Mobile Learning
5 strategies for cross-disciplinary success p. 24

making it through the first year

Targeted web portals are helping freshmen make the transition to college life

21st Century Projection
How advancements in digital projectors will impact the classroom

Software on the Edge
The latest apps for learning, administration, IT security, and more
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Moving Forward
This month’s Campus Technology conference will delve into the future of teaching and learning in a digital world.

When I was a faculty member in the ed school at Miami University (OH) back in the early ’80s, I struggled to keep my students engaged in ways that have a strange resonance with themes that weave throughout this year’s Campus Technology conference, to be held in Boston at the end of this month.

For example: “Immersive education” was taking students to a lab school and having them observe firsthand the interactions of teachers and learners. “Interactive media” was pausing a video tape of a teacher in action and asking students what the teacher should say at critical points in a lesson. “Student collaboration” was having students work in small groups to design lessons.

Were we “envisioning the future” (as we promise to do at our 16th annual conference)? A bit, at least in terms of pedagogical progress. But thinking back to those early days should give heart to even the most impatient of us (and I include myself in that group) that innovations in technology have indeed brought us a very long way in a short time—even for today’s digital generation.

Contrast my bit of teaching history with sessions you will encounter in Boston July 27-30:

- How immersive education is breaking down barriers of time, space, and distance through 3D and virtual environments, to allow communication and collaboration across levels of education, curricular areas, and around the globe.
- How to create interactive media for use with students and have students use the tools to create content themselves.
- How to foster student collaboration with wikis, social networking, and scores of specific tools such as Twitter, YouTube, Meebo Me, and more.

For more information on these and other CT 2009 sessions, go to www.campustechnology.com/summer09.

But the conference goes beyond exploring new media, Web 2.0, and social networking innovations. It is designed to help faculty and administrators realize the power and capabilities of this digital age. Keynoter and Harvard (MA) Graduate School of Education Professor Chris Dede will explore which tools are appropriate to use when, and help faculty understand that having these tools can change their entire approach to teaching. The technology part is easy; the people part is more difficult. That is why a conference like Campus Technology is so valuable—people learn from fellow attendees as well as from the presenters. In addition, tools are in place so you can continue benefiting from the conference in a variety of ways, including our first-ever Campus Technology virtual conference this December.

McGuffey Hall, the 100-plus-year-old building where I taught while I was at Miami, recently underwent a $14 million renovation, including “…making sure the infrastructure of the classrooms had up-to-date technology,” according to an article in the Miami Student. Talk about progress: I always struggled to find an outlet to plug in the VCR in that building.

I’ll see you in Boston. CT

—Geoff Fletcher, Editorial Director

CORRECTION: In “Capturing the Market,” CT June 2009 (www.campustechnology.com/articles/2009/06/01/lecture-capture.aspx), we stated that Sonic Foundry holds a 40 percent-plus market share of the lecture capture market. That figure, which comes from research analysts Frost & Sullivan, refers to the overall market, including not only higher ed but also corporate, government, and other sectors.
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UPCOMING EVENTS

July
JULY 12 - 15
Association for Information Communications Technology Professionals in Higher Education
2009 ACUTA Summit on Unified Communications and Collaboration
(www.acuta.org)
Denver, CO
JULY 14 - 17
Blackboard
BbWorld 2009
(www.bbworld.com/2009)
Washington, DC
JULY 18 - 22
Society for College and University Planning
SCUP-44: Annual International Conference and Idea Marketplace
Values and Vision Create the Future
(www.scup.org/page/annualconf/44)
Portland, OR
JULY 19 - 21
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
2009 AACRAO Technology Conference
(www.aacrao.org/tech09)
Tucson, AZ
JULY 27 - 30
Campus Technology 2009
Mastering Digital Worlds
(www.campustechnology.com/summer09)
Boston, MA

August
AUG 2 - 7
The Data Warehousing Institute
TDWI World Conference—Summer 2009
(www.tdwi.org/education/conferences/index.aspx)
San Diego, CA
AUG 19 - 21
Society for Applied Learning Technology
2009 Interactive Technologies Conference
(www.salt.org/dc/washingtonp.asp)
Arlington, VA

September
SEPT 13 - 17
Association of College and University Auditors
2009 Annual Conference
(www.acua.org/go/events-and-seminars/annual-conference)
Minneapolis, MN
SEPT 14 - 22
The SANS Institute
Network Security 2009
(www.sans.org/ns2009)
San Diego, CA
SEPT 24 - 26
National Association for College Admission Counseling
2009 National Conference
(www.nacacnet.org/event/training/no09)
Baltimore, MD

