UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Office of Information Technology

Information Technology
Newsletter

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■ **Computer Repair Services** moved to 2331 University Ave. Free parking is available next to the front door. New phone number is 612-624-4800. For a map of the new location, see www.umn.edu/crs.

Need Answers?
Help is One Phone Call Away
Call 1-help: 612-301-4357

This summer the Office of Information Technology (OIT) began implementing a common interface for its help desks that support the University community in its various endeavors. One goal was to have a tracking system that enables all the help desks to track and escalate calls to each other (for details see the May 1999 newsletter).

The overall goal is to provide a faster, more efficient service; this goal is well on the way.

New Telephone Service
Since telephone help is a critical component of our service, to help meet our goals, we have established a telephone service using the new 301 exchange.

1 help

Dial 612-301-4357
Now you can reach all the OIT help desks by dialing 1-help, that is 612-301-4357. You can also dial 1-help for bulletins about the status of systems you use and rely on. The bulletins will provide information about PeopleSoft, registration, voice mail, the modem pool and updates about servers, data or systems that may be temporarily unavailable.

612-301-4357

Dial 301-help and:

- ☐ Press 1 to reach ADCS (Academic and Distributed Computing Services) for help with your Internet account and modem or Ethernet connection, email, hardware or software.

- ☐ Press 2 to reach CCO (Central Computing Operations) for Enterprise help for PeopleSoft and mainframe systems.

- ☐ Press 3 to reach NTS (Networking and Telecommunications Services) for telephone, voicemail, networking or modem pool issues.

We have implemented this common interface to better serve the University community. In most cases you will just need to talk to us once. For those calls that require more research or specialized handling, we will have information from the Peregrine Service Center call tracking system. Eventually customers will also be able to use a web interface to track the progress of the "trouble ticket" that was generated by their phone call.

In addition to these changes, all of the OIT help desks have been expanding their service hours.

To learn more about the help and services that are available to the University community, read each group's short overview. If you want more details, visit their websites.

Phase I Complete

Adding the 1-help (612-301-4357) telephone number to the call tracking system we implemented earlier completes Phase I of improving OIT help and support for its diverse customers.

Future phases will include bringing other functional, application and policy help for Enterprise systems under the umbrella of 1-help. Watch for updates later this Fall.

Press 1

ADCS: Academic and Distributed Computing Services
➤ http://www.umn.edu/adcs

Help is a Telephone Call Away

Long before all students, staff and faculty were given a central email account and Internet access, the service that was simply called the Microcomputer HelpLine provided walk-in and phone support for those in the University community who used personal computers and workstations.

Although the specific needs of that community have changed and broadened, the categories remain the same, such as: hardware purchasing and upgrade questions; printers that refuse to print; questions about using popular software programs; and how to exchange "computerized" information with other computer users. The Academic and Distributed Computing Services (ADCS) HelpLine still answers these questions, although questions about email, Internet access, setting up modems, the workings of the World-Wide Web and requests to set or reset passwords have moved to the top of the list.

Learn to Do It Yourself or Hire Us

Our Technology Training Center offers a wide range of self-paced and instructor-led training options. Details are available from the training section of the ADCS website: http://www.umn.edu/adcs

ADCS also offers specialized help for departments with technical needs or problems that cannot be efficiently resolved with a phone call. For a fee ADCS consultants can develop or tweak your website, install your software, troubleshoot your printing problems, set up a database and hundreds of other tasks that information workers need. Contact Rent-a-Guru at 612-625-0100 or FAST (Field Administration Support Technologists) at 612-624-0505.

Press 2

CCO: Central Computing Operations
➤ http://www.umn.edu/cco

Central Computing Operations (CCO) provides secure infrastructure support for enterprise computer systems. The changes brought about by the Enterprise Systems Project mean the University is moving away from mainframe computing to a distributed client/server setup. CCO operators still run approximately 6500 batch jobs weekly.

Enterprise Help/Customer Assistance Center
This OIT HelpLine provides connectivity help for University of Minnesota enterprise systems, including Financial Systems, PeopleSoft Human Resources Management System and System Administration and University Libraries. If necessary, this help desk refers calls to other OIT units or other CCO groups.

Computer Operations
The servers and mainframe on which the University of Minnesota administrative and financial systems run must be available on a 7/24/365 schedule, that is, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Computer Operations houses the systems that comprise the Enterprise Data Center, and they work closely with Enterprise Help/CCO Customer Assistance Center to monitor on-line production and test computer systems. CCO's goal is to detect and fix on-line problems before customers begin to call the help desk.

Production and Technical Services
There are many layers to the enterprise infrastructure. Technical Services builds and supports the infrastructure on which University computer systems run. Production Services provides the production infrastructure for on-line and batch processes for University computer systems. Production and Technical services will be contacted if there are system-related problems with production, batch or test computer systems.

Data Security
CCO Data Security is responsible for the administration of access to the University's enterprise data and for the management of related processes, functions and systems. Data Security establishes and monitors usage of system IDs and passwords; they work closely with the University Data Custodians and with the Functional Security Administrators who, in most cases, grant access to the data itself.

Enterprise Help/CCO Customer Assistance Center is ready to assist customers with system access questions; when needed, they will escalate your issues to Data Security or to one of the Functional Security areas for resolution. Data access forms, procedures and information about the data contained within each system are also available from CCO Data Security's website. Enterprise Help/CCO Customer Assistance Center and Data Security work closely together to solve enterprise access issues.

Press 3

NTS: Networking and Telecommunication Services
➤ http://www.nts.umn.edu

Networking and Telecommunication Services (NTS) manages the University's telephone and data network, making NTS responsible for keeping the voice mail and modem pool working, maintaining the University's network backbone, and IP (internet protocol) addresses and domain name registration as well as distributing IP addresses and maintaining, installing and activating Ethernet data jacks.

