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Volume 5 Number 5

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Dates to remember:

Scheduled maintenance slot

The next scheduled ICTS maintenance slot is set to take place on **Sunday, 17 August 2014** from 09:00 - 17:00. During this time, there will be no access to any ICT services. This includes IP telephony and the Campus Copy & Print Service.

Training

You already understand the basics of Microsoft Word and Excel, but would now like to use more advanced features. During our [Word Intermediate course](#) we will show you how to manage

UCT Upper data centre emergency power generator gets a new alternator

Last month, the **scheduled maintenance slot** was extended to two days in order to shut down both UCT data centres and perform routine and preventative maintenance and tests on electrical equipment. The data centre houses more than 500 physical and virtual servers, including data storage and ICTS' High Performance Computing equipment. The time extension was necessary to commission an additional Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) in the Upper Data Centre and to commission revamped electrical reticulation within the data centre. During this maintenance slot the diesel electric engineers found that there was a fault with the upper data centre's backup generator.



The backup generator kicks into gear whenever there is a power outage which affects the Data Centre to ensure that ICT services and systems are still available even though there is no utility electrical supply to the data centre.

To ensure that the university was not exposed to undue risk, such as in the case of any unplanned power outages, a new alternator was immediately ordered and a temporary generator was hired. This was then connected to special bypass switchgear previously installed for just such an eventuality.

Replacing the alternator was no easy task. It required a 50 ton crane to hoist it up over the top of the Computer Science Building, and then place it down on the staircase between this building and the John Day Zoology Building. Contractors then had to remove the faulty alternator - which weighs close to a ton - and a number of hard-to-reach bolts. All this had to be done in a very confined plant room. Once the alternator was loosened, it had to be pushed and pulled through narrow doorways and passages in the Computer Science building to the staircase where the crane could pick it up and place it on a truck.



The new alternator then needed to go through the same process in reverse to get it in place and ready for installation. After installation and all the necessary functional load tests, the generator was placed back in auto start mode - ready to kick in should we ever experience a power outage.

lists, customise tables, charts, styles and themes, modify pictures, create graphic elements and automate mail merges. The course takes place **12-15 August 2014** (09:00-12:00).

The [Excel Intermediate course](#) is scheduled for **18-21 August 2014** (13:30-16:30) and will focus on data calculation and advanced formulas, pivot tables and charts as well as how to organise worksheets and table data and insert graphic objects.

We've recently been inundated with requests to re-run our popular [Electronic Newsletter Design](#) course and so we've set a date for **22 August 2014** (09:00-12:00). During the course you will learn how to create a newsletter, set up a mailing list and how to test and send it out. We will also provide you with some handy hints and tips you can use when creating your newsletter.

eResearch Africa conference focuses on the needs of the 21st century researcher

More than 70 people from six countries gathered in Cape Town last year to attend the first eResearch Africa conference. Since then eResearch has become a top priority at a number of South Africa universities, including UCT, with new partnerships being formed and a wider array of services and resources being offered.

eResearch looks at how information and communications technologies help researchers to collect, manage, share, process, analyse, store, find, and re-use information. The conference is aimed at bringing together practitioners and researchers from diverse disciplines to share ideas and case studies of how eResearch is, and can be, used.

We would like to thank all Property & Services and ICTS staff who were involved during this process. We appreciate the effort that you put in to ensure that everything was done efficiently.



Recommendations on how to improve call quality when using a headset

ICTS monitors the quality of each telephone call that is made and received at UCT in order to ensure good service. Each call is either rated as good, fair, poor or unacceptable with most of the calls falling into the good or fair quality category.

On average, over half a million calls are made and received on campus of which less than 1% are rated as having bad call quality. While ICTS can control voice traffic on the UCT network, once it goes external the call quality could deteriorate due to congested cellular networks or the voice quality delivered by service providers.

Helpful tips to improve call quality

If you are going to use a headset, use one of these [ICTS-recommended headsets](#) which have built-in noise cancellation and also prevent voice distortion. This will help to block out background noises and will also improve the voice quality for both call participants.



Rather don't use the Microsoft Lync client to make calls on a laptop that is not connected to the UCT network.

Microsoft Imagine Academy now available to all UCT staff and students

Information Technology drives much of the work done today so it makes sense to increase your skill levels in this area - without necessarily becoming a geek! The Microsoft Imagine Academy was designed to bridge the gap between the education and business sectors by providing people with fundamental skill in using Microsoft applications that are commonly found in the workplace.



UCT recently subscribed to this [extensive online training library](#), which offers a range of basic to advanced Microsoft courses. There are also short video clips showing you how to use the [various Microsoft applications](#) such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote and Office 365. Once a course is completed, you will receive a certificate of completion which you can include on your CV.

Internet to flow like electricity by 2025

The Internet is set to become as integrated in our lives as electricity by 2025 - or at least that's what technology experts and builders believe. With the way technology is changing, people who currently don't have access to the Internet will be able to connect, share and gather information as easily as pressing a light switch.

Most of those surveyed by the Pew Research Centre's Internet Project from November 2013 to January 2014, believe that more good than bad can come from more people being able to access the Internet.

The theme for this year's conference is *Meeting the needs of the 21st century researcher*. Delegates interested in presenting a poster, presentation or workshop can select one of seven topics to talk on: big data; research data management; national research and education networks; collaboration; data storage; or computing and visualisation.

To submit your abstract, navigate to the [eResearch Africa](#) website and follow the [participation instructions](#). Those who are interested in attending the conference without presenting can complete the [online registration form](#).

The conference will take place 23-27 November at the University of Cape Town's Wilfred & Jules Kramer Law Building.

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Experts believe that the world could become a smaller place in that more global partnerships could be formed. They also predict a steady increase in online relationships, interviews and professional networking. One forecast even goes as far as suggesting that there will no longer be borders between countries as likeminded people start forming their "own nations".



Chief Economist for Google, Hal Varian, believes that developing people's skills will have a major influence. "The biggest impact on the world will be universal access to all human knowledge. The smartest person in the world currently could well be stuck behind a plow in India or China. Enabling that person - and the millions like him or her - will have a profound impact on the development of the human race."

There are however those who have their reservations about the Internet being more accessible to all. They believe that advanced technology will see a definite increase in cybercrime, terrorism, espionage and that privacy will be compromised.

One thing is for sure though, the Internet will continue to evolve and become a critical part of our lives. Only you can decide how this change will affect you.

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