October
OCT 11 - 14
League for Innovation in the Community College
2009 Conference on Information Technology
(www.league.org/2009/oct)
Detroit, MI
OCT 11 - 14
Association for Computing Machinery Special Interest Group on University and College Computing Services
2009 SIGUCCS Fall Conference
Communication, Collaboration
(www.siguccs.org/Conference/Fall2009)
St. Louis, MO
OCT 11 - 15
Oracle OpenWorld 2009
(www.oracle.com/us/openworld/index.htm)
San Francisco, CA
OCT 15 - 19
Consortium of College and University Media Centers
CCUMC 2009 Annual Conference
Get Connected!
(www.ccumc.org/node/2358)
Greensboro, NC
OCT 19 - 21
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
CUPA-HR National Conference and Expo 2009
Where Now Meets Next
(www.cupahr.org/conference2009/index.asp)
Las Vegas, NV
OCT 25 - 28
Association for Information Communications Technology Professionals in Higher Education
ACUTA 2009 Fall Seminar
(www.acuta.org)
Portland, OR
OCT 26 - 30
Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education
E-Learn 2009
(www.aace.org/conf/elearn)
Vancouver, BC

For more events, go to:
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To submit your event:
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Features

ERP Helps Drive Enrollment, Staff Development at Houston CC
The Houston Community College System had been using a PeopleSoft ERP system since 1998, but it wasn’t until last year that the third-largest accredited community college system in the US upgraded its campus collaboration and web presence to create one streamlined process.

WiFi on a Budget
With six campuses spread across California, Alliant International University was an early adopter of WiFi technology, having set up a system for students and faculty several years back. But as those users’ mobile internet usage increased, so did the school’s need for a more robust, reliable system.

Viewpoint

Horns of the Dilemma for Faculty: Legacy Demands and Technology Expectations
Amidst the Web 2.0 tsunami, life on campus goes on as normal. Faculty members are still expected to publish in traditional journals, still expected to meet their classes in rooms equipped with chalkboards and designed for lectures, and still expected by their students to tell them what they should know so they can write it on paper during a test. Where’s the tsunami?

You Told Us

Does your institution have a lecture capture system in place?
(73 respondents)

- Yes 37%
- No 63%

You can weigh in on our latest poll at www.campustechnology.com.

WEBINARS


ON DEMAND!

Academic Computing Virtualization in Action
Expert advice on using virtualization to enhance the learning environment on your campus.

Executive Panel: Enhance Programs for On-Campus, Blended, and Distance Learners With Lecture Capture
Technologists from three colleges discuss how class-capture technology impacts learning both for on-campus students and online learners.

802.11n for Higher Education: Exceed Your Mobility and Wireless Expectations
Best practices for deploying secure high-speed wireless anywhere on campus—indoors or outdoors.

Improve Recruiting Efforts and Reduce Costs
Learn how Harrison College (IN) has automated and streamlined its web-based recruitment efforts.

NEED TO KNOW

The Significant Other: The Projection Screen
A tremendous amount of research can go into deciding on a projector, but the selection of a projection screen can be just as important—not in terms of capital outlay, but in terms of the impact it can have on image quality. The wrong projection screen can make images look terrible, which, in turn, can impact the way students receive and absorb information in class. But the right one enhances the contrast, brightness, and sharpness of images and can lead to less eyestrain for the viewer.

How do you determine the best screen for a classroom, lecture hall, or meeting room? The size, fabric, style, proportion, and rear versus front come into play, as do the specifications of the projector itself. Read more at www.campustechnology.com/articles/2009/05/20/the-significant-other-the-projection-screen.aspx.

You Decide

In Box

“It’s about time that people realized that the ePortfolio serves a far wider purpose than the narrow use of assessment tools.”
—Ray Tolley, United Kingdom

Read this and other reader comments at www.campustechnology.com/articles/2009/05/20/why-eportfolio-is-the-tool-of-the-time-and-who-is-enAAEEBLing-it.aspx

Top Stories

- Syracuse U (NY) Aims for Greener Data Center
- IT Dogged by Security Issues, Studies Find
- Southwestern Oklahoma State U Rolls out Public Digital Repository
- George Mason U (VA) Boosts CRM with Intelliworx
- Columbia Business School (NY) Ramps up Use of Lecture Capture
- Dominican U (CA) Couples Course Evaluations With LMS
- U of Georgia Goes Open Source for Student Portal

Source: www.campustechnology.com

Does your institution have a lecture capture system in place?
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NEWS

USING DATA TO SUPPORT STUDENTS. Louisiana State University Continuing Education has selected the Jenzabar Non-Traditional System (www.jenzabar.net) to consolidate various departmental administrative systems and obtain insightful data on the university’s non-traditional students. The system will give students a personalized experience based on their histories, interests, and demographics; faculty can utilize the system to obtain student data and determine how best to communicate and interact with each individual. Jenzabar NTS also will provide the ability to set up new sections of course offerings in real time, accommodate flexible course dates, and audit financial, enrollment, and academic transactions. Read more at www.campustechnology.com/articles/2009/04/13/louisiana-state-continuing-ed-to-manage-programs-with-jenzabar-software.aspx.

