University Technology Update

Dear Colleagues,

It has been just over two months since we announced the University Technology reorganization and I stepped into the role of Interim CIO. In that time, we have launched four important revitalization initiatives to enhance technology service to the community. I'd like to take a few minutes of your time to review the significant progress so far and what's still to come. Many of these changes are informed by the results of the Employee Technology Survey conducted this fall. We intend to issue a student oriented survey this spring, and both of these surveys will serve a vital role in our planning process going forward. I'd like to thank Gamin Bartle for leading the effort to administer this survey and Mike Richichi for writing the report, which you may read here.

As you read through the summaries of the work accomplished, they may strike you as different than a typical technology announcement. We are not pitching new tools that you can use with a lot of new features. That is deliberate. The four revitalization initiatives are focusing on the fundamental services that UT provides, reevaluating *How* and *Why* we deliver these services and not just *What* services we offer. The underlying motivation of each of these four initiatives is to either improve customer service or to eliminate unneeded complexity and reduce costs, freeing up resources for more important pursuits. Ensuring that the basic services are performing as effectively and efficiently as possible will put us in a better position to meet the evolving needs of Drew going forward.

So what is it that we have been doing for the past two months?

- **User Services Revitalization** - Starting January 26, we made the most significant change to our customer service model since the beginning of the computer initiative. Calls to the University Technology Service Center during business hours are now answered by members of the UT professional staff. Student assistants will continue to answer Service Center calls during evening and lunch hours and also serve as overflow operators for periods of unexpected high call volumes. By putting experienced staff on the front-line, we are able to resolve more incidents during the initial call. Full-time staff are also able to provide continuity and take a more active role in ensuring that an incident which requires additional research or engaging other areas of UT is resolved quickly and efficiently. If you haven't used the Service Center recently, I encourage you to do so. The number is 973-408-4357 (or **HELP** from your Drew phone). Read more about the User Services Revitalization here.

- **Computing Experience Revitalization** - UT's Operations team has been working to improve the most basic service any IT department provides, the computer on your desk. An important first milestone in this project has been to change the way your network drives work. By moving off of the Novell file servers to standard Windows servers, we are going to reduce software licensing costs and reduce complexity, but more importantly this change is a prerequisite for what will be coming later in the spring. We will be announcing new desktop management software for PCs which will automate keeping your computer healthy and up to date with patches and the current versions of Drew supported software. In addition, as more people rely upon the CloudPC service to access Windows-only Drew software from Macs and other devices, we have decided to invest in CloudPC and will be announcing a change to the more industry standard Citrix platform for CloudPC later this spring. Read more about the Computing Experience Revitalization here.

- **Infrastructure Revitalization** - UT is making a significant investment to bolster wireless network coverage in the student residence halls to meet current demand. This past week, based upon an engineer's site survey conducted in the Fall, we installed new wireless access points throughout the Tolley and Brown residence halls. This represents the highest density wireless deployment we have on-campus, with a dedicated access point installed per every two bedrooms. This deployment will serve as a model for other buildings on campus. Based upon a follow-up site survey, we will plan for wireless improvements in all student residence halls, with the bulk of the work to commence this Summer.

  The campus telephone system will also be revamped. Drew's current phone system was installed in the late 1980s, is costly to operate, and lacks some basic expected calling features like Caller ID for off-campus calls. This January, work began in the installation of a new telephone system. The basic equipment is on-site and being configured. The first roll out of new phones will be to the 22 Madison building, which is not currently on Drew's phone system. Read more about the Infrastructure Revitalization here.

- **Administrative Systems Revitalization** - The Enterprise Applications team has been meeting with the major users of Banner to set priorities for changes and new functionality in the coming months. An initial priority for this Revitalization project has been to focus on the Finance area, in particular budget manager reporting. Working with the Finance team, new processes have been developed for managing and reporting on restricted funds which will be rolled out in the coming months.

  In addition, UT has been able to acquire an easier to use web-based reporting tool which will supplement the existing Argos reports. Training for IBM Cognos for UT staff and a group of functional users was delivered in December and we are currently in the process of setting up a production installation of Cognos. Expect more information on Cognos in the coming months. Read more about the Administrative Systems Revitalization here.

I would like to acknowledge the dedicated and talented UT staff who have responded to the call for change with professionalism and skill. Thanks to their efforts, significant progress has been made in a very short time period and there is much more to come. I would also like to thank Mike Groener and President Baenninger for their support of these initiatives. I am eager to hear your feedback on this or any other technology related concerns. Please feel free to reach out to me directly at elarsson@drew.edu with your feedback.

Thanks!

-- Axel Larsson