**ict**

INFORMATION + COMPUTING TECHNOLOGY

# 2009-2010 ANNUAL REPORT

## Summary of the Year

ICT accomplished all of its goals for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. Our top priority and most important accomplishment is the continued success in providing high quality, reliable service and support to our community. Major work for this year included the 64-Bit Windows 7 desktop rollout, security and computing support for the Fair Health project, the upgrade of the Maxwell Auditorium, and the completion of the web content management system migration. These accomplishments are detailed in subsequent sections.

ICT's technology initiatives this year include the deployment of new and innovative computing sustainability strategies, upgrade of our media services infrastructure, introduction of a low-cost, low-power desktop solution and the opening of a secure research room.

## Strengths and Accomplishments

Maxwell continues to maintain an up-to-date infrastructure. ICT maintains and supports over 40 servers (most of them virtual), over 50TB of storage and 83 network switches. This year we were able to downsize our infrastructure by virtualizing several servers and making better use of storage. As a result, 3 servers and 4 storage arrays were eliminated.

ICT worked with the central computing group to provide a low-cost, low-power desktop solution for users who don't require high-end computing needs. After several desktop computers from six companies were tested, the Dell Optiplex 380 was chosen. The 380 features a small desktop case, 64 bit compatibility and costs hundreds of dollars less than the higher end models. ICT deployed 125 new desktops this year, 100 of them were the low cost 380. Users with more intensive computing needs will continue to receive the higher end models. All models of computers, printers, monitors and scanners used in Maxwell are Energy Star compliant and have earned the highest rating of EPEAT Gold.

This year ICT introduced new technology that allows remote desktop computers to go in to sleep mode after one hour of inactivity. Previously, users who need to

remotely access their desktops could not benefit from the energy savings of hybrid sleep mode because the computer needed to stay powered on in order for remote desktop to function.  Now, a "magic packet" can be sent to the computer to wake it up from sleep so the users can remote in.  The site where users can perform this function is http://wakeme.maxwell.syr.edu.

All the electronic classrooms in Maxwell and Eggers were outfitted with a device that automatically turns off the multimedia projectors at midnight and 3:00 am.  This will save thousands of dollars in bulb costs and energy savings as well as extend the life of the projectors.

After a year of testing and preparation, ICT started the migration of approximately 600 computers in the Maxwell community to the 64-bit version of Windows 7; a project to be completed by August 2010.  So far, the rollout has been extremely smooth and without incident.

Additional training workshops have been added this year to aid in the professional development of the Maxwell community.  ICT has added Ektron and SharePoint to its curriculum that also includes Office, Windows 7 and Adobe Creative Suite.  There were over 200 attendees between all sessions this year of which 50% were unique faculty, staff and students.  Additionally, ICT continues to provide student support through general and department-based orientations, and during normal and extended help desk hours throughout the year.

ICT continues to support the Communications Office in the school's development of our primary web site (www.maxwell.syr.edu) using the Ektron Content Management System (CMS).  The current Maxwell School website includes 24 distinct sections and over 130 active site editors.  ICT's role in this collaboration has been the integration of the Communication Department's website page designs and feature requests into the Ektron framework.  Now that the migration is complete, ICT is working with the Communications Office to introduce new features that will help promote the mission of the Maxwell school and its departments.

ICT is collaborating with the central computing group, Information Technology and Services, and several other colleges on campus to develop a parallel computing environment for faculty research.  This initiative will allow faculty from across campus to take advantage of a central computing environment rather than the need to support multiple computing clusters across campus.

This year, the staff at ICT collaborated with Information and Technology Services to provide security and computing support to Maxwell faculty researchers and researches from other universities on the Fair Health Project.  Fair health is a nonprofit company formed to determine how much insurance companies nationwide must pay when patients see doctors who do not have contracts with the insurers

ICT continues to provide a wide variety of event production services to the Maxwell Community.  These services include live webcasting, video recording/archiving, podcasting, video streaming, audio and video conferencing, web conferencing, video production and editing, and DVD authoring.   Each is

tailored to the specific needs of our units/departments. ICT has supported over 286 multimedia events this year including such high profile events as the health care policy announcement by NYS Attorney General Andrew Cuomo and the national speech given by Director John Berry of the US Office of Personnel Management. Approximately 200 events took place in the Global Collaboratory this year alone.

Eggers room 021, which was formally ICT's test lab, has been converted to a computing facility where faculty and graduate students can utilize secure data for research grants.

Maxwell Auditorium received a major technology upgrade this year. This room now features additional large projector screens, a newly designed teaching station, an updated computer and microphone system and a document camera.

ICT maintains a stable, well-seasoned staff. By promoting teamwork, professional development and cross-training, ICT staff is able to provide both cutting edge technology and top-notch service to the Maxwell community.

There were no significant security incidents on our network this year. While ICT continues to be vigilant, there are no means, technologically or other otherwise, to guarantee the absolute security of our systems.

Other key accomplishments this year include:

• Maintained 99.99% uptime for Maxwell's network and Maxwell supported core servers

• Expanded our media services infrastructure to include high definition recording, audio and video editing, and distribution

• The ICT staff continues to maintain and support core services such as DHCP, DNS, WSUS, firewall, web services and over 80 network switches.