SHARING RIDES AND CARS. Car sharing provider Zipcar (www.zipcar.com) has partnered with Zimride (www.zimride.com), an online ride sharing social network, to integrate car sharing and ride sharing services and make it possible for Zipcar members to see, offer, and share Zipcar rides with friends and others. It will also enable Zimride ride sharers to use Zipcar for their vehicle, eliminating the need to own a car. The joint service will be offered to colleges and universities; Stanford (CA) is the first school implementing the joint solution.

IMPROVED DATA STORAGE. Liberty University (VA) is making improvements to its digital storage solution with the implementation of Symantec’s (www.symantec.com) Veritas NetBackup and the selection of an off-site location for data storage. With the new system, contents in storage are now more easily recoverable in case a user accidentally deletes a file. Along with the installation, the IT organization is formalizing backup procedures, scheduling, and documentation. Read more at www.campustechnology.com/articles/2009/06/03/liberty-u-improves-storage-technology-and-processes-2.aspx.

VIRTUAL LAB. Utah Valley University has received a $100,000 donation of equipment and services from virtualization vendor Vucci Technology Solutions (www.vucci.com) to outfit the athletic department computer lab with virtual desktops and managed services. The new lab, named the Vucci Computer Lab, is open year-round to all student athletes and their tutors. The virtualization installation is expected to cut power usage by as much as 97 percent. Read more at www.campustechnology.com/articles/2009/06/08/utah-valley-u-installs-vucci-virtual-lab.aspx.

EMERGENCY RECRUITMENT. During the Red River flooding this past spring, Minnesota State University Moorhead used its e2Campus (www.e2campus.com) emergency notification system to communicate life safety information to the community and to recruit volunteers for sandbagging efforts. Thanks to over 15 alert messages broadcast via text message, phone calls, e-mail, and web page postings, more than 20,000 volunteers filled and stacked over 1 million sandbags.


PEARSON ACQUIRES NTC. Pearson (www.pearson.com) has acquired the National Transcript Center (NTC; www.transcriptcenter.com), the largest national e-transcript and student record exchange provider. NTC’s solution for securely exchanging electronic student transcripts and records will enhance Pearson’s ability to deliver integrated solutions to increase automation, digital workflow, and data quality. NTC will become part of Edstructures (www.edstructures.com), a business unit within the Assessment and Information Group of Pearson.
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Small, Flat, and Crowded

Competition is heating up in the tight eTextbook market as open source upstarts come up against veterans.

“THERE WAS ALWAYS talk that eTextbooks were not working and customers didn’t really want them,” says Eric Frank, co-founder of open source digital textbook publisher Flat World Knowledge (www.flatworldknowledge.com). “But what students really want are choices. Students have grown up in a world that’s all about choices. Textbooks haven’t turned that corner.”

Since Frank founded Flat World Knowledge about a year ago with fellow publishing veteran Jeff Shelstad (both hail from Prentice Hall), his business model has been hailed as revolutionary. Flat World gives away professionally written, peer-reviewed textbooks for free, online. How does the company expect to make money? By selling students ancillary products such as low-cost printed copies or study aids.

“It’s not that people didn’t want eTextbooks,” Frank points out. “There was just no sense in students paying half the price of a regular textbook for an eTextbook. The other flaw in the model was that it’s sort of one or the other—an eBook or a print book. We didn’t necessarily want to build eBooks, but rather give students a choice of formats.”

This philosophy is creating quite a flap in a market that’s still miniscule and struggling to find a feasible business model. According to the Association of American Publishers (www.publishers.org), the revenue for eBooks in the higher ed market in 2007 (the latest year for which statistics are available) was $17.2 million, up from $13.4 million the previous year. That’s still a fraction of the $1.6 billion in revenue that the standalone textbook category generated in 2007 (up from $1.5 billion the previous year).

Veering off Course

Among the organizations that are most vocal in their criticism of current eTextbook models are the Student Public Interest Research Groups (Student PIRGs; www.student pirs.org), the nation’s largest student activist network, which has a presence on campuses in 20 states. In January 2008, the Student PIRGs launched Make Textbooks Affordable, a campaign to encourage faculty to adopt open source educational resources (more economical and practical than existing eTextbooks) in their classrooms. Last fall, campaign director Nicole Allen, who heads up the textbook program for the Student PIRGs, conducted a comprehensive study of the digital textbook market that challenges existing models and issues an urgent call for change.

Allen’s report, Course Correction: How Digital Textbooks Are off Track, and How to Set Them Straight (www.maketextbooksaffordable.org/course_correction.pdf), is based on a survey of 504 college students and an analysis of eTextbook prices, based on 50 commonly assigned textbooks. It asserts that eTextbooks come up short on a number of important criteria.

“eTextbook publishers are fundamentally disconnected from the students,” says Allen. “Three criteria are most important to students: First, eBooks need to be affor-
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able, more so than their print counterparts. Second, unrestricted printing options are necessary, because students still prefer a print book to an eTextbook. Third, the book needs to be accessible. Students need to be able to use it anywhere on any computer and be able to keep it forever.”

