DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY: ANNUAL REPORT

Information & Technology Services
Annual Report of 2000-2001 Fiscal Year

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I. Unit Title: Information & Technology Services
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II. Data and information for the department.

In spite of a severe staffing shortage, ITS was still able to focus its efforts on improving service to the campus as well as the overall condition of the campus infrastructure. Some of ITS’s accomplishments include:

- Connected 6 student dorms to the campus network. This provides high-speed access to campus resources and the Internet.
- Began the migration from the existing 3COM ATM networking equipment to CISCO ATM equipment. 3COM withdrew their ATM product line from marketing and support. Standardizing on CISCO equipment will give continuity among the core network switches and routers for ease of maintenance and integration. It will also ease our transition to newer technologies, such as Gigabit Ethernet, in the future.
- Installed an Academic lab in Library services for general student use.
- Installed and implemented a Windows NT based web server to augment existing UNIX web services on campus. This will give broader set of tools and functionality for the campus to utilize.
- Installed and implemented a Windows NT based server for student use. This server will supplement academic course work offered by the CIS and other departments.
- Connected additional Academic/Administrative buildings to the campus LAN including Alumni/Foundation, BPAC, Coliseum, and the Natatorium
- Brought the new GHEC center on-line with new servers (2 servers to handle file and print service, web, email, etc.) and networking equipment as well as 150 workstations for faculty and student use
- Connected GHEC to the state backbone via a T1 (1.5 megabits/sec)
- DSU signed the Novell Campus License Agreement giving us access to several of Novell’s products allowing us to better manager computer resources on campus
- Integrated Campus Pipeline, Banner Web for Student, Web for Faculty, Web for Alumni, and WebCT for seamless access to information via the web allowing students to register, check fees and financial aid, check grades, enroll and complete on-line courses hosted by WebCT all through one common web-portal, Campus Pipeline. Faculty can post grades; check student advisee
information; check schedules; correspond with students via email, message boards and chat rooms. Alumni can check campus events, check on classmates, and stay current with the campus

- DSU hired a full time web designer to work closely with the campus this past year and will unveil a new DSU web presence on August 20, the first day of the fall 2001 semester
- Web designer will work closely with others on campus to enhance DSU's web presence and on-line course offerings

III. Personnel.

1. Activities:

- Rusty Applegate, Chris Giger, Becky Finley, and Luigi McMinn attended the state Mississippi Banner User's Group (MBUG) conference in Jackson.
- Luigi McMinn and Cory Edwards attended "ORACLE SQL/PLSQL Programming" training.
- Sam Kelly and Chris Giger attended an CISCO implementation and staging training in Memphis.

2. Change of Status:

- Hired Matt Logan as Systems Engineer.
- Matt Logan transferred to the Greenville Higher Education Center as Systems Engineer.

1. Goal #1

A. Adequate Staffing:

ITS's primary goal is to implement a staffing plan that will support the information and technology needs of Delta State University. This plan will include additional personnel to directly support the different functional units of the campus. Appropriate salaries would be a major component which would allow us to not only attract but also maintain qualified personnel. Training and on-going development is also an essential part of preparing ITS staff to be able to support and stay current with ever changing technology.

B. Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal:

Faculty

Strengthen the faculty in their pursuit of scholarship in teaching, service, and research through a comprehensive program of faculty development and renewal, including appropriate support services, resources, and personnel.

The Environment

Maintain a climate of involvement in which faculty, staff, students, and administrators work together to provide the optimal environment for living and learning.

Provide the resources and assistance to support the disciplines, including modern instructional equipment, a strong library and media center, computer facilities, and other services required for instruction, research, and public service.

C. Expected Results:

Adequate staffing will allow ITS to provide improved service to faculty, staff and students. This improved service will include meeting information needs, providing more timely support, providing more and better access to systems and services, and providing increased instruction and training to the campus community.
D. Evaluation Procedure(s):

Reaching this objective will be evidenced increased staffing which will result in a reduction in turnaround time of work orders, meeting deadlines for completion of services, more training offerings, etc. It will also allow ITS personnel to respond to day to day activities as well as devote necessary time and effort to long range projects.

E. Actual Results of Evaluation:

ITS was successful in grooming a student employee to be hired as a Systems Engineer upon graduation. Unfortunately he transferred to the Greenville Higher Education Center later in the year for significantly more pay. This is a prime example of the difficulty in IT staffing. Therefore there has been no change in ITS ability to respond to campus needs.

F. Use of Evaluation Results:

ITS will continue to request increased staffing to better address campus demands as outlined in the ITS proposed staffing model. ITS will continue to recruit qualified personnel until all existing positions are filled and retention rates improve.
2. Goal #2:

A. Installation and Deployment of Windows NT Servers:

ITS will install and deploy two (2) new Windows NT servers on the campus network. One server will provide Windows NT web server capabilities to supplement our existing UNIX based web servers. The other will provide a platform for CIS and other Academic departments to teach emerging technologies such as Active Server Page (ASP) development.

Institutional Goals supported by this goal:

The Curriculum

Improve computer literacy for all students by making computer services available and by facilitating the use of appropriate software packages in courses throughout the curriculum.

The Students

Increase student retention by providing a support program with the following attributes: a comprehensive system of advising and other services to enhance student development, increased financial support to students through scholarships, assistantships, grants, and loans; a developmental studies program for under prepared students in mathematics, English, reading, and study skills; opportunities to meet or communicate with prospective employers or admission personnel from graduate or professional school.

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B. Expected Results:

These enhancements will improve access to campus resources for all faculty, staff and students. The new Windows NT web server will provide an additional platform and tool set for web page development and deployment. It will be configured to support both industry standard and proprietary Microsoft technologies (i.e. MS FrontPage extensions). The ASP server will be used for Academic purposed in providing a platform to instruct students in current technologies.

