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UM TECH BRIEF

Archive: February 1, 2006

No contacts? No links? No problem: send your inquiries and comments to oitbrief@umn.edu.

The **UM Tech Brief** is a resource for University of Minnesota technical support staff and department and unit decision makers.

Security and Internet Services

Security home

SPAM AND VIRUS STATS.
In January, 2006 central e-mail spam control blocked 17,554,478 messages. Anti-virus controls blocked an additional 86,179 messages.

BOTS: ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL PROSECUTION.
Those annoying "bot" viruses have real people ("bot herders") behind them, and investigators are working hard to track them down. After a recent successful investigation, a 20-year-old California man plead guilty to charges that he sold access to networks (botnets) of bot-compromised computers. See the Jan 23, 2006 Security Focus story at: http://www.securityfocus.com/news/11370.

MORE ABOUT THE THREAT OF BOTNETS.
The United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT) recently published a Cyber Security Tip to explain more about this threat. See the January 25, 2006 US-CERT security tip at: http://www.us-cert.gov/cas/tips/ST06-001.html.

COULD YOUR COMPUTER FILES BE DELETED ON FEB 3?
An estimated half-million computers are infected by Blackmal.E (or the Nyxem.E virus), an e-mail virus that will delete files on infected Window's systems on February 3. The virus is spread through e-mail as an attachment, infecting computers when it is opened. See the Jan 23, 2006 Security Focus brief at http://www.securityfocus.com/brief/113.

UPDATED YOUR ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE LATELY?
As always, it is important to keep your computer's antivirus software up-to-date and run it regularly. Antivirus software is available at: http://www.umn.edu/adcs/software/security/.

Network and Telecommunication Services

NTS home

NEW: NETWORK TRAFFIC REPORT.
Commodity Internet, Internet2 and coordinate campus network traffic reports are now available for those with x.500 access. Other reports are coming with more information about the University's network. To access the reports, click on the Network Reports logo for current and historical dashboard and graphical views for Wiltel, Level3, Internet2, MREN, Crookston, Duluth, Morris, and Rochester at http://www.umn.edu/nts.

COUNT DOWN TO GOPHER MESSAGING.
Gopher Messaging count down to a spring cutover is underway. Get excited! The new service, replacing the existing voice mail system, will be a state of the art technology much like the services now offered by wireless and cell phone providers.

GOPHER MESSAGING FEATURES.
Paging and fax will be standard for all users; text to voice is supported. (But not voice to text.) Use a web interface to set up personal features such as greetings for special schedules or notification preferences. Telephone access will work the same as before for setting up features and retrieving messages; but now all of this can also be done from the web.

TRANSITION PERIOD FOR GOPHER MESSAGING.
There will be a transition period for Gopher Messaging, allowing existing users to set up new mailboxes and e-mail settings and to record personal greetings. The old system will remain in service for a short period after the cutover so old messages can be accessed there. More information about access numbers will be available soon.

ATTEND A GOPHER MESSAGING INFO MEETING.
To introduce the new Gopher Messaging, NTS will hold information meetings this February in Coffman Union, the Presidents Room: Tues., Feb. 21, 12:30-2 pm; Thurs., Feb. 23, 10:30-noon; and Tues., Feb. 28, 1:30-3 pm. To reserve your place, e-mail go4msg@umn.edu.

Academic and Distributed Computing Services

ADCS home

NEED A MICROSOFT PRODUCT FOR YOUR OWN COMPUTER?
Now all current U faculty and staff can purchase one software product (per Microsoft family) at reduced prices through a new program. The offer includes Office Prof. Edition 2003; Office 2004 for Mac Prof. Edition (with Virtual PC); Windows XP Prof. Upgrade; Project 2003. You must use a special online order form. Login with your InternetID and password for descriptions and prices. More at http://www.umn.edu/ucs/Microsoft/personal-soft.php.

NEW: ALLOWED SENDERS AND DENIED SENDERS LISTS.
For better control over the e-mail that gets into your inbox, you can personalize Denied and Allowed Senders lists, adding entire domains or individual addresses. Since all e-mails are still scanned for viruses, an e-mail containing a known virus will be blocked even if it is on your Allowed Senders list. See FAQ at https://www.umn.edu/dirtools/etc/allowed-senders-faq.html.

NEW UMCAL CLIENTS, TOOLS, AND SERVER.
The UMCal server was upgraded on January 15. New clients and tools have also been released, but older versions continue to function with the new server software. Several new features are available in the new clients and synchronization tools. Get more information about the upgrade and new software at http://www.umn.edu/umcal/10g.

NEED ACCESS TO BREEZE?
Faculty, staff, and eligible graduate students have access to Adobe (Macromedia) Breeze. Breeze can be used to create content for the web and for web communication and collaboration. The latest version of Breeze will be available Feb. 6, 2006. More information on Breeze Services at http://breeze.umn.edu/.

UPDATE: WEBMAIL 3.
Based on your feedback we keep working on improving WebMail 3. Two examples are including an "Unstyled" theme for screen-readers (see Settings) and e-mails longer than one page will now print the entire message. We're also tuning the proxy service to resolve the login issues some users have experienced. See http://www.mail.umn.edu.

NEW COURSE, BREEZE 5 NARRATED PRESENTATIONS.
Sign up for Breeze 5 Publishing Narrated PowerPoint Presentations on the Web. Easily create dynamic, multimedia content for the web from your PowerPoint Presentations. In this course, you will use Breeze Presenter to add narration, embed quizzes and surveys, and upload your PowerPoint presentations onto the Breeze server. More at http://uttc.umn.edu.

NEW COURSE, BREEZE 5 WEB CONFERENCING & COLLABORATION.
Sign up Breeze 5 Small Group Web Conferencing and Collaboration. Online meetings and collaboration made easy. Learn to create and manage web conferences, including inviting participants, interacting using text chat and whiteboard tools, and gathering real-time feedback through polls. More at http://uttc.umn.edu.

NEARLY 1,400 WIRELESS ACCESS POINTS.
Did you know that the Twin Cities campus has nearly 1,400 registered Wireless Access Points that faculty, staff, and registered students can use to access the Internet? We're working on expanding this service to cover more areas where faculty, staff, and students work, collaborate, and carry out research. See https://www.umn.edu/wireless.

Digital Media Center

DMC home

MARCH 2 SEMINAR: COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY-BUILDING WITH MY.
Panelists will discuss how they have used the myU Portal to facilitate the strategic positioning process, to improve administrative efficiency, and to support the undergraduate community: MARCH 2, NOON-1:30 PM, 155 PETERS. The TEL seminar also will be broadcast online. See: http://dmc.umn.edu/series/spring06.shtml.

FEB 5, 12, 19, 26 TV SHOW: TECH TALK.
Watch the February episodes, Technology and Cars; Digital TV and DVR; Computer Breakdown; and RFID Tags: Sundays, 9-9:30 PM, TPT channel 17. See http://techtalk.umn.edu/schedule.

REMINDER: FEB 9, EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGISTS FORUM.
Attend the Feb 9 meeting. Learn how faculty members, staff members, and students can pursue personal web publishing using UThink and in collaboration through UMWiki, and how one instructor has used wikis to support collaboration in the classroom: FEB 9, 3-4:30 PM, 402 WALTER. See: http://dmc.umn.edu/etf/schedule05.shtml#3.

REMINDER: DUE FEB 16, TEL GRANT PROGRAM PROPOSALS.
Through this program, faculty members are awarded grants for developing, implementing, and evaluating technology-enhanced learning (TEL) experiences. A Call for Proposals for 2006 is at http://dmc.umn.edu/grants/. Applications are due FEB 16.