Existing digital options fail to meet those criteria, in Allen’s view. “They have lower up-front prices, but are not as affordable as they need to be,” she says. In fact, she adds, eTextbooks actually end up costing more than the print version, since a student can sell a traditional textbook back to the bookstore and recoup some of its cost. What’s more, eTextbook publishers drastically limit printing capabilities—a major drawback, as 75 percent of the students surveyed in the PIRG report said they preferred a printed textbook to a digital one. “With the eTextbooks we surveyed, you can print only 10 pages at a time,” she says. “Access is so mired in DRM restrictions, more so than their print counterparts. Second, unrestricted printing options are necessary, because students still prefer a print book to an eTextbook. Third, the book needs to be accessible. Students need to be able to use it anywhere on any computer and be able to keep it forever.”

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Certainly, cost is a key factor fueling the eTextbook debate. According to a report released in May 2007 by the US Department of Education’s Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (Turn the Page: Making College Textbooks More Affordable; www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/tur nthepage.pdf), the average college student shells out about $900 a year for textbooks; in fact, between 1987 and 2004, textbook expenses rose much faster than the prices of other commodities nationwide. The US Government Accountability Office reports that textbooks account for 26 percent of tuition and fees at four-year public universities, and nearly three-quarters of the costs at community colleges (www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/edlite-txtbkstudy.html). Both reports note that publishers’ superfluous bundling of supplemental items, release of unnecessary new editions, bookstores’ high profit margins, and the whims of faculty members who rarely select lower-priced alternatives, are among the forces keeping prices high. By bypassing all these issues, eTextbooks should be a more affordable option—except that they aren’t, according to their detractors.

The Future’s an Open Book

The cry for open source digital materials is gathering momentum. Last year, more than 1,000 professors at universities across the country signed a letter of intent to adopt open digital textbooks in place of commercial digital or print ones, if the former were a comparable option. Faculty also have written to publishers complaining about the high cost of textbooks.

In the past few years, publishers have been experimenting with content delivery methods, ranging from simple PDFs of printed textbooks, to interactive multimedia texts that students and faculty can customize. CourseSmart (www.coursesmart.com), a digital textbook company formed by six major textbook publishers, offers more than 5,000 textbooks online, and covers about 30 percent of the market. CourseSmart Executive VP Frank Lyman says he aims to “jump-start the market for eTextbooks.” CourseSmart still requires a subscription, however, and offers limited printing options. Then there’s CaféScribe (www.cafescribe.com), a social networking site that also bills itself as “textbooks 2.0.” Students must buy their eBook from CaféScribe’s bookstore, but can then invite friends and faculty (who also bought the eBook) to interact with them, share notes, set up online study groups, and so on.

Many colleges and universities are themselves experimenting with open educational resources: Last August, Colleges andUniversities (www.cnx.org), based at Rice University (TX), published its own open source statistics textbook for use in transfer-level community college courses. Also at the forefront of the open textbook movement is the Community College Consortium for Open Educational Resources (www.oerconsortium.org), which offers open textbooks on its website. And MIT’s OpenCourseWare (ocw.mit.edu) has placed most of its curriculum online—video lectures, problem sets, and exams for more than 1,800 courses in 33 disciplines.

Clearly, publishers like Flat World are at the cutting edge of the eTextbook market. Most recently, Flat World announced plans to add support for direct integration of its books into campus learning management systems. As of February 2009, Flat World had completed beta testing of its open source textbooks at about 15 universities across the country.

Some caution against going “overboard” with open source textbooks. “What you want is flexibility,” advises William Chesser, general manager of educational solutions at VitalSource Technologies (www.vitalsource.com), a company that works with publishers and academic institutions to deliver digital textbooks online. “The business model may be different for a network certification course than for a first-year undergraduate biology course. I don’t think open textbooks make sense everywhere.”

Chesser points out that in some disciplines, such as the health sciences for instance, only a commercial model can protect original research. “We have to resist the temptation to think of education as a monolith—that we’re all going digital,” he says. “We need to use open textbooks in those areas where they make sense.”

Rama Ramaswami is a business and technology writer based in New York City.

Flat World Knowledge is planning to support direct integration of its books into learning management systems.
Tech Refresh in a Down Economy

Campus CIOs are finding all sorts of clever ways to stretch those tech refresh dollars. Find your recession-mode best practices here.

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY (NJ) has a reputation for being ahead of the technology adoption curve. Among other moves, the South Orange campus rolled out wireless early in this decade. It moved to Live@edu from Microsoft (www.microsoft.com) in January 2009, to supply its 4,400 students with e-mail and hosted online storage. It used VMware (www.vmware.com) early on (in spring 2007) to virtualize its data center. The school has had a virtual presence in Second Life (www.secondlife.com) since 2006. And it is piloting a program with Nokia (www.nokiausa.com) to outfit 350 students with smart phones, for use in academic activities. So how does a tech-focused university like Seton Hall keep technology "refreshed" during economically tough times, when tech budget dollars are shrinking and campus tech-refresh programs everywhere are falling under the knife?