• A portable web conference cart has also been created for deployment in any room within Maxwell or Eggers Hall. This allows a meeting attendee to participate remotely via Skype.

• Worked with the dean's office to rollout the first of many OnBase projects in Maxwell.

• Upgraded the Geographic Information and Analysis lab in Eggers 014 with new computers and computer furniture.

## Challenges

*Centralizing Computing Resources* - ICT will continue to seek opportunities to save money and promote sustainability through resource centralization while maintaining the quality and integrity of the Maxwell computing environment. As the computing infrastructure housed in Maxwell (servers and storage) come to end of life, ICT will explore ways to leverage the central computing environment thereby minimizing the need to purchase and maintain equipment outside the Green Data Center.

*Staff recruitment and staff dependencies* – we presently have two individuals that maintain the core elements of our infrastructure. Either of these two staff members would be difficult to replace. ICT tries to reduce this threat by growing talent internally and by maintaining a network from which to pull talented staff. The centralization of core services will reduce this risk.

## Goals for 2010-2011

- *Systems Assurance/Resilience.* ICT will continue to strengthen our defense against viruses and worms, to educate our community on threats and how to protect themselves from them, and will strive to maintain our reliability of 99.99% uptime for our network and all production systems.

- *Windows 7 Migration.* Complete the migration from Windows Vista to Windows 7 desktops in the Maxwell School.

- *Student Focus Groups.* ICT will continue to host student focus groups to explore how we can use technology to better serve the Maxwell student community.

- *Office 2010.* ICT is preparing for the migration from Office 2007 to Office 2010 later this summer.

- *High quality of service.* ICT will continue to maintain a superior quality of service to Maxwell faculty, staff, and students.

- *Faculty, Staff and Student Training and Orientation.* Training opportunities will continue to increase over the next academic year. ICT plans to expand its training sessions to include Office 2010, video editing and podcasting.

- *OnBase.* ICT will continue to leverage the OnBase framework by working with the departments in Maxwell to develop projects that will save paper and increase workflow.

- *Campus Technology Collaboration.* ICT continues to work collaboratively with Information Technology and Services, as well as other distributed IT support units on campus. ICT Staff members participate in several projects and committees on campus including research computing, Fair Health, security, identity management, OnBase, software packaging, Technical Leadership Committee, DSP committee, digital signage, , i-Tunes Podcasting sub-committee, sustainability, hardware and software purchasing, and the active directory technical team.

- *Classroom and Conference Room upgrades.* ICT will continue to upgrade the technology in the classrooms and conference rooms and look for opportunities to address classrooms that are currently lacking in technology.

- *Digital Signage.* ICT is participating in a new campus-wide digital signage solution that will offer more content opportunities, including emergency notification capabilities.

# 2009-2010 STATISTICS AND OPERATIONAL NOTES

## Service

ICT support staff processed more than 9075 electronic mail messages, telephone calls, and voice mail messages in addition to almost 1400 service related appointments with faculty staff and students in 2009-2010.

## Help Desk

The ICT Help Desk is the primary avenue for in-person assistance for Maxwell graduate students. A significant percentage of students coming to the Help Desk are seeking assistance with questions related to their laptop. These requests are consistently focused on wireless connectivity, data access and printing. ICT staff handled approximately 550 visits to the help desk, including over 275 students with laptop related issues. ICT continues to support the Macintosh community by providing tutorials and utilities that help automate the process of connecting Macintosh laptops to university resources.

## Advisory Committee

The role of the committee is to provide advice on a variety of technological and computing issues which assist in helping ICT to think about trade-offs between requests for new services and the support of existing ones; the development of policies, procedures, and standards; user interface and support issues; the planning and implementation process of migration to new systems; and the development of programs which contribute to the School's leadership in research and teaching. The committee also assists ICT by helping to keep the community informed about IT related issues and initiatives, facilitating relevant communication between ICT and those who use our computing system and by providing ICT with information about faculty, staff, and student concerns and ideas.

## Survey

In order to assess the level of satisfaction among the Maxwell community with the technology infrastructure, facilities, services and support provided by ICT, a biennial survey is distributed to the entire population of current Maxwell faculty, staff and graduate students.

## Student Focus Groups

ICT meets with the Maxwell student groups during the semster to demonstrate and promote the use of technology at Maxwell. This meeting also provides an opporunty to learn how ICT can best serve the students.

## TAP Program

The Technical Advisor Project program assigns one of the ICT staff members to serve as a single point of contact for a defined faculty project. Such project tasks include assistance with grant writing, hardware and software specification and purchasing, project planning, application support and multimedia support, to name a few.

## Mobile Teaching Carts

This years' increase is attributed to vigorous use in a few rooms despite the fact that we have decommissioned one of our MTCs last year.

| Percent of Year-to-Year Change | % (+/-) |
|---|---|
| From 2009 to 2010 | +134.36% |
| From 2008 to 2009 | -32.01% |
| From 2007 to 2008 | -37.52% |
| From 2006 to 2007 | +122.54% |
| From 2005 to 2006 | +111.68% |
| From 2004 to 2005 | +109.40% |
| From 2003 to 2004 | +145.75% |
| From 2002 to 2003 | +138.26% |
| From 2001 to 2002 | N/A |