NEARING COMPLETION WITH LIFECYCLE PROJECTS: NETWORK & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Enterprise Technology is nearing completion with two major network equipment lifecycle projects:

- Wireless access point installation is 97% complete (3,636 out of 3,759) across 160 buildings.
- Vulnerable switch installation is 96% complete (976 out of 1,020) across 162 buildings.
- Both projects will be substantially completed by 8/31/24, with the remaining cleanup to be completed in September.
- Wireless Access Point Lifecycle:
  - Support newer encryption technologies.
  - Improved Wi-Fi performance.
  - Support more user devices.
- Switch Lifecycle
  - Risk reduction is achieved by eliminating switches that can no longer be security patched.
- Vastly improved performance to enable teaching, learning and research:
  - Going from 100 Megabit to Gigabit or higher from the computer/end point to the switch
  - Going from 1/10 Gigabit to 10/25 Gigabit from the switch to the building router
  - Going from 10/40 Gigabit to 25/100 Gigabit from the building router to the core network
- Improved hardware reliability: older switches experience high failure rates and often fail intermittently.
- A significant reduction (61%) in the number of models of switches we need to support from 91 to 35. This lowers the complexity of operations and improves service.
- The university has a significant amount of deferred network equipment replacement resulting from decentralized funding and past lifecycle practices.
- The University Budget Council allocated three years of bridge funding to resolve this technical debt for campus units other than auxiliaries until a better long-term funding model could be established.
- Networking initially focused on two sets of equipment:
  - Aging wireless access points (WAP), "Cisco Aironet 2800 series WAPs."
  - Network switches that are so old that they can no longer be vulnerability patched. The Information Security Office (ISO) conducted a penetration test of devices representative of these building switches and found that they are a significant risk to campus and users and a compliance issue with UT Austin and UT System security policies.

SERVICE DESK FEEDBACK: CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES

The Service Desk Values Your Feedback: Each year, the Service Desk, along with our In-Person and ID Card Services, manages over 100,000 interactions. Serving the UT community is a complex task due to the wide range of services we provide and our federated structure. Often, customers reach out to us unsure of whom to contact. That's why one of our mottos is "no dead ends." We are committed to guiding you to the right support resources, even if we can't resolve the issue ourselves. Feedback plays a crucial role in ensuring we deliver exceptional service and connect you to the appropriate support groups. We gather feedback through various channels, including knowledge article comments, input from our support partners and internal staff, and survey responses. Each piece of feedback is carefully reviewed, and we take the necessary actions to enhance your experience. In the past year alone, we have processed over 700 pieces of feedback, leading to significant service improvements. We truly value your input and appreciate the opportunity to serve the campus community.

INCREASED AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY: TEACHING AND LEARNING TECH.

Increased availability and accessibility of the Simple Syllabus Tool: As part of a coordinated effort with the Office of Academic Technology and the Teaching and Learning Technology team to streamline and enhance the syllabus submission process for instructors and faculty, and in conjunction with the Canvas minimum-use policy, Simple Syllabus has been made available to the campus community for use. The tool, which provides an easily usable, standardized template to users, allows rapid production and submission of syllabi to meet departmental and administrative guidelines in a timely, efficient manner. After opening the tool to our campus community for the Fall 2024 term and performing faculty outreach, training and support for the tool, Simple Syllabus adoption has increased 259% for the Fall term compared to Spring, with 54 syllabi submitted for the SP24 term and 194 for Fall 2024.

CANVAS INTEGRATIONS FROM 7/01/24-8/29/24: TEACHING AND LEARNING TECHNOLOGY

Canvas Integrations from 7/01/24-8/29/24. Completed requests for integrations (received via Forms, Emails, Teams Chat and Service Now). 73 completed requests with 19 in progress. Each request has a different set of variables that must be reviewed prior to integrations are completed: ISO approval (TX-RAMP/Fed-RAMP/ISORA) and active contract (connecting vendor with college/school point of contact to get contract process going). By facilitating the process to vet and approve integrations into Canvas, we are taking the necessary steps to protect student data, lower the University's risk of exposing FERPA data, and expanding the academic technology ecosystem so that faculty needs are met. Since the pandemic, the usage of LTI apps has surged dramatically. Implementing a more structured process for vetting and approving these apps has significantly enhanced the experience for both faculty and our team.

GUEST AUTHENTICATION SSO: CAMPUS SOLUTIONS

Launch of Guest Authentication SSO service. Enhancing application access and security for UT guests, visitors, private industry partners, and research collaborators, significantly reducing the need for guest EIDs. Guest Authentication is a centralized authentication service suitable for use with low-risk web-based services and applications to allow access without requiring a UT EID. This service allows guests to access protected resources using their Apple ID, Google Account, Microsoft Account, or an account from an identity provider in the InCommon Federation. Additionally, existing UT EID holders can authenticate to resources protected by Guest Authentication through the Enterprise Authentication service. This significantly reduces the need for unnecessary Guest EIDs and streamlines access to University resources. The Guest Authentication SSO service improves user experience by providing a faster and more convenient login process through familiar social, education, or business Identity Providers. By reducing the creation of redundant University EIDs, the service lowers administrative overhead and minimizes potential security risks. The Texas Advanced Computing Center is configuring their user account creation flow to leverage existing account information from Guest Authentication's connected Identity Providers, delivering a streamlined user experience to their many computing services. HyFive, an application implemented by the Bureau of Economic Geology, uses Guest Authentication to enable private industry and research partners, such as those from companies like Shell, to The Alienware Longhorn Esports Arena, an early adopter, reported high user satisfaction and seamless integration, illustrating the potential for broader application across the University. The Guest Authentication SSO service was developed by the IAM team to address the challenges posed by traditional University authentication systems, which required external users to create and manage University-specific credentials. By allowing guests, visitors, private industry partners, and research collaborators to authenticate with their existing social accounts, the service reduces the burden of account management while maintaining high-security standards. Early adopters, such as the Texas Advanced Computing Center, the Bureau of Economic Geology, and The Alienware Longhorn Esports Arena have demonstrated success with this service, showcasing its broader impact potential for UT Austin.

https://iamservices.utexas.edu/resources/case-studies/alienware-longhorn-esports-arena-and-lounge/