"We're planning for the budgetary double whammy of a slightly reduced number of students and a slightly increased financial aid budget," confides Seton Hall CIO Stephen Landry. He estimates that he'll have to cut between five and 10 percent of his overall budget. "That means all the operational areas have to give something," he says.

Seton Hall's tech refresh program is one of several that were profiled by Campus Technology in 2006 ("Technology Replacement Planning: How Refreshing!" www.campus technology.com/articles/2006/06/technology-replacement-planning-how-refreshing.aspx). IT leaders at three of those campuses are making use of careful planning and even ingenuity to guide those earlier refresh plans through the budget crunch. The bottom line: Plans have been modified, but in subtle ways. Here's what these IT pros are doing.

**Seton Hall: Optimizing Value**

Three years ago, each Seton Hall undergraduate was required to pay $650 a semester to lease a laptop and all related software and services. Every two years, that laptop could be replaced with a new machine, and when a student graduated, she could keep the notebook. Full-time faculty enjoyed a similar perk with a two-year refresh; computer lab equipment also was swapped out for new gear every two...
years. The older machines were handed off to adjunct faculty members, graduate assistants, and the like.

Now, in 2009, the fee remains the same; it’s still $650 a semester, and the equipment has been tweaked from a Lenovo ThinkPad T60 laptop or tablet (www.lenovo.com) with 2GB of RAM and a 120GB hard drive, to a ThinkPad T61 laptop or X61 Tablet with 4GB of RAM and a 160GB of storage.

But since the fee paid by students is sitting “off budget,” says Landry, it’s not subject to the same kinds of reductions the overall operational IT budget is undergoing. And since a three-year refresh on student machines doesn’t save the school any money (students still refresh their equipment just one time before they graduate), it’s sticking with the two-year refresh on the student side. Where Landry is finding ways to reduce costs, however, is on the refresh cycle for everybody else. Full-time tenure-track faculty still get new equipment, but now that happens every three years, as does the refresh process in the computer labs.

The CIO is quick to point out that he doesn’t believe the extension will reduce the quality of the user experience or increase support demand for IT. “Up until the last couple of generations, laptops didn’t have longevity,” he says. “They were fragile even six or seven years ago. Operating systems would go ‘poof’ quite a bit; they were high maintenance items. But the last two generations—Windows XP and Windows Vista—are extremely stable. It’ll be very easy to get a third year out of those machines.”

Coppin State: Follow the Warranty

When the new $52 million Health and Human Services Building opened in the fall of 2008 at Coppin State University (MD) in Baltimore, the sum total of technology on campus doubled overnight. The new structure includes dozens of smart classrooms set up to handle lecture capture, a virtual clinic for the nursing program, and two lecture halls with massive video walls. But because of a hiring freeze on campus, the size of the IT staff hasn’t grown at all. Even so, IT has kept up with technology needs, says Ahmed El-Haggan, the university’s VP of IT and CIO, thanks to a combination of new tools and new work processes designed to make it more efficient and reduce expenses. That includes, for example, issuing campus IP phones to IT staff, which enables them to communicate wherever they are.

“They don’t have to come back to the office to get instructions, which makes them more efficient,” explains El-Haggan.

Currently, El-Haggan’s staff is busy deploying 1,500 new HP (www.hp.com) computers running Vista Enterprise and Microsoft Office 2007 to faculty, staff, and computer labs—a total refresh across the campus. By going with equipment that’s more energy-efficient, the institution expects to save $45 a year per machine, or about $67,500. The number of machines included in this refresh also has grown since the previous tech refresh, in order to accommodate the needs of the new building. But the budget will remain about the same, says the CIO. To provide line-item predictability, El-Haggan has structured the purchase transaction as though it were a lease. He borrows the full amount to pay the vendor, and then spreads the payment over the life of the PCs’ warranty: three years.

“With it’s tied to a warranty program, he explains, “there’s a savings in person hours. When PCs get older, they’re slower and they break more frequently. Four years is too long; two years is more of a strap on the financial situation. I believe three years is a reasonable length of time.”

Creighton: New Perspective on Ops

In Omaha, NE, 4,100-student Creighton University is sticking with the same student purchase program it had in place in 2006, in which undergraduates are encouraged to buy a laptop through the university. Creighton flexes its purchasing power to get Lenovo ThinkPad notebooks and Apple MacBooks (www.apple.com) at a discount. About 65 to 70 percent of students take advantage of the program, which includes software and services as well as four years of accidental damage protection.

“It’s a service contract where even if a student spills liquid into the equipment or drops it down a flight of stairs, the company replaces it. I think the worry-free issue is important,” says Brian Young, Creighton’s vice president for IT and CIO.