Call the NTS Technical Assistance Center if you have telephone, voice mail, or networking issues or suspect there are problems with the modem pool itself. This summer the NTS Technical Assistance Center will be staffed 7 days a week, 24 hours a day and will continue that support 365 days a year.

■ Joann Conradson, Simin Hickman, Katherine McMullen-Serrault, Jacqueline Santopietro

Dial 1-help

Server Security

Ken Hanna, Office of Information Technology

It's a 2-Way Connection

One of the things we tend to forget about the Internet is that it is a two-way connection. If, like many people on the campus network, your departmental or collegiate server has access around the clock to the Internet, then the Internet has equal access to your server. The Internet is a great and useful (and even fun) tool that is changing everything in its path. But there are risks, and one of the biggest is security.

Unfortunately, it is a fact of life that there are always people — both from inside and outside the University — who can use that Internet connection to do bad things. Things like bombard your server with so many messages it gets overwhelmed — or steal your data — or deface your web pages — or insert subtle program changes into your software. And believe it or not, it can happen to servers just like the one sitting in your office or lab, and the mischief can come from just about anywhere in the world.

Bad Odds

Many people think that for once (unlike the casino) the odds are in their favor because they are just one of millions of computers in a sea called the Internet.

Scanning for Vulnerabilities

Things don't work that way, partly because of a technology called "scanning." Scanners are software that automate the job of looking for vulnerabilities. Just as other software shields you from complexity, these scanners have made searching for vulnerable computers literally child's play — or at least teenager's play.

We at the University get scanned often from the Internet and in response have begun a program to scan ourselves to identify our weaknesses before others do.

OIT Recommendations

The set up and maintenance of secure servers requires expertise and constant attention, since new vulnerabilities are discovered frequently, and they become common knowledge overnight.

To reduce the risk to the University community, the Office of Information Technology is identifying a set of recommendations for server configuration and operation as well as increasing the educational options available for technical staff. We are also identifying the inventory of servers, starting with the critical ones for each college, so that we can work with staff responsible for administering those servers to improve security.

More specific information will be provided to those involved.

What Can You Do?

One of the most important parts of improving security is awareness, and this is something that everyone can participate in.

☐ Ask questions about security when purchasing software and hardware, such as who will maintain security over the life of the system.

☐ Identify responsibility for server and desktop security.

☐ Identify your most valuable information assets and biggest liabilities and plan accordingly.

☐ Join the campus mailing lists and attend related meetings; this is especially important for staff who are responsible for a unit's security and networking issues.

For signup and information on the NetPeople monthly meetings or phone numbers for questions, see the following website for University LAN administrators: http://www.nts.umn.edu/ula /geninfo.html

http://www.nts.umn.edu/ula/geninfo.html

ResNet

A Student Focused Service

Connecting Resident Hall Students to the Internet

In response to the increasing number of students bringing computers to campus and demand for computing capabilities, Housing & Residential Life (HRL) began wiring residence halls with Ethernet in 1996. Frontier, Territorial and Wilkins were the first three halls wired. Since then all other halls have been wired: Centennial and Middlebrook in 1997; Comstock and Bailey in 1998; Pioneer, Sanford, the newly constructed wing of Territorial and University Village (a new apartment complex) in 1999.

Getting Students On-line

Getting students on-line and using the Ethernet service is more than providing an Ethernet jack. In 1996, HRL along with Academic and Distributed Computing Services (ADCS), Computer Repair Services (CRS), Bookstores Computer Store (UBSCS) and Networking and Telecommunications Services (NTS) made arrangements to provide convenient access to University computer resources. That was the beginning of the ResNet program.

This program, which is primarily administered over the web, allows students to subscribe to the service as soon as they receive their housing contract. Based on surveys and information gathered from ADCS HelpLine trouble tickets, many improvements have been made to the ResNet program. Information about the program is available at: http://www.resnet.umn.edu

This year, the fourth year of the program students:

1. **Subscribe**
   Students sign-up for the ResNet program over the web. This subscription system provides them with essential networking information such as IP number, subnet mask and gateway.

2. **Set-up**
   Getting a computer ready for the Ethernet can be intimidating for some students, others prefer to do it themselves. For students who need help, the ResNet program offers software installation as part of the Housing & Residential Life room contract.

   Academic and Distributed Computing Services staff are available by appointment to install, configure and troubleshoot the Internet Toolkit. Computer Repair Services offers Ethernet adapter installation at a reduced rate. This "room-service" is arranged by an appointment scheduled through the ADCS HelpLine. Another option is to purchase a "ResNet Ready" computer from the University Bookstore's Computer Store.

Getting students on-line and using Ethernet is more than providing an Ethernet jack.

3. **Troubleshoot**

   Students having problems with their computer receive consultative troubleshooting help from the ADCS HelpLine.

   Problems that can't be resolved over the phone and are Ethernet related are escalated; a trouble ticket is created in the ResNet database; an appointment(s) is set up; and staff from the appropriate OIT department (ADCS, CRS or NTS) are dispatched.

Participation

The numbers of students using Ethernet has increased as more halls have become wired and more students bring computers to campus.

The bar graph (Figure 1) shows the participation numbers for October of each year.

College Students and Computing

Student Monitor, which has studied the college student market, published some interesting findings in the Computing/Internet section of their website: http://www.smcinc.com/monitor

☐ "Students report nearly half the time they spend in a typical week performing various computing tasks are for school-related work (with less than 10% of their time spent playing games). The balance of time students spend is allocated among sending and receiving e-mail, job-related activities and surfing the www."

☐ "Among the www sites visited most commonly by students are ESPN Sports Zone, CNN, The New York Times, MSNBC, CBS Sportsline and The Wall Street Journal."

These findings are from the Executive Summary of a 1997 report that's available from the Student Monitor's website.

Customer Satisfaction

Many factors have been responsible for the increases in student satisfaction and the use of the service.

Progressing from the initial system of manual subscription and scheduling to developing and using the ResNet web page (developed Fall of 1998) is the biggest improvement. From this page students can subscribe, follow progress on trouble tickets, use on-line instructions and troubleshooting guides, learn how to subscribe for subsequent academic years and much more.

