

Information Resources Committee – Progress Report, April 20, 2004

Committee composition

Bowen, Brian (Chair) – six meetings since May, 2003
Malhotra, Arun (6)
Rudd, Ken (6)
Schesser, Kurt (5)
Rambarran, Richard (5)
Mian, A.M (2)
Pattany, Pradip (3)
Powell, Thomas (2)
O’Connell, Mark (1)

Other faculty and interested parties: Steve Teitelbaum, Nick Pikarsky, Richard Bookman, Rudolph Werner, and Chris Bogue.

Issues addressed

Updated web site: <http://structure.med.miami.edu/irc>

This contains the IRC mission statement, current committee composition, most recent progress report to school council, UMSM departmental IT contact list, and old committee reports (thanks to Dr. Malhotra).

Web policy: This was the primary issue discussed by the committee at five of the six meetings. Following the appointment of Steve Teitelbaum as Director of Medical Web Services in April, 2003, the committee began a close working relationship with Steve that evolved over the course of the year and continues today. The old, 2002-2003 version of the UMSM Web Policy Manual was rejected on several grounds, and we started from scratch. First, we determined a basic outline of topics that were pertinent to the medical school web site and had not been addressed in the overall University web policy. With subsequent discussion, we reached a consensus on the wording of these topics. The next major item was establishment of an approval process for web content. This involved the enumeration of guidelines for identifying the person(s) responsible for the content of a given (eg, department, center, or institute) site. We agreed upon a tiered structure in which the order of responsibility was author, approving supervisor, director (who assumes ultimate responsibility). Finally, we created a policy for dispute resolution, and then devoted the remaining committee time to streamlining the document. The UMSM Web Policy manual can be accessed and reviewed at <http://webservices.med.miami.edu/webpolicymanual.asp>.

Steve has recently informed me that the University is going to adopt a new design for its website and that he will be available to present to the committee the ramifications of this change for the UMSM website.

IT policy and plans: Chris Bogue, Director of Medical Information Technology, addressed the most recent committee meeting regarding UMSM policy for pricing based on machine ID numbers (MAC addresses). This has been an area of recurrent interest to committee members who are concerned about what is considered excessive charges for access to the UMSM network, Internet/Internet2 and computing resources as well as the management costs associated with the network.

Chris also discussed briefly, plans for a wireless cloud at the medical school campus. The wireless cloud would enable 802.11b connectivity across the entire campus and within buildings. End users could roam from the Coral Gables campus to the Medical Campus and still have connectivity to each respective wireless cloud with minimal configuration.

Medical IT currently charges \$12 per month, per device that is using the UMSM network. The purpose behind this chargeback structure is to fund for the remaining amount of Medical IT's operations. Each year, Medical IT receives an allocation from the Deans Office and the remaining amount must be recovered to continue operations. The \$12/month charge has been argued as an excessive amount for a 10, 100 or 1000Mbps connection. In comparison, a home 1.5Mbps DSL connection (with 5 or more e-mail addresses and sometimes web-space) is approximately \$45/month. Other comparison's have been made to other Universities across the country. Medical IT also charges less per connection than the Coral Gables or RSMAS campus (CG = \$12.73/month and RSMAS =\$1/day).

Historically, the department charged connectivity based on an Internet Protocol (IP) address. This became an ineffective means to manage network connectivity as over time, IP addresses were allocated without notifying Medical IT (formerly Network Services). When an IP address was given out twice or more, whichever device obtained a connection to the network first, would prevent the other devices from connecting. So, IT changes the IP address scheme from statically granted IP addresses to ones that change when a device connects to the network (DHCP). So, IT is now keeping track of devices on the network with their Media Access Control address since no two MAC addresses are the same.

From the end user's perspective, the cost for IT support should be included in any indirect costs.

Additionally, by instituting a chargeback structure for services, we have created additional, unnecessary, overhead expense for supporting the campus.

In the near future, the committee expects to invite John Deeley, Vice President for Administration, to discuss long term IT planning for the medical school.