructure and Operations

A new Active Directory management and security model for client systems was developed and over 6,000 client systems were migrated to the new model, resulting in major improvements in client system security and significant reductions in operational and support costs.

Upgraded client systems management software was deployed throughout the distributed IT support staff units of the Springfield and West Plains campuses to enhance infrastructure capabilities and information security protection layers. This has enabled the Campus User Support Committee to:

- develop standardized processes for creating/deploying system images and application packages
- build shared application deployment packages for widely used applications
- create shared system images for computer labs, classrooms, and offices that incorporate a secure baseline configuration and other information security best practices

These shared resources and processes are used by multiple units, resulting in reduced operational and support costs, increased standardization, and additional layers of information security protection.

Advanced client systems management functionality was extended to Apple devices by implementing Apple School Manager. The new capabilities for device management and software provisioning that were added have resulted in increased security, lowered costs, and has enabled new opportunities for student learning and workforce mobility.

Section 02: Student Computer User Experience Workgroup – Preliminary Findings

The Student Computer User Experience workgroup was formed to determine which areas students thought were working well and areas in which they would like to see improvements. The workgroup was led by Angela Strider, the Student Affairs representative, and included students and staff from both Springfield and West Plains campuses.

Areas students thought were working well

- my.missouristate.edu portal and the availability of mobile-friendly resources
- increasing number of self-service capabilities available
- good communication and notifications from social media outreach
- “high contact” model of providing services and resources
- convenience of ResNET support and services for Residence Hall students
- quality and availability of computing facilities, including support services and the availability of collaboration spaces, BYOD seating, and upgraded furniture with power outlets

Areas where students would like to see improvements, and specific concerns

- Account Creation and Management
 - lack of automatically generated BearPass Login and email address
 - the BearPass login and email address being different
 - password expiration over breaks and during finals week
 - process for self-service password resets and account unlocks
 - documentation and user guides
- Wireless Connectivity for Consumer Devices
 - personal devices such as smart televisions, media players, and game systems being unable to connect to the University’s wireless network due to network security requirements
- Better Support and Options for Chromebook Users
 - An increasing number of students are using Chromebooks in the K-12 schools and bringing them to the University as their personal devices, then discovering that many IT resources and services are difficult or impossible for Chromebook users to access.
- Email and Spam
 - the amount of spam email received
 - the possibility of becoming a victim of a phishing attempt
- Identifying Available Services and Support Offerings
 - difficult to determine which IT resources and support services are available, resulting in confusion about where to go for assistance
- Emergency Notifications
 - lack of notifications to computers, digital signage, and MSU Mobile app

Section 03: Ongoing and Planned Activities

Services and Support

Continue to assess stakeholder views of which areas are working well and areas in which they would like to see improvements.

- Faculty Computer User Experience workgroup to be formed
- Staff Computer User Experience workgroup to be formed

Fiscal Improvements

The Lifecycle Management of Hardware and Software workgroup is investigating ways to lower IT costs and increase return on investment by improving standards and procedures for the lifecycle management processes of procurement, provisioning, inventory, and surplus. Specific topics include:

- leasing IT equipment instead of purchasing it
- switching to subscription-based licensing instead of perpetual licensing
- continuing to lower the cost of standard configurations
- improving procurement and management options for mobile devices
- studying the feasibility of having a central organization perform lifecycle processes
- developing a shared inventory system containing all IT equipment

The Server and Application Hosting workgroup is being formed to identify the opportunities, risks, and costs associated with the way servers and software applications are hosted by distributed IT units, and the potential for improvements. Specific topics include determining:

- how servers and software applications are currently hosted by distributed IT units
- the feasibility of lowering IT costs and eliminating unnecessary redundancy by:
 - distributed IT units sharing resources to consolidate servers and application software
 - virtualization and hosting being provided for distributed IT units as a billable service
 - migrating more services to the Office 365 environment
 - hosting more services and software applications in cloud environments

Infrastructure and Operations

The Configuration Management workgroup is continuing to determine how to improve the security of baseline configurations by implementing evolving information security best practices and guidance procedures.

The Campus User Support Committee (CUSC) is investigating ways to continue to reduce operational and support costs, improve service levels, and adapt more quickly to the demand for changing support services needs from the University community. Focus areas include:

- determining the best way to sustain the development and creation of standardized processes and shared resources such as shared system images and application deployment packages
- identifying how to integrate functions and services while eliminating unnecessary redundancy
- identifying areas where units can work together to provide better coverage and support services
- finding opportunities for cross-training and resource sharing

User Support Advisory Committee (USAC) Recommendation 01

IT support activities for members of the University should be managed and tracked with a university-wide system that includes a self-service support portal with an integrated service catalog and knowledge base. This system should use an IT Service Management (ITSM) framework based on the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) in order to maximize standardization, interoperability, and decision-making capabilities.

“ITIL, formally an acronym for Information Technology Infrastructure Library, is a set of detailed practices for IT service management (ITSM) that focuses on aligning IT services with the needs of business.” (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ITIL>)

Overview

- The ability to track all IT support activities with a university-wide system will provide a better view of support needs and resources, and will allow for better decision-making, process improvement, and resource utilization. Most IT support areas already use systems for tracking support activities, but these systems are “siloesd” and non-standardized.
- Utilizing a self-service support portal will provide a consistent method for people to request IT support and track the status of their requests. Other contact methods, such as in-person and phone support, can still be provided by individual IT support areas based on their needs, but work will be tracked and the status visible to the person being supported.
- A Service Catalog will provide a comprehensive list of available IT services.
- A Knowledge Base will provide answers to common questions, self-help guidance, and documentation concerning IT services.
- Requests will be more efficiently routed to the correct support resources based on service and/or support area.
- Standard metrics and levels of service will be more effectively developed and communicated.
- Exceptions may be granted for operations that involve unique needs and requirements

How this Recommendation Aligns with USAC Charges

Charge 2: Identify and implement a common service and support philosophy, including the use of IT management tools and processes, to improve the service and support experience for faculty, students, and staff.

Charge 3: Improve business processes, cut costs, and increase the efficiency of user support by developing a standardized set of metrics, processes, and standards for effective delivery of support services to users