Enhanced reliability and performance should be realized by incorporating newer more robust technology into the infrastructure as well as providing dedicated resources.

C. Evaluation Procedure(s):

Reaching this objective will be evidenced by the successful installation and implementation of the new servers into the network infrastructure. Statistics will be gathered in real time and compared to current statistics to monitor performance.

D. Actual Results of Evaluation:

The new servers were installed and are fully functional. The NT web servers houses production “live” web pages. The student server is being utilized by the CIS and other departments for Academic instruction.

E. Use of Evaluation Results:

ITS will continue to evaluate performance of the new servers as well as the network infrastructure through monitoring as well as feedback from students, faculty and staff. ITS will use the information to enhance network based services.
3. Goal #3:

A. GHEC Technology Infrastructure Implementation:

ITS will install and deploy the technology infrastructure necessary to operate the Greenville Higher Education Center (GHEC). This will include the network infrastructure (CISCO) and cabling; two (2) servers to provide file and print service, web, email, etc.; and approximately 150 workstations for faculty, staff, and student use. The GHEC will also be connected to the state network as a stand-alone entity. “Ghec.org” is the registered internet domain name. A T1 circuit and appropriate router will also be installed.

Institutional Goals supported by this goal:

The Curriculum

Improve computer literacy for all students by making computer services available and by facilitating the use of appropriate software packages in courses throughout the curriculum.

The Students

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B. Expected Results:

These enhancements will provide access to technology resources to all occupants of the GHEC. This will allow the GHEC to operate independently of any of the sister institutions currently involved in course offerings there. Enhanced reliability and performance should be realized by providing dedicated services and resources to this constituency group.

C. Evaluation Procedure(s):

Reaching this objective will be evidenced by the successful installation and implementation of the new infrastructure at the GHEC. Statistics will be gathered in real time and compared to current accepted industry standards to monitor performance.

D. Actual Results of Evaluation:

The GHEC infrastructure was installed, implemented and went “live” over the past year. Students and faculty accessing the new resources reported excellent capabilities and performance.

E. Use of Evaluation Results:

ITS will continue to evaluate performance of the infrastructure through monitoring as well as feedback from students, faculty and staff. ITS will use the information to enhance the infrastructure and network server based services.
4. Goal #4:

A. Connect 6 Student Dorms to Campus Network:

ITS will connect 6 student residence halls to the campus network. This will allow high-speed access by students to campus computing resources as well as the internet.

B. Institutional Goal which was supported by this goal:

The Curriculum

Improve computer literacy for all students by making computer services available and by facilitating the use of appropriate software packages in courses throughout the curriculum.

The Students

Increase student retention by providing a support program with the following attributes: a comprehensive system of advising and other services to enhance student development, increased financial support to students through scholarships, assistantships, grants, and loans; a developmental studies program for underprepared students in mathematics, English, reading, and study skills; opportunities to meet or communicate with prospective employers or admission personnel from graduate or professional school.

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C. Expected Results:
These enhancements will improve access to campus resources currently hampered by slow dial-up circuits. Upgrading the students' connection rates improve performance and reliability while accessing electronic resources.

D. Evaluation Procedure(s):

Reaching this objective will be evidenced by the successful installation and implementation of the new network components. Statistics will be gathered in real time and compared to current statistics to monitor performance.

E. Actual Results of Evaluation:

The six residence halls were connected to the campus network and went "live" during the past spring semester. Students reported better throughput and response time accessing both on and off campus resources. Access to resources over the new connections has eliminated several problems caused by congestion on the old dial-up circuits.

F. Use of Evaluation Results:

ITS will continue to evaluate performance of the network through monitoring as well as feedback from students, faculty and staff. ITS will use the information to enhance and network based services.
5. Goal #5:

A. Migration to CISCO Networking Equipment:

ITS will begin the migration from the existing 3COM ATM networking equipment to CISCO ATM equipment. 3COM withdrew their ATM product line from marketing and support. Standardizing on CISCO equipment will give continuity among the core network switches and routers for ease of maintenance and integration. It will also ease our transition to newer technologies, such as Gigabit Ethernet, in the future.

Institutional Goals supported by this goal:

The Curriculum

Improve computer literacy for all students by making computer services available and by facilitating the use of appropriate software packages in courses throughout the curriculum.

The Students

Increase student retention by providing a support program with the following attributes: a comprehensive system of advising and other services to enhance student development, increased financial support to students through scholarships, assistantships, grants, and loans; a developmental studies program for under prepared students in mathematics, English, reading, and study skills; opportunities to meet or communicate with prospective employers or admission personnel from graduate or professional school.

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B. Expected Results:

These enhancements will improve access to campus resources for all faculty, staff and students. It will provide a common platform for ITS to support over the entire range of the network fabric – switches, routers, etc. Enhanced reliability and performance should be realized by incorporating newer more robust technology into the infrastructure.

This will also allow continued vendor maintenance, support and growth path from CISCO as 3COM has withdrawn all of its ATM products from the market.

C. Evaluation Procedure(s):

Reaching this objective will be evidenced by the successful installation and implementation of the new network infrastructure. Statistics will be gathered in real time and compared to current statistics to monitor performance.

D. Actual Results of Evaluation:

The new infrastructure was installed with CISCO Catalyst 5513’s replacing the existing 3COM Corebuilders as the core of the DSU network backbone. Other key network switches and devices were replaced to provide optimal service and compatibility.

The new network infrastructure shows a vast improvement in available bandwidth and throughput over the existing 3COM network core.

E. Use of Evaluation Results:

ITS will continue to evaluate performance of the network infrastructure through monitoring as well as feedback from students, faculty and staff. ITS will use the information to enhance network based services.