Budget-driven change has, however, had an impact on the way other computing equipment is managed at Creighton, and that includes faculty and staff machines as well as equipment in the computer labs. For the former, Young says, the IT team is evaluating whether a four-year refresh rate could be lengthened to a fifth year. For the lat-
ter, the university is debating a switch to thin client computing for the financial advantages it would bring.

In fact, Young adds, the IT team has taken a proactive stance on scrutinizing the replacement of any kind of tech product, from access points to projectors, provided that “there’s no impact to an academic program or to student learning, and provided that the equipment is still functioning.” He insists that he appreciates the opportunity provided by economic challenges because it forces people to reconsider their original assumptions about their technology.

In addition, he points out, shaking up the status quo can uncover “free-range” computer operations that could benefit from coming under IT management. “Every group has this; departments with a server here, a server there. As they look to replace those, they’re asking, ‘I wonder if there’s a smarter way to do this? Do we have to pay $3,000 or $4,000, or can I call IT and see what they can provide?’ That gets us excited,” Young explains. “Now we don’t have rogue servers sitting around. We help to secure things a bit more. And we don’t have to utilize expenditure of university dollars on hardware that might not be needed.”

Young provides three solid tips for other IT leaders struggling to sort out their own budgetary challenges in replacing equipment. First, he says, it’s wise to question standing expenditures. “Eight years ago, servers were replaced on a three-year cycle. Will certain equipment last longer now? I think the answer is yes.” Second, don’t extend the technology contract longer than it has to be; preferably, to no longer than one year (it can be extended if the pricing and service remain competitive). That ensures you’ll have continued flexibility in vendor negotiations and not be stuck with dated technology or services. And third, don’t wait for the vendor to write the contract; be ready to supply your own contract language. Today, says Young, “I’m proactively saying: ‘This is what it takes to do business with Creighton.’ Of course, they can turn me down, but it’s amazing how many say, ‘No one’s ever really done that.’ Bottom line? I’m in it to protect Creighton and our students.” [For basic tips on tech refresh strategies and tactics, go to www.campus technology.com/articles/2006/06/technology-replacement-planning-how-refreshing.aspx.]

Dian Schaffhauser is based in Nevada City, CA. She covers technology for Campus Technology and its K-12 sister publication, T.H.E. Journal, in addition to other technology and business publications.
PRESENTATION TECHNOLOGY

FROM WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY to light processing improvements, digital projectors have incorporated a number of technological advancements in recent years—developments that have made the tools even easier for higher education technologists to use. We offer here some vendor insights about some of those trends, and the ways in which they might make a difference in teaching and learning in higher education classrooms.

Trend No. 1: Going Wireless
Perhaps the biggest development in digital projectors is the introduction of wireless connectivity. In years past, educators needed cords to connect the devices to laptop or desktop computers. Now, however, many projectors are equipped with the ability to access files remotely with the help of a USB device.

New projectors from Epson, for instance, incorporate the company’s Quick Wireless Connection, which establishes an ad hoc 802.11a, b, or g wireless connection between the projector and a user’s PC via a special wireless USB thumbstick preloaded with software drivers to facilitate the connection. Units come standard with one thumbstick.

Products from other vendors like Hitachi and Sanyo offer certain degrees of wireless connectivity as well. Sanyo’s PLC-XU355 projector, for instance, comes with a USB key that visiting professors can pop into their laptops to display files on the projector. In addition, the company’s DHT100 projector comes with an optional wireless high-definition transmitter and receiver that facilitates wireless transfer of high-definition video.

5 trends in digital projectors that translate into ease of use in the classroom By Matt Villano
“Wireless simplifies installation,” says Mark Holt, VP and general manager of Sanyo’s Presentation Technologies Division. “Convenience is something that should never be overlooked.”

Wireless capabilities could become even more streamlined over time. While most of the current solutions work with the help of USB devices, a number of vendors are enabling their products to work with internet protocols that will give them the ability to send and receive data over a campus’s wireless local area network.

Trend No. 2: Better Light and Color

Light and color are two other areas in which digital projectors are improving by leaps and bounds. In the old days, brighter was better, and brightness was measured in lumens. Today, however, excellence isn’t defined exclusively by the number of lumens a projector can boast; brilliant colors and improved detail have become important factors, too.

A number of new digital projectors feature one-chip digital light processing (DLP) technology, which utilizes an optical semiconductor and up to two million microscopic mirrors to reflect digital images on a screen. (Three-chip DLP projection systems are used in more industrial applications like cinema.)

Texas Instruments, the developer of DLP, licenses the technology to a number of different vendors. Sharp’s new PG-F267X projector, for instance, features both DLP BrilliantColor and 2,500 lumens of brightness.