Providing information packets via U.S. mail, a subscription station at New Student Orientation, Welcome Week programs and information on the web have all been factors in the success of the ResNet program. Other factors include the affordability of computers and Ethernet adapters.
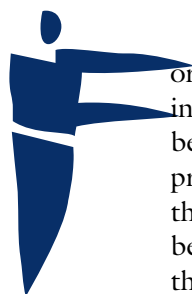
▬ Simin Hickman, Academic and Distributed Computing Services and Jill Froehlich, Housing & Residential Life

Figure 1: Participation

Number of ResNet Subscribers

October
1996 · 1997 · 1998 · 1999
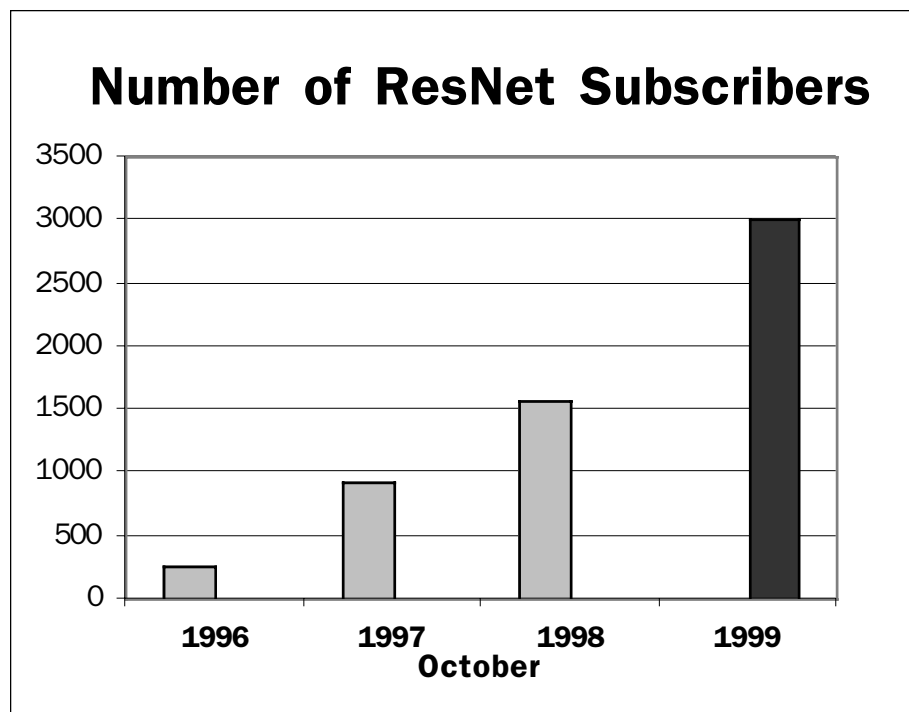
Orientation, A Fall Ritual

This Year We're Helping More Students in Less Time

For many years Academic and Distributing Computing Services staff have been a part of the Fall orientation programs for new students. During the 1992 orientation program we began providing information about the newly created campus-wide electronic mail initiative. Since that time many students, their parents, faculty and staff have become dependent on the anytime, anywhere convenience of email and Internet access.

Orientation 1999

Each year we have refined our orientation sessions as the students and the resources the University offers have changed. We are prepared to help the computer novice as well as those who already have access to a computer and the Internet through their home or school.

As a part of the new student orientation program, our goal is to: introduce students to the Internet services available on campus; make sure their accounts are set up and ready to use; and teach them how to use the Internet and send and receive email before the first day of school. To help meet this goal, we offer hands-on Internet/email training for up to 50 students per day.

Every day of the Information Fair we also have consultants at Coffman Union to answer technical questions, initiate new accounts and help students subscribe for ResNet Service in the Residential Halls.

Over 5,000 accounts were initiated during last year's New Student Orientation. This year we expect to initiate many more. During the June 15 to July 15, 1999 orientation we initiated over 6,000 accounts; and we will assist more students in late August and early September when the remaining students attend orientation. This service is in addition to the Welcome CD kit that was sent to all incoming freshmen and graduate students.

Welcome CD Kit

In 1998 the University sent out the first Internet Welcome Kit to all incoming freshman, a project championed by President Mark Yudof and put together by Academic and Distributed Computing Services.

The kit contains two CDs. One CD introduces the students to life on campus and the other provides the software needed to access the Internet services provided by the University of Minnesota. This CD Welcome Kit was so popular that one was also created for Graduate and Professional students this year. Visit the kit's website for more detailed information: http://www.umn.edu/welcome5

In 1999 the Welcome CD was sent to 8500 incoming freshmen and transfer students.

Hands-on Training in Student Computing Facility

We provide 1.5 hours of hands-on training for those students, and their parents, who sign up for this option. The training takes place in the Lind Hall Student Computer Facility, giving students a feel for the speed of Internet access with an Ethernet connection and a taste of the computer resources that are available to them on campus. We work with 50 students at a time and conduct 8 sessions a week (two sessions a day, Monday through Thursday).

Students also learn about the other Student Computer Facilities that they can use on campus.

Related Articles

■ August 1998 OIT newsletter
  ● Welcome to the University! Here's Your Internet Kit ● `http://www.umn.edu/oit/ newsletter/0898-itn/welcome_cd.html`

■ September 1992 CIS newsletter
  ● Campus-wide E-mail Project ● `gopher:// spinaltap.micro.umn.edu:70/00/cisnews /92/Sep/Campus-wide E-mail Project`

■ Simin Hickman, Academic and Distributed Computing Services

Faculty Get Free or Reduced-Price Multimedia Software

So, you're a Professor and you want to create an instructional website or CD-ROM on your own desktop computer? Well, you'll need software. Last month it might have cost you or your department hundreds of dollars to purchase at least one authoring and one graphics program and days to choose from the many possibilities, then buy and install your choices.

