



# Central IT

## Commerce Newsletter



UNIVERSITY  
OF TASMANIA

## *Commerce IT Infrastructure Renewal Project*

### *Newsletter Number 2*

### **Progress to Date**

#### **Student Lab Project**

Two student laboratories, Lab D004 in Newnham and Com Lab 2 in Sandy have been made more efficient through the installation of Terminal Services software. This approach provides performance improvements for the students while also providing ease of management by IT staff, and prolonging the life of aging lab computer hardware. The Newnham lab is to undergo refurbishment of all its desktop machines over the mid-year break with the agreement to lease 24 new Dell GX240 computers with 17" monitors. The current machines will be re-deployed to Sandy Bay campus to facilitate the rectification of hardware problems being experienced in Com Lab 2. While there were some teething problems regarding student log-in procedures and the affect the introduction of a new University-wide printing service had on productivity early in Semester 1, all is now fully functional.

#### **Student 'Home' drives**

This service has been implemented. All Commerce students now have direct access to centrally backed-up storage space for their University work. Initially, only those enrolled in a Commerce course were given this facility but has now been extended to any studying a Commerce unit.

### **Staff Project**

#### **Staff IT Hardware & Software Review**

In February-March, Jack Potter undertook an audit of the hardware being utilised by staff in each of the three Schools covered by the SLA.

The results of the review cemented the need for new machines in several locations and instigated serious amendments to the Faculty IT Asset Register. Future software requirements were also identified resulting in a need for an increase in the number of licenses for End Note and Lotus Notes.

#### **NDS - The New Authentication System**

It is envisaged that by mid-year all staff of the Faculty will be using NDS (Novell Directory Services) to authenticate their log-on. As with the student population, when staff log on they will also be automatically provided with a home drive (P:\) and access to a shared school drive (N:\), the structure of which will be defined in consultation with representatives of all major areas.

The usage of these new drives will be explained in detail to staff as they are moved to the new system.

The new staff file-servers are in place in the Commerce buildings in Sandy Bay and Newnham to replace the Tokyo and Berlin servers respectively. As staff are moved across to the new system, they will be connecting to the appropriate server which will provide a faster and more reliable service.

It is necessary, however, for staff to have the necessary software resident on their machines.

Macintosh machines require only installation of the new client, while some Windows-based machines require Windows 2000 installed first. The new machines for Accounting & Finance, and those PCs in the School of Management already have Windows 2000 pre-installed. The School of Economics will have their NT4.0 machines upgraded.

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Project Outline

- 1) deploy new machines in School of Accounting & Finance (15-19 April)
- 2) deploy new machines to economics students (18-19 April)
- 3) upgrade economics staff machines to Windows 2000 (23-25 April)
- 4) visit each staff and post-graduate student, install NDS authentication / client software (date to be fixed)

Any queries should be directed to Jack Potter on x7682.

### New IT Support for Newnham

Ms Thi Thi Khin has relocated to Newnham for an initial period of 12 months. She fills the position recently vacated by Jason Dean. Thi was recently team leader of the lease-scheme deployment team based in Sandy Bay and brings to the northern campus a wealth of experience in IT support and service and extensive knowledge of the student and staff IT environment.

### VPN – Virtual Private Network

In the past, only those staff and students using Tassie Access as the Internet Service Provider (ISP) could access the University system from a remote location. In March, VPN became available allowing those using other ISPs to log onto University systems. It allows authentication against their normal username and password without requiring Tassie Access delivering authentication details.

The VPN client needs to be installed on the students/staff-members home computer. It is in the best interests of the students that they become aware of this facility.

Although there was little active advertising of it's existence, during the trial period it was proven to be an extremely effective product. Could lecturers and tutors, where deemed appropriate, convey the existence of this software to their students. The VPN client software and documentation can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.utas.edu.au/vpn>

### Disposal of Faculty IT Assets

The machines in Newnham, as previously stated, will be used to populate Com Lab 2 in Sandy Bay with the remainder scrapped for spare parts. However, neither the obsolete staff machines nor the 24 ex IS lab machines will be deployed anywhere within the Faculty. Staff will be advised via email when these machines are to be disposed of in accordance with "Faculty of Commerce Policy and Procedures Regarding the Disposal or Redeployment of Computing Equipment".

### HelpDesk

There have been some delays in the receipt by Central IT staff of problems logged with the HelpDesk by Commerce staff. This has raised serious concerns amongst Commerce and Central IT staff alike

Central IT's responsibility for the timely provision of IT support to Commerce staff is one of the major points of the SLA. On-site Central IT staff are expected to address problems logged through the Service Centre system within specific time limits as set by the Project Manager and Senior Project Officer in consultation with the HelpDesk Manager.

To assist the casual staff on the HelpDesk assign the problem appropriately and for us to provide you with the appropriate level of service, when logging a problem with the HelpDesk, could you please clearly identify yourself as a Commerce staff member, and any error messages that are displayed on your machine.

Central IT management are currently in discussion with HelpDesk management with regard to the issues raised.

**For HelpDesk Service  
Please Phone  
1818  
and state that you are from the  
Faculty of Commerce**

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