Another technology that improves brightness and color is 3LCD, which incorporates three LCD chips in every projector. In a January 2009 Projector-Central.com comparison of 847 shipping models, those devices with 3LCD technology projected 26 percent more brightness per lamp watt of electricity than those with one-chip DLP. Devices incorporating this three-chip strategy include the CP-SX635 from Hitachi, the VPL-CX70 from Sony, and a variety of projectors from Epson.

As Epson’s Heather Gareis points out, this kind of improved light has distinct educational advantages. “It really makes a difference when viewing content with color gradients and fine detail—the kind of content in classes from biology to art history,” says Gareis, senior product manager for higher education and business projectors. “With 3LCD technology, you’re not compromising color output to achieve high white-light brightness.”

Other vendors are focusing on solutions that are eco-friendly. Gone are the days of mercury vapor lamps; today, vendors are incorporating reflectors and other techniques to boost the brightness of LED lamps.

Casio, for instance, is looking into a variety of options in “greener” light. Joe Gillio, the company’s director of product marketing, says that in addition to the environmental benefits of these alternative light sources, the new bulbs last much longer, helping customers cut costs on replacements.

“It turns out that in this case, being green probably can save people money, too,” he says.

Trend No. 3: Remote Monitoring and Maintenance

As colleges and universities invest in more digital projectors, managing and maintaining the devices becomes increasingly tough. This is where developments in remote monitoring show their value.

Generally speaking, these features allow technologists to control devices from a central location: e.g., turn off projectors remotely to conserve power; monitor bulb life to allow proactive replacement of bulbs; and ensure the machines stay free from viruses and other forms of malware.

“At a time when IT staffs are shrinking, this kind of luxury makes everyone’s job easier,” says Rich McPherson, senior product manager for NEC Display Solutions. The company’s newest projectors—the NP400, NP500, and NP600—all include features designed to facilitate management from afar; for instance, scheduling shut-downs to conserve energy.

New products from other vendors also include provisions for remote maintenance; Epson’s new Easy Management software, for instance, alerts technicians when a projector is due for maintenance or if there is a problem with a particular device.

When it comes to filter maintenance, Sanyo is offering new projector devices with its Active Maintenance Filter (AMF) system. Instead of utilizing a single filter, these machines use a cartridge with 10 of them. An airflow sensor behind the cartridge reads when the filter is dirty and automatically advances to the next one in the cartridge.

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“Colleges used to have to clean filters every 500 hours, but with this tool they can clean every 5,000 hours,” says Sanyo’s Holt. He adds that another technology—automatic lamp selection system—enables customers to program which of two lamps the projector should use first, thus prolonging lamp life across the board.

Of course, DLP projectors don’t need filters in order to operate adequately; many of the devices, including the Sharp XR-32S and the ViewSonic PJ458D, can be “filterless.” These particular models have sealed optical systems, eliminating the need for filter maintenance. They are ideal for ceiling-mounted installations and other difficult-to-reach locations.

**Trend No. 4: Embracing Lens Shift**

Projector vendors are also making advancements in lens shift, the process through which users adjust the lens to get the image to appear where they want it on a screen, whiteboard, or wall. Hitachi, for example, incorporates tiny motorized lens shifters in its CP-X10000, CP-WX11000, and CP-SX12000 projectors, that move the lens up, down, left, or right.

John Glad, product manager of the company’s projectors and interactive whiteboards business group, says that with this technology, the lens doesn’t have to be always pointing at the middle of the screen. “However you want the image,” he notes, “you can manipulate it or move it to appear that way.”

Another vendor, InFocus, includes both motorized and manual lens shift in projectors that comprise its IN5100 series. Projectors from Sanyo and a number of products from Epson offer the same luxury.

**Trend No. 5: Mounting Efficiencies**

Finally, a number of display vendors also have tweaked the way their products can be mounted. In the past, there weren’t many options—most products came only with ceiling mounts. Today, however, many new projectors are described as “short-throw,” meaning they can be ceiling-mounted, mounted on a desk, or mounted on the wall immediately above a screen or whiteboard.

A number of vendors offer short-throw products, including Sharp, NEC, InFocus, and Sanyo.

Robert Detwiler, product manager at InFocus, points out that the new short-throw development eliminates the likelihood that educators will walk through the projected light, and provides faster mounting when the ceiling isn’t a good option. The new technology also simplifies projector placement in classrooms with limited space and enables more interactive presentations.

“One of the traditional limitations to display technologies is that you have to be sequestered in the back of the room,” Detwiler says. “We’re trying to eliminate that by allowing our users to step up to the blackboard and give presentations as they would teach a regular lecture.”

**DOCUMENT CAMERAS RIDING THE OPTICAL CURVE**

**PROJECTORS AREN’T THE ONLY** digital display technology to benefit from new developments. Document cameras (also known as digital presenters) also have experienced significant advancements, particularly in the area of optical and digital zoom. With most document cameras, standard zoom features magnify the object at hand by up to four times its ordinary size. The problem? Magnification is limited, and once users zoom in, they cannot pan; in order to get a larger perspective of a different part of the object, they need to move the object itself.