The cost this month: as little as $0 and a lot less time, thanks to the Faculty TEL Kit.

Faculty TEL Kit

In Fall 1998, the Twin Cities TEL (Technology Enhanced Learning) Strategic Planning Team determined that faculty urgently needed a common set of software to help them develop TEL projects. In response, staff from Academic and Distributed Computing Services (ADCS) and the Digital Media Center (DMC) developed the Faculty TEL Kit with the support of the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. Work began in March 1999 and took just five months.

The Faculty TEL Kit is a CD-ROM, website and collection of 21 pieces of multimedia development software (some of which are included on the CD) designed to help faculty members enhance learning with technology. On August 10, 1999, the CD was sent to all 2,900 Twin Cities campus faculty along with an introductory letter from President Yudof and print materials describing the campus computer support services available to help them use the kit.

CD-ROM

The CD contains both information on how to enhance learning with technology and many of the software programs:

- examples of effective uses of technology in an educational setting
- descriptions of the 21 software programs available to Twin Cities faculty
- nine software programs that can be installed directly from the CD along with instructions on how to obtain the other programs

- an introduction to the instructional CD and website development processes
- direct links to software manufacturers and other websites containing multimedia development information

Website

The website is an extension of the information provided on the CD and includes the following:

- grids comparing the software so faculty can see which meet their needs
- instructions on how to obtain the software not on the CD
- information about campus technical support, training and consultation services that can help faculty use the CD and software
- profiles of instructional projects developed at the University
- templates instructors can use to create course materials with the software
- tutorials describing how to develop course materials with the software

The website's address is: http://www.umn.edu/dmc/initiatives/telkit

Software

With the software provided, faculty can create the following types of instructional materials:

- graphics
- animations
- audio and video clips
- interactive course websites with quizzes, chat tools, bulletin boards and more
- interactive instructional materials published on CD-ROMs

Distribution Process

As a result of distribution restrictions imposed by software vendors and administrative requirements, the Faculty TEL Kit software tools, called Faculty Tools, are being distributed through the four venues listed in Table 2 to qualified recipients.

Faculty TEL Kit Info Sessions
12:15 pm to 1:30 pm

ADCS and DMC will hold brown bag information sessions about the Technology Enhanced Learning Kit CD that was recently mailed to Twin Cities campus faculty. No registration is required for these 12:15 pm to 1:30 pm sessions. Refreshments will be provided.

☐ September 15, 21, 22, 23 in 140 Nolte Center, East Bank
☐ September 22 in Minnesota Commons Room, First Floor, St Paul Student Center.

Questions? Contact the DMC at dmc@boombox.micro.umn.edu or 612-625-5055.

Qualified recipients are individuals on the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities payroll who hold faculty-ranked positions in the following classifications:

- 9410 Regents Professor
- 9401 Professor
- 9402 Associate Professor
- 9403 Assistant Professor
- 9404 Instructor

Teaching assistants and University employees who are not classified within the faculty ranks may purchase the Faculty Tools — at the cost that the University pays for the software — for use in course development and for instructional purposes at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

To find out where you can obtain a particular piece of software, see Table 2. The distribution venues are also discussed below.

Distribution Venues for the Faculty TEL Kit CD

1. **Kit: Faculty TEL Kit CD**
   The CD and an information packet was sent to all qualified Twin Cities campus faculty on August 10. Qualified faculty who did not receive a CD can arrange to get one. Table 1 has information about obtaining the toolkit. Table 2 has information about obtaining particular software.

2. **Academic and Distributed Computing Services**
   Some of the faculty tools must be ordered from ADCS. Many are free to qualified recipients. Several particularly expensive packages (including Macromedia Authorware and Macromedia Director) are available at greatly reduced prices.

   Qualified recipients can obtain these tools by submitting completed *Faculty Tools Agreement* forms signed by their department heads. The forms must be sent to Academic and Distributed Computing Services — 190 Shepherd Labs — fax 612-625-6817. ADCS staff will contact recipients when their orders are ready.

   Faculty Tools Agreement forms are available at the following locations:

   ☐ Faculty TEL Kit website:
   http://www.umn.edu/dmc/initiatives/telkit/agreement.pdf
   ☐ ADCS administrative offices: see Table 1
   ☐ DMC in 67 Norris Hall: see Table 1

   Only one copy of each tool can be distributed to an individual, and each tool is made available based upon the course for which it will be used. For more information, call the ADCS administrative offices at 612-625-1300.

3. **Web**

   WebCT is a comprehensive course management system available on the World-Wide Web (WWW). (The University of Minnesota's system is hosted on an ADCS server.)

   To access the system, faculty members must obtain an account. WebCT accounts are offered free of charge from ADCS and the DMC to all faculty members to use for instructional purposes; accounts include support services.

   To find out more about WebCT training, design resources and support, visit the University of Minnesota WebCT site at: http://webct.umn.edu

   To obtain an account, send email to: webct@umn.edu

4. **DMC: Digital Media Center**

   Most of the faculty tools are available for faculty and their assistants to use in the DMC Development Suite in 67 Norris Hall. Due to hardware and licensing constraints, Adobe Premiere, Macromedia Sound Edit 16, Microsoft PowerPoint and Sonic Foundry Sound Forge XP are available for use in the DMC only.

   The suite is staffed with attendants who can help qualified recipients use all 21 tools. DMC consultants are also available to help faculty plan, design, create, implement and evaluate instructional multimedia projects.

   The Development Suite is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, call 612-625-5055.

More Information

For more information about the kit, contact the Digital Media Center in 67 Norris Hall at 612-625-5055, via email at <dmc@boombox.micro.umn.edu>, or see the Faculty TEL Kit website at <http://www.umn.edu/dmc/initiatives/telkit>.

If you need help installing or using the CD or software, contact the DMC or the ADCS helpline at the new 1-help number: 612-301-4357.

