

ICTS Annual Report 2010



ASAUDIT

Sakkie Janse van Rensburg, UCT's Executive Director: ICT was elected as the Chairman of ASAUDIT (Association of South African University Directors of Information Technology). He chaired a 3-day mini-conference at North-West University and will chair the Executive Committee's planning session later this month. Mr. Janse van Rensburg has also been invited to serve on the SANReN advisory forum at Meraka. A Memorandum of Agreement has been signed between ASAUDIT and its Australian equivalent CAUDIT.

Academic HODs

ICTS is pleased that 72% of academic HODs recently indicated that they are confident that ICTS can meet the IT challenges of the future.

Move to 7 Main Road

Thanks to extensive planning and preparation, the department's move to ICTS-on-Main took place over a two week period in June with little interruption to ICT services.

Web renewal / Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Project

The Enterprise Content Management (ECM) project will define and implement an enterprise-wide content management strategy and solution. Richard Higgs was appointed as the ECM project manager and took up his position on 15 September. At a recent PIC, he presented a high level project plan that contained detailed deliverables for the first two phases and information about who would lead the various workstreams. Members of the PIC have also undergone introductory training on ECM to ensure a consistent understanding of the concepts involved.

Email migration project

Having completed their investigations, the Email task team presented their findings and recommendations to UICTC. A proposal was drafted regarding the migration of staff and students to a cloud computing email and calendaring service. The email migration Project Implementation Committee approved the proposal and has made a recommendation to UICTC to move email to Microsoft's Live@Edu solution, starting with students in 2011. Meanwhile, GroupWise has been relatively stable this year, achieving an uptime of 98.5%.

Flexible learning through ICTs / student notebook programme project

At the Vice-Chancellor's request, ICTS started investigating the possibility of launching a notebook programme for UCT students. A comprehensive project proposal was developed by a working group of representatives from ICTS, Finance, CET, EBE and Science led by Professor Beall. The proposal was presented to the University ICT Committee (UICTC) and to the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) and was received favourably by both groups. Application has been made to the VC's Strategic Fund, with a proposal that the project be phased in over a three-year period.

Project Management Office

ICTS has established a Project Management Office which will be used to manage large institution-wide ICT-related projects. The PMO uses proven project management methodologies and on-line tools.

ICTS restructure

In early 2010, the ICTS management team, in consultation with staff, developed a possible new organisational structure that would position ICTS to effectively support and execute the emerging ICT strategy. In recognition of budgetary constraints, ICTS has decided to focus initially on restructuring the ACS division only and to move towards a new ICTS structure over the next 3 to 5 years.

Risk Management

The external audit report, which noted good progress on the part of ICTS, was tabled to the UCT Audit Committee by Ernst & Young. The Chair responded that the efforts being made by ICTS and E&Y gave comfort to the committee. An IT risk management framework, which will also consider issues of governance, is being developed by ICTS with E&Y.

IT Service Management assessment

ICTS took part in the first SA-based survey for ICT in Higher Education. The purpose of this extensive assessment is to identify where each institution stands with regards to IT Service Management - as an institution; compared to other institutions; and compared to Industry.

IPD review

2011 has been earmarked as the year ICTS will undergo an official departmental review. In preparation, ICTS has launched a national benchmarking initiative and has identified external participants for the review.

Research support

- UCT has been established as the SA hub for research grid member organisations from Europe and Africa.
- Two ICTS staff members attended a month long training session in Sicily to equip them to provide support for UCT researchers for high-performance computing.
- ICTS succeeded in porting some applications to HPC/Grid format for a number of South African researchers.
- ICTS is working closely with Prof Ed Rybicki to determine what ICT support researchers at UCT need.

Administrative systems and support

- The Online Application facility was launched in mid-April. Work continues on streamlining the application processes.
- The Continuing Education system, based on PeopleSoft, was successfully used for the administration of the 2010 Summer School in January and February. The system is also being used by other faculties for continuing professional development courses.
- After implementing a significant upgrade to the 3rd Party system, ICTS has activated the automatic de-provisioning of visitor's accounts.
- For Procurement and Payment Services, ICTS supported the implementation of the SpendTrak service, which provides reporting and analysis of the university's spending.
- ICTS has launched a project, together with Student Housing & Residence Life (SH&RL) to implement aspects of the RMS system to support their various commercial enterprises, including vacation accommodation, conference hosting, staff housing, etc.

