

Duke Office of Information Technology

Minutes

April 14, 2005

Members present : Owen Astrachan, Mike Baptiste, Pakis Bessias, John Board, Shailesh Chandrasekharan, Paul Conway, Tracy Futhey, Christopher Gelpi, Michael Gettes, Guven Guzeldere, Craig Henriquez, Billy Herndon, David Jamieson-Drake, David Jarmul, Kyle Johnson, Roger Loyd, George Oberlander, Lynne O'Brien, Mike Pickett, Rafael Rodriquez, Dalene Stangl, Molly Tamarkin, Robert Wolpert, Steve Woody

Guests: Cheryl Crupi, OIT-OWS; George Ward, OIT-ATS; Debbie Deyulia, OIT; Gayla Bonke, OIT; Ben Riseling, New & Communications

Start time : 4:05 p.m.

I. Review of Minutes and Announcements:

- ? Mike Pickett says we had great conversation about collaborating to get even better deals on hardware/software purchases than before. We met to talk about getting all of A&S together to try and get a better deal, talking about printers, PDAs, and other things, as well as getting groups of people across schools together to try and get better deals. We'll be calling a meeting over the next couple of weeks, and we will see what we can come up with.
- ? Lynne O'Brien says CIT's annual showcase is April 28 at the Bryan Center . For more information visit <http://cit.duke.edu/showcase/2005> .
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II. Oracle Calendar Demonstration - Michael Gettes

Michael Gettes says first he will provide a quick update as to what this demonstration is about. For two years we've had a calendaring prospective, broken down into two areas: group scheduling and event calendaring. Right now we are only looking at group scheduling. We're trying to understand the group calendaring world, and have narrowed it down to two vendors, MeetingMaker and Oracle. We would like to see if there is one calendaring project that could meet our institutional needs, or how we can get multiple players to operate together.

Within OIT we've combined two projects. One is the Oracle Calendaring pilot; at same time folks in the institution are saying they want support for mobile devices. So we have started MCES (Mobile Calendar and E-mail Services) to run a trial of Oracle Calendaring, and the overall project is looking at both of these problems. I'd like to quickly show you around Oracle. There are of course different capabilities of the program, and there is support for Windows, Mac, Linux, and Solaris.

[Michael demonstrates Oracle Calendar]

There is a Web-based client, and on the web the interface looks pretty much the same. When you use things on a Blackberry, Pocket PC or other mobile device, you get the device's interface. There is also an Oracle Outlook Connector to interface with Outlook. You get all the benefits of group scheduling and can bring up an environment that allows you to quickly see who is available at what times. The regular client and Web client can do group scheduling.

We're trying to conclude the trial by end of May so the committee can develop a recommendation. We're working with about 40 people within OIT, essentially managers and administrative assistants. They are still running their old systems (like Lotus Notes) parallel to the Oracle test.

George Oberlander asks how can you run parallel when looking at mobile devices?

Michael says in the trial you'd use your calendar off of Oracle for your mobile device and have to rely on the fact that both environments are being kept up-to-date. Now we want to bring other people outside of OIT, for the trial, mostly MeetingMaker people. So far we have spent no money on software licenses. Some has been spent on hardware, but if when the trial ends we decide not to use it for a calendaring system we could re-deploy it for other uses.

In the mobile device area we hit one problem in which a piece of software designed to interface with Oracle turned out to be not that great. There are other products out there, though. We've gotten the PDA and Pocket PC thing to work, but Blackberry is a little more difficult.

Molly Tamarkin says there are some conduits from Oracle to Outlook – are there other conduits like that?

Michael says there is talk of that, but there isn't a product yet.

Molly asks, has anyone tried importing all of their calendar?

Michael says we ended up having to write something in order to do so. Lotus Notes is a jail in respect to calendaring, so we had to export the information though what we wrote to get it into Oracle Calendar.

III. Content Management System Demonstration, News Service Pilot-Gayla Bonke, Ben Riseling

Gayla says Content XML is an off-the-shelf Content Management System (CMS) product, developed by a Duke grad by a company called Hannon Hill, based in Atlanta . We selected this product based on need identified by the ITAC CMS subcommittee. It was rated highest based on viability as enterprise project, using it out of the box.