■ Chris Goodland, Digital Media Center

Table 1: How to Obtain the Faculty TEL Kit CD and Software

1. Request a CD from the DMC or the ADCS administrative office at the locations listed below.

2. To obtain the additional software from ADCS, request a *Faculty Tools Agreement* form from the DMC or ADCS locations listed below.

   A PDF version of the form is also available on-line. Download it from: http://www.umn.edu/dmc/initiatives/telkit/agreement.pdf

   Fax, mail or bring the form to the ADCS administrative office. ADCS staff will contact you when your order is ready. You may request that the CD be sent to you by campus mail or you may pick it up from the ADCS administrative office.

   Please allow one day to process forms.

   ▼

☐ **ADCS Administrative Office, East Bank:**
Academic & Distributed Computing Services
University of Minnesota
190 Shepherd Laboratories
100 Union Street S.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55455

   • Voice: 612-625-1300
   • Fax: 612-625-6817
   • Email: office@tc.umn.edu

☐ **DMC:**
Digital Media Center
67 Norris Hall, East Bank

   • Voice: 612-625-5055
   • Email: dmc@boombox.micro.umn.edu

Table 2: Faculty TEL Kit CD Software, Descriptions and Distribution Venues

Software	Description	Kit	ADCS	Web	DMC
Acrobat Reader	Software required to read Acrobat PDF files.	Free			●
Adobe Acrobat 4	Software to produce Portable Document Format (PDF) files.		Free♦		●
Adobe PhotoShop 5	Professional quality digital image editing package		Free♦		●
Adobe Premiere 5.1	Professional digital video capture and editing package.				●
Apple QuickTime 4.0	All-in-one digital video editing, compression and player application.	Free			●
Avid Technology Avid Cinema	Entry-level digital video capture and editing package.		Free♦		
CBT Systems TechEdVantage for Windows	Interactive courseware that teaches recipients how to use several software applications.		Free♦		
Fetch 3.03 for Macs	File transfer protocol (FTP) client used to transfer files to a central server.	Free			●
Macromedia Authorware	Professional-quality procedural multimedia authoring system.		♣		●
Macromedia Director 7.0	Professional-quality time-based multimedia authoring system.		♣		●
Macromedia Dreamweaver 2.0	Popular WYSIWYG ('what-you-see-is-what-you-get') HTML editor.	Trial ver.	Free♦		●
Macromedia Fireworks 2.0	Program designed specifically for developing images to be delivered via the web or CD-ROM.		Free♦		●
Macromedia Flash 3.0	Animation package.	Trial ver.			
Macromedia Shockwave 7 and Flash 4 players	Shockwave and Flash players enable you to access Shockwave- and Flash-enhanced sites on the Internet.	Free			
Macromedia Sound Edit16 2.07 for Mac	Digital audio capture and editing package.				●
Microsoft Media Player	Software enables you to access files embedded in video- and audio-enhanced Internet sites.	Free			
Microsoft PowerPoint 98	Popular presentation-development package included with the Microsoft Office Suite.				●
Netscape Communicator 4.6	Popular, full-featured World-Wide Web browser.	Free			
Sonic Foundry Sound Forge XP 4 for Windows	Digital audio capture and editing package.				●
WebCT 1.6 For more info see: webct.oit.umn.edu	Web-based course-development application provides document publishing, communication, assessment and course management systems.		Free♦	Yes	
WS-FTP32 for Windows	File transfer protocol (FTP) client used to transfer files to a central server.	Free			●

♦ Free of charge to qualified faculty.
♣ Available at a greatly reduced price to approved faculty members.
● The Digital Media Center provides access in their Development Suite.

WebCT, Course Materials and You

http://webct.umn.edu

Academic and Distributed Computing Services (ADCS) and the Digital Media Center proudly announce that we now offer access to the WebCT web-based course development environment.

What is WebCT?

WebCT is a web-based course authoring and presentation tool. WebCT boasts an array of publishing, communication and course management functions, including:

- a document publishing system
- a glossary builder
- a quiz generator
- several class discussion tools, including a threaded discussion list and synchronous chat tool
- a system for creating secure workspaces for student group work and presentations
- a system for managing class lists and student grades

Despite this wealth of features, WebCT requires no programming expertise.

Cross-platform

Because WebCT is entirely web-delivered, it is cross-platform and available on any Macintosh or Windows PC with an Internet connection and a Netscape 3.0+ or Internet Explorer 4.0+ browser. WebCT designers should be familiar with World-Wide Web and HTML concepts.

Download Class Lists

As an improvement to the standard WebCT application, ADCS/JaWS programmers have added a special feature to existing WebCT code to allow instructors to download class lists from the Office of the Registrar, enabling students to use their University of Minnesota Internet IDs and passwords to access University WebCT courses. (Those are the same identifiers students use to dial into the modem pool, access LUMINA and to register for Fall 1999 classes.)

How do I sign up for an account?

We offer two account types: (1) a training or trial account that enables you to evaluate WebCT before you commit to using it in a class and (2) an active course account.

To sign up send email to <webct@umn.edu>; please include your name, email address, telephone number and the type of account you'd like. You will receive a username and password within 48 hours, along with instructions on how to get started. Graduate teaching assistants and staff should include the name of a sponsoring faculty member.

How much does an account cost?

WebCT accounts and support are sponsored by ADCS and the Digital Media Center and are provided at no cost to all University of Minnesota faculty, as well as to instructional staff whose primary responsibility is teaching and to teaching assistants (with faculty sponsorship).

Is training and support available?

There are WebCT training, support, design and consulting resources available through Academic and Distributed Computing Services and the Digital Media Center.

Is there a ClassWeb to WebCT converter?

JaWS programmers are working on a ClassWeb to WebCT converter. A demo version of the converter is available; the final version will automate more of the conversion. If you'd like to be part of the test group, send email to: webct@umn.edu

For information about WebCT resources send email to <webct@umn.edu> or visit the WebCT website: http://webct.umn.edu

■ Chris Scruton, Digital Media Center, Jenny Blaine, Academic and Distributed Computing Services

Information Management Systems

Susan Grotevant, IMS

nformation Management Systems is designed primarily to meet the diverse needs of university faculty and staff who need "view only" access to University operating data, both from legacy systems and the new PeopleSoft Human Resources and Student Administration Systems.