Network and server infrastructure

- In order to allow authenticated access to the UCT network from off campus, a new Virtual Private Network was implemented.
- On 1 September, ICTS commissioned a 16Mbps full-duplex point-to-point wireless link between Hiddingh and Upper Campus. This significantly improved the speed of access for Hiddingh users to services.
- Since the introduction of additional capacity via Seacom in 2009, UCT's bandwidth needs to longer exceed supply. Bandwidth usage reports are being regularly produced and sent to Deans and Executive Directors.
- UCT is negotiating with TENET to provide a redundancy circuit for the Seacom international cable, to mitigate the risk presented by this single point of failure.
- ICTS will install wireless networking in UCT's leased residences during the 2010 year-end vacation period.
- UCT was the first university in Africa to successfully set up an Eduroam service which provides access to the internet for global member institutions from the UK, Europe, Japan and Australasia.
- A Lifecycle replacement plan has been developed to cater for the replacement of the hardware and servers in the data centres.

Security

- After communicating to campus and gaining support from UICTC and in accordance with the Firewall policy, ICTS has begun to implement stricter firewall rules to protect the network and associated services from unauthorised access.
- Upgraded McAfee to provide support for Windows 7.
- Avoided the effects of 2 major virus attacks that negatively affected a number of companies worldwide.

Performance as measured by the Core ICT Services SLA

A report was presented to UICTC on ICTS' performance against the Core ICT Services SLA – availability of systems, resolution of service requests, and responses to Helpdesk calls. UICTC complimented ICTS on its excellent performance.

- Uptime results were excellent – 99.9% for most services. The network fared particularly well – 60 of the 62 network components ICTS measures were available 100% of the year (measured 24 x 7 excluding monthly maintenance slots), while the Residence Network achieved 99.97%. GroupWise was significantly more stable than in 2009. It was up 98.5% of the time except for the student post office which achieved 97%.
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- The IT Helpdesk handles about 5000 calls per month. Close to half of these are for service requests. Again, 90%+ of these were processed within their target resolution time KPIs. Service improvement plans were put in place to address failures that occurred earlier in the year – pressure was put on vendors, business processes were changed, staff received training, communications were sent out to users, etc.
- Similarly, ICTS met its response time KPIs. Of these calls, 70% are resolved within 1 day.

Telephony

- ICTS successfully privatised 1300 phone lines, for which UCT would have had to pay Telkom R10.2 million per year in rental fees. Progress continues on efforts to eliminate equipment being rented from Telkom by various departments on campus. UCT has signed an agreement with a Voice-over-IP vendor to reduce UCT's phone call costs from 2011.
- UCT's new telephone management system is now being used to cost calls which are recharged to fund holders via SAP.
- Various upgrades were made to our telephony infrastructure to provide phone services to tenants in new buildings.

Student computing support

- ICTS renegotiated SLA contracts to provide student lab management services to CHED, EBE, Health Science, Science, Student Housing and Residence Life, LAW and CFU. A lab imaging solution was also implemented for the Post Graduate funding office.
- ICTS implemented the new lab management model without incident.
- Labs were successfully upgraded during the June/ July vacation period.
- ICTS conducted a survey to measure students' satisfaction levels with ICT services.
- ICTS produced a "Staff and Student Guide to ICT Services at UCT" and distributed an "ICT Guide for Undergraduate Students" during Orientation.

World Cup

ICTS provided services to 2010 World Cup Accommodation visitors which included staffing and managing the Baxter student lab, as well as information pamphlets.

Support for new products and operating systems

Support for Windows 7 was launched after thorough testing of various systems and applications.

Communication

- ICTS ran a very successful "Respect Copyright" awareness campaign which has been lauded by SAFACT and BSA. SAFACT have reported that UCT has one of the lowest levels of downloads of all universities.
 - ICTS produced a "Staff and Student Guide to ICT Services at UCT".
 - The Bits & Bytes monthly electronic newsletter, aimed at UCT staff and containing useful easy-to-understand ICT information and tips, was launched on 1 July.
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