Content XML has a single point of input that allows end users to create, update, and edit content on a Web site. It has multiple points of output. OWS assembled a team of 8 and began building the Duke News & Communications site on February 8, 2005 . The site has 1,750 news items and 3,756 pages, and the Web site is schedules to go live with the CMS Monday, April 18. We have also had “end user” training for those people who will be using the CMS to update the Web site on a regular basis.

Now we'd like to take you to the staging site, show you what we've done to create content. [Gayla and Ben demonstrate Content XML and the News & Communications site]

Ben Riseling says the homepage and most of the pages are totally automated, so you just enter your release, tag it to go somewhere, and the pages populate themselves. The keyword-based archive pages are available as an RSS feed. We have a list of all the email-based newsletters across Duke and a list of RSS feeds we'll be going live with, with a total of 29 available.

Our current site has one hand-coded archive page. Now you can find any of our content based on news type or based on keyword. The search results page shows the current month first, and you can go to a specific year and a specific month within that year.

[Gayla shows the backend of the CMS] Gayla says this is what the end-user would see when editing content. The way the filing of the story goes, News & Comm. gives everything a final name. You can do this from anywhere.

John Board asks can import a file directly from a word processing document?

Gayla says you have to copy and paste the text.

Ben says when you paste in from Word it does preserve the annoying HTML tags, but it has a "Clean HTML" command that fixes that.

Robert Wolpert asks is this something we could use on a department level for our own Web site?

Ben says yes, you can take websites into an editable form.

Mike Pickett asks what kind of control do you have for creating secure sites, for example, to restrict who can view a site?

Gayla says there is some security now. We've talked to Hannon Hill about this a little.

Cheryl Crupi says it isn't something we've done yet; this is a push service, it pushes them out to be hosted, so it would work the same way it would with any other static pages.

David Jarmul says we are really pleased with all the work Web Services has put in. The only people in News & Communications happier than Ben are the writer types. If I get a call in the middle of the night, I can put it on the site myself.

John Board asks how is it decided what the headline story is?

Ben says that is the one thing that is manual: that is our main editor's choice. We could make it automated, we just didn't choose to.

Tracy says the library has been getting familiar with the tool, Student Affairs over the next couple of months has a large body of work with their sites, and then we are looking at a more general release so anyone can use it.

Billy Herndon adds that phase one with Student Affairs is done, and they are already into phase two.

IV. Computer Recommendations for 2005 - Debbie Deyulia, Mike Pickett, George Ward

Debbie hands out the supported software information sheets; the front and back are the changes made to this list. If you have any comments, feel free to send them to me. Jim Rigney couldn't be here, though he did send the computer recommendations. It doesn't have pricing or a recommended IBM desktop, but other than that he thinks they are pretty close.

Looking at the recommendations, there are two issues we are dealing with: how keep computers from coming into the service center, and how a student can get hands-on software support for their computer.

Our personal computer recommendations for students are: 1) buy it through TAP, 2) buy a computer elsewhere and bring it with you, 3) bring the computer you already have, or 4) use the computer labs. We wanted to look at how Duke compares to other schools as far as what they offer students for discounts and repair. Princeton is the only school that supports all computers whether bought through the Princeton initiative or not, but if doesn't a computer does not meet minimum requirements they may not support it. The rest of the schools had either a fee or limits on what they support.

One of the options for support we talked about was to support TAP and non-TAP computers equally. This option would require us to increase the service center personnel by at least 2 people. This has large financial implications overall, as well as with peaks and valleys of the number of people needing service. Other options were to support TAP and non-TAP computers equally, but charge for the non-TAP; to only support TAP computers at the service center; and to support TAP only in the hands-on service center but also set up an outside vendor that would charge students to fix their computers, but make it easy.

Our recommendation is to only support TAP computers in teh OIT Service center, make TAP computers very Duke-ified, and set up an arrangement with an outside vendor to fix non-TAP computers.

The next steps are to finish making sure we keep computers from coming into the service center in the first place; get an agreement with outside vendor; look at limiting the number of TAP computers available; complete the "Duke image" to put on the TAP machines to be ready for the fall; and publicize this widely.

ike Pickett says we presented a plan for upgrading labs last fall, and there are no substantial changes to that plan. The specs for the type of machines are similar to what Debbie has suggested; the recommendation for the Linux machines will require some discussion.

V. Other Business

None.

End time : 5:06 p.m.

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