IMS User Services are designed to help users:
- Support management decisions
- Integrate information
- Determine management reporting needs
- Obtain timely information
- Monitor transactions
- Measure activities and progress
- Maximize resources
- Manage human resources
- Design business processes
- Forecast and plan
- Translate management information into management strategies

Access

IMS is founded on the principle that one of the most effective strategies for reshaping and revitalizing institutions and containing costs while improving service is to provide easy access to an information rich environment throughout the organization.

Recent changes in the University's data access policies permit all faculty and staff with a valid Internet (email) ID and password to log into the Management Reporting or IDEA Financial Reports using Internet Explorer or Netscape web browsers to view reports containing public data.

AR001

Access to data warehouse tables and confidential or private data maintained in the Data Warehouse and reports published in Management Reporting has also been further streamlined through use of the AR001, a universal access form available on the web: http://www.umnn.edu/cco/security/sec00032

IMS Mission

The mission of IMS is to provide information solutions to support improved decision-making and enhance educational and business processes and resource utilization.

Confidentiality

However, users are reminded that they are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of that information when it is transferred to hard-copy documents or removable media or when downloaded to an individual workstation or network.

Web Based Solutions

Management Reporting at <http://www.umreports .umn.edu> is one of several enterprise based Internet portals using web-based reporting tools to meet the business data needs of University staff and decision-makers. Users can access financial, human resource, student, instructional and asset information through predefined reports.

Management Reporting allows you to:
- View reports and save them to your desktop
- Create and schedule your own report views using prompts
- Use summary data for quick and easy analysis
- Drill through to detail reports
- Slice and dice information for quick and easy ad hoc reporting

- Bookmark the views you need, use multiple measures and graph your data
- Print the information you need on your local printer

IDEA

IDEA web access provides access to data for reporting and analysis. The data is extracted from the University's operational systems and reformatted to allow for easy combinations across systems: http://notes.ais.umn.edu

Data Warehouse

The Data Warehouse contains data from PeopleSoft Student Administration and Human Resources modules, the University Financial system (CUFS), Payroll, Space and Inventory systems. To access both public and private data in the warehouse, users must request access using the AR001 Access Request Form: http://notes.ais.umn.edu

IDEA provides users with web-based access to the Data Warehouse using either a "point and click" query building tool or a free form query window that allows users to write their own SQL query statements. Additional information that is also available at this site includes: data dictionaries describing the data available and how to access and use it; update schedules listing when the data is refreshed; and a list of frequently asked questions and answers.

New Data Warehouse services being implemented during FY00 include the ability to request recurring data extracts be made available to users on a scheduled basis. For more information on how and when this service will be implemented, contact the IMS user support line at 612-626-8812.

Financial Reports

IDEA also links faculty and staff to *Financial Reports on the Web*, which contains reports from the legacy financial and payroll systems, with special emphasis on the reporting and management needs of principal investigations, administrators and staff responsible for grant administration and the management of sponsored funds.

The Data Warehouse contains data from PeopleSoft Student Administration and Human Resources modules, the University Financial system, Payroll, Space and Inventory systems.

User Support Services

Desktop requirements vary depending on a user's particular environment, the tools and applications used and the report functionality needed.

Information Management Systems staff can help users determine the best configuration to meet their individual needs. Users experiencing problems with software installation, desktop configuration, accessing reports or business or data questions can call the IMS User Support line at (612) 626-8812 or forward questions by e-mail to: reports@umn.edu

Management Reporting also provides on-line help documents on how to download and configure web browsers and use individual reports.

Join a Listserv

Users seeking information about reporting tools, new functionality, tips, tricks, troubleshooting and up to the minute information on data issues and refresh schedules are encouraged to join the Management Reporting or IDEA Listserv. To join either Listserv:

- ☐ Send a message to
  `listserv@tc.umn.edu`
- ☐ Leave the subject line blank
- ☐ Type the following text in the first line of the body.

  ☐ For the Management Reporting Listserv:
  `subscribe reports-talk <your name>`
  for example: subscribe reports-talk Les Toil

  ☐ For the IDEA Listserv:
  `subscribe idea-l <your name>`
  for example: subscribe idea-l Les Toil

Current Contents: A Current Awareness and Scholarly Journal Database

Cindy Gruwell, University Libraries, http://www.lib.umn.edu
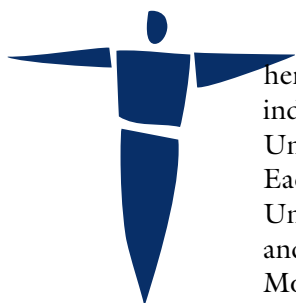
here are currently a plethora of indexes available throughout the University of Minnesota Libraries. Each can be accessed through the University Libraries' web page and/or within the various libraries. Most, although not all, specialize in a specific subject and allow you to research and locate materials from numerous resources. However, in this scholarly environment there is a great need to have at least one index that is current and able to host a wide variety of information.

The Current Contents® (CC) database furnishes just this type of service. By providing information from all seven of the Current Contents print editions (e.g., Agriculture; Arts & Humanities; Biology & Environmental Sciences; Clinical Medicine, Engineering; Computing & Technology; Chemical & Earth Sciences; and the Social & Behavioral Sciences), this index is able to answer a wide variety of research questions with very current information updated weekly with excellent resources. What follows is a brief description of the database, its features and attributes.

What's It All About?

Current Contents is a current awareness database that contains bibliographic citations and table of contents from a wide range of scholarly works. It includes journals, books, meeting abstracts, editorials, reviews and more. With 7500+ international journals at its disposal, CC is able to cover all disciplines of study with depth given to the aforementioned areas. In addition to well-documented citations, English language abstracts are available for many citations.

As a student, faculty or staff member associated with the University, you may access CC at the library or from your computer at your home or office. You may find it on the web listed under **Indexes** on the University of Minnesota Library homepage or within the BioMedSearch group of indexes on the Bio-Medical Library homepage. Current Contents is available in both telnet and web versions.

> http://www.lib.umn.edu
> http://www.biomed.lib.umn.edu
> telnet://biomed.lib.umn.edu

The telnet and web options give you the ability to choose an interface that is compatible with the hardware and software of your computer. Information for access to the Current Contents index can be found in any of the Universities Libraries or on the web at: http://www.lib.umn.edu/toolbar/comphelp.html

Both the telnet and web versions contain the same material; however, the web version is a bit simpler to use because of its point and click features. This includes, but is not limited to: links to table of contents from a specific issue of a given journal; links to a given author's works; and extensive on-line help screens. All of these features help to make your exploration and searching through the database as swift and as simple as possible.

You may also save searches and run them later, set searches to be delivered to your desktop as the database is updated, and use the "Ask a Librarian" feature which allows you to pose questions about a given search or questions pertaining to the database.

LUMINA is the on-line computer system of the University of Minnesota Libraries–Twin Cities and includes MNCAT, the catalog of most of the books and periodicals in the Libraries' collections. Access to MNCAT is available free of charge with no password. Due to contracts with commercial vendors, many of the other databases available through LUMINA may be accessed only by University of Minnesota faculty, staff and students; this restricted access also requires a campus e-mail username (ID) and password.
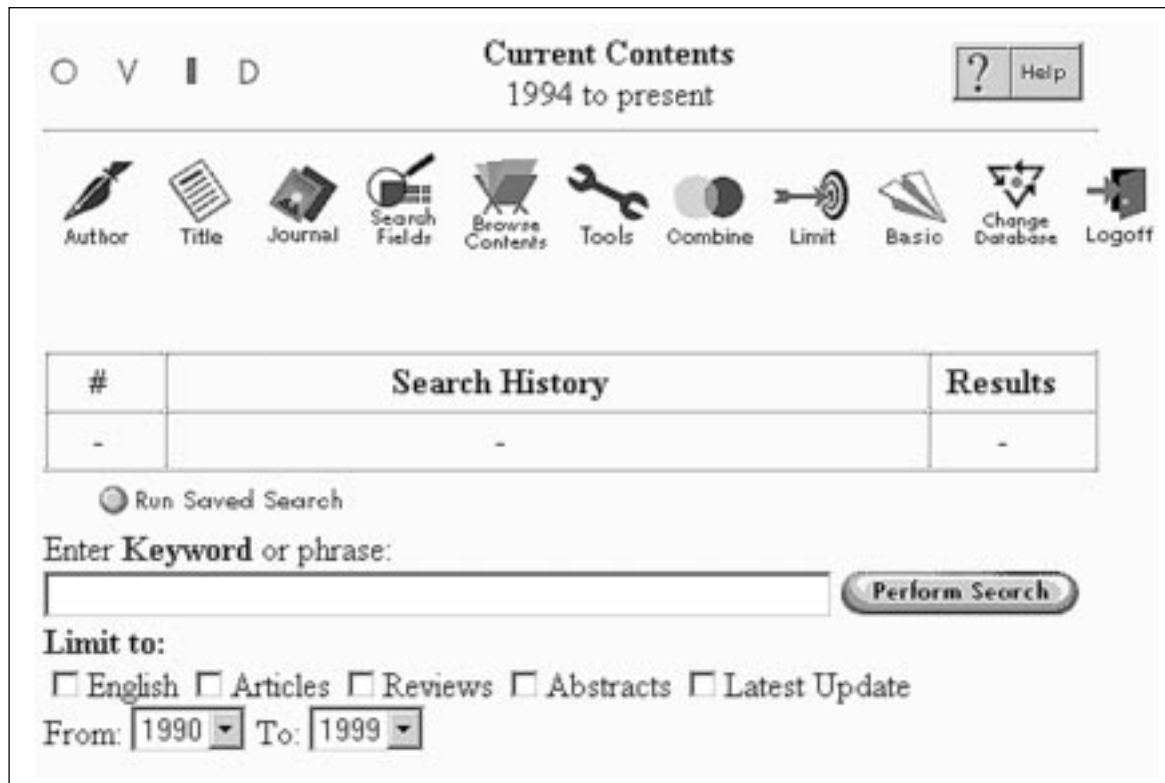
Search Attributes and Limits

Searching the Current Contents database can be done in either the basic or advanced modes. Since both are relatively easy to use, we recommend the advanced mode for its simple and yet diverse indexing features. (Figure 1) Both the web and telnet versions contain a significant amount of on-line help.

The major difference between the two interfaces is the keyboard dependence of the telnet version as opposed to the click and point features of the web.

As with most databases, searching primarily takes place using keyword or author functions. However, CC contains additional features which allow you to further clarify and identify relevant information for your research. By using a variety of limits you may control the citation response for edition subset (e.g. Agriculture, Clinical Medicine, Social & Behavioral Sciences), publication types and language.

In addition to the limits mentioned above, there are several specific fields which may be incorporated into your search. The use of these fields will yield unique results. (Figure 2) These fields include: abstracts, source items, accession numbers, abbreviated sources, authors, book ordering information, book editors, entry week, institution, page, series title and several others.

Advanced Search Features

In the Advanced Search Mode there are a number of attributes that can be used to further refine your search results by selecting and applying limits after completion of the search, apply limits (such as dates, publication type) to subsequent searches and save searches for future use.

For instance, you may build a series of basic and limited searches and then save your results for future use by saving the search temporarily, permanently or as an AutoAlert (Selective Dissemination of Information) Service. (Figure 3) This last service provides weekly updates containing the most current articles available for assigned subject areas.

Figure 2: Search With Specific Fields (Web Version)

Table of Contents

As you have seen, there are a number of features which allow for thorough searching of the CC database. However, there is one more attribute that you should not miss.

Like many other indexes, CC has the ability to allow you to search for information in a specific journal. This is a simple function that is achieved by prompting the database to search for a given term(s) within the designated journal. However, sometimes you may not be sure where a particular topic resides or you may want to browse a journal's content on your desktop much like you would do with a hardcopy. It is the ability to provide this type of information that gives CC its notoriety for current awareness.

By allowing you to search and display the Table of Contents for a given journal issue, you will be able to browse articles for a specific subject and/or view the latest content a particular journal has to offer. This is an excellent way to stay current with a subject that is of particular interest to you. (Figure 4)

In order to access this feature you go to the "Browse Contents" icon in the web version and type in the title of a journal. (In the telnet version, you press the control key and the letter "A" after which you would select TOC Fields, then journal name and enter the title of the journal. A few more steps, but you obtain the same results as the web version.)

Output Results

Hopefully, the end results of your searching will produce a number of citations in response to the search terms that you have used. Here, again, you are given a number of choices in response to how you may retrieve and retain your information. You have the choice of printing your results, saving to disk, or emailing them to yourself. These functions are found in the **Citation Manager** at the bottom of the results page when using the web interface and through the print function in the telnet version.

On the Horizon

This has been a brief overview of the Current Contents database. The many features that are currently in place allow for in-depth research into a broad range of academic disciplines.

New and innovative search techniques and displays are right around the corner. Some of the possibilities include current book contents, enhanced search tools,

Figure 3: Setup for Saved and SDI Service (Web Version)

modified publication year/type limits and new output options for bibliographic software. Additional updates in the overall interface will continue to take place on a regular basis.

The University Libraries will continue to provide the latest and best information they have available. With the surge in web access, we have been able to update and improve our databases and other information tools!

Please check our web page for "What's New" at the University Libraries.

■ Feel free to contact me with any questions: Cindy Gruwell, Assistant Librarian/Coordinator of Outreach, Bio-Medical Library, University of Minnesota Libraries, 303 Diehl Hall, 612-626-3936, henri013@umn.edu

Figure 4: TOC — Table of Contents (Web Version)

Oracle Licenses and Technical Support Fees

Special License Discounted for Departments

Through the Campus-Wide Application Specific License Agreement with Oracle, Oracle software licenses and technical support are now available to University of Minnesota departments, including all Coordinate Campuses, at "substantially" discounted prices.

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Discounts include 40% on software licenses and 30% on technical support fees if purchased with the software license. Orders $2,000 and above need to be placed on an RX (requisition) and submitted to Purchasing for processing.

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For more information on the products available at these discounts, contact

- Melanie Woiwode, Higher Education Account Manager (Oracle)
- 888-216-4027, extension 45934
- email: mwoiwode@us.oracle.com

■ Pete Bartz, Central Computing Operations

PeopleSoft Upgrade to 7.5

Completed on Schedule

The upgrade to PeopleSoft Version 7.5 was successfully completed on schedule on August 15, 1999.

More to Come

Work continues on adding financial aid and student financials functionality, converting historic student records and tuning the system. There is much work still to be done!

■ Jude Poseley, Enterprise Systems Project, http://www.umn.edu /enterprise/whatsnew.html

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▼ Help   Phone: Area Code = 612

Computer Misuse or Abuse (also see Procedure 2.8.1.1)
- Emergency Network Help Line 625-0006
- Non-emergency, e.g., spamming: abuse@tc.umn.edu

1 Help← 7/24/365, unless otherwise noted 301-4357
- CCO: central systems, Enterprise PeopleSoft . 301-4357
  - web: http://www.umn.edu/cco   *New*
  - by email: x-help@cafe.tc.umn.edu
- Internet, E-mail and
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  - call-in: 8 am–11 pm ← Monday–Thursday   *New*
  - call-in: 8 am–5 pm ← Friday
  - call-in: noon–5 pm ← Saturday
  - call-in: 5–11 pm ← Sunday
  - walk-in 152 Shepherd Labs: 8 am–5 pm, M–F
  - walk-in 50 Coffey Hall, St. Paul: 8 am–5 pm, M–F
  - walk-in 50 HHH, West Bank: 1-5 pm, M-F
  - web: http://www.umn.edu/adcs/
  - by e-mail for U of M: help@tc.umn.edu   *New*
- Password: Forgot it?... 301-4357
- NTS-TAC: Technical Assistance Center........... 301-4357
  - web: http://www.nts.umn.edu   *New*

▼ Dial-in Computer Access

Internet/SLIP: up to 56,000 bps if v.90 ...... 612 627-4250
Internet/SLIP *(in transition but still supported)* .. 852-5252
Internet/SLIP: ADI & ITE (with MKO) 623-0291
SecurID Access HiSpeed (v.32) 19200-N81 626-1061
    2400-N81(no parity/8 data bits/1 stop bit) 626-7770

▼ Web and Internet Addresses   Quick Guide

Information Technology Newsletter
http://www.umn.edu/oit/newsletter

Modem Usage (current activity on your account)
    http://www.nts.umn.edu/services/modemusage.html
Internet/E-mail account management/validation
    http://www.umn.edu/validate
LUMINA (Library) – http://www.lib.umn.edu
  via Telnet/TN3270: admin.ais.umn.edu
OIT – http://www.umn.edu/oit
UM Bookstores – http://www.bookstore.umn.edu
UM News Server – news.tc.umn.edu
UM Twin Cities – http://www.umn.edu/tc

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  - self-paced training and customized training
  - select "training" at: http://www.umn.edu/adcs
Computer Accommodation Program – voice/tty... 626-0365
Computer Repair Services/Engineering Serv....... 624-4800
Computer Store, Williamson Hall 625-3854
Digital Media Center 625-5055
Statistical Software Support:
    including SAS and SPSS 624-3330

Interim Associate Vice President and
Chief Information Officer, Steve Cawley 612 625-8855

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