A handful of new technologies aim to make zoom technologies more powerful and flexible. Last year AVerMedia released AverZoom, a proprietary digital technology that gives certain document cameras optical zoom quality of up to 20x and the ability to pan.

AverMedia Marketing Director Grant Woods says this feature can make a huge difference in the middle of a lecture. “If an educator wants to change the emphasis, it’s possible to do so with electronic controls, without having to manually adjust the document itself,” he says.

While few other vendors offer customers the ability to pan while zoomed in, many have responded to customer demands by increasing the standard zoom. Elmo, which specializes in high-end digital presenters, has increased the standard zoom on some models to 16x.

In a totally different development, the PS-660 from Lumens offers users the ability to plug a microphone into the unit and record audio or video to accompany each slide. After class, educators can hand these files over to IT administrators for archiving or posting online.

Matt Villano is senior contributing editor of this publication. He is based in Healdsburg, CA.
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Our recent virtual roundtable discussion with instructional design leaders on mobile technology application included: Jim Wolfgang, director of the Digital Innovation Group at Georgia College & State University and member of CT’s editorial advisory board; Michael Cottam, director of instructional design at fully online Rio Salado College; and John Ittelson, director of instructional technologies at the K-20 California Educational Technology Collaborative and professor emeritus at California State University-Monterey Bay.

1. Don’t Let Technology Drive Your Plans

Campus Technology: Given the wide range of disciplines you’ll find on any campus, where do you start in terms of planning a comprehensive technology implementation to serve today’s mobile learners?

Jim Wolfgang: With the high visibility of devices like the iPhone or the iPod Touch, or whatever is the hot mobile technology in the spotlight, people seem to like to start with the coolest device and then figure out how to do something with it. That’s a real mistake whatever the type of technology implementation you’re considering, but we’re very prone to this in the mobile learning context, especially given the hype surrounding some of these mobile technologies. Here’s what we should be doing, however: Instead of focusing on the technology, we should identify our challenges and opportunities first, and only then move forward with mobile technology selection. Whether you’re working within an individual discipline or trying to bring disciplines together across campus, determine your goals before attempting to select the right technology.
Michael Cottam: At Rio Salado, it’s less about the device and more about delivering to as many possible devices as we can. As a fully online campus—there are basically no on-site courses—we have to think of all our students as mobile learners; all 32,000 of them. We’re not designing specifically for a laptop or an iPhone, or for any particular device. We simply want to make everything web-accessible, by the student’s device of choice. So we move our focus from the device to the course. Every course at Rio is designed to meet quality standards, and every course gets the same treatment: They are all well designed with objectives, and with assessments in line with the objectives. But of course, that’s where you get into some differences between disciplines. When you look at what you are trying to accomplish with, say, a Spanish course, or a science course, there are certainly different requirements for what you want students to accomplish. For example, a science course has many course-level objectives that students would need to meet in kind of a hands-on or experimental view, which we simulate. So, we’ll simulate with a virtual microscope or a virtual lab of some sort. For biology it might be a virtual microscope; for chemistry it might be a virtual chemistry bench where you’re studying solubility or other things. We have more than 500 unique courses, many with multiple sections, but there is a standard way that we treat every course, spanning the disciplines.

2. Collaborate Across the Disciplines

CT: How else do you factor the disciplines into your plans for mobile learning?

Wolfgang: As technology planners, we hope our students will have a [complete and integrated] educational experience, not just isolated academic experiences. But the focus on most campuses is riveted on academics, with [technology] initiatives revolving around a faculty member, or centered on a single course within a single discipline. That’s much too narrow.

If we want to create balanced and productive technology initiatives, it’s important to look across campus, throughout the disciplines—and then some. That may include looking at counseling, housing, student activities, or any institutional units that support students. When we deploy mobile technologies—which move the potential of technology outside of the classroom and build links among disciplines—we define a broad cross-disciplinary approach and empower it. A broad definition of cross-discipline collaboration is critical, whether the work is between departments on campus, such as math and the school of education, or between academia and the community, for example, between schools of business and the “real world” business world. If we collaborate with the business world—a broader kind of collaboration—we can both help students transition into the business world as well as inform the business world about new technologies. Great opportunities for interdisciplinary collaborations may also be found across different institutions within the same discipline; expertise may exist on one campus that can be shared with another. And all of this can be enabled by mobile technology—if we keep the notion of cross-disciplinary collaboration at the forefront of our plans.

3. Seek Out Real Change

CT: What’s the most important challenge for mobile learning?

John Ittelson: The most important challenge for mobile learning is whether we can embrace the technology as a genuinely new form of engagement with students. For a striking example of missed opportunity, remember that back when we began using course management systems, in the majority of the courses—even in the hybrid models—we didn’t significantly change key processes like the creation of content. Faculty still created their own courses. We had the opportunity, but we didn’t change the old model of the single faculty member creating course content to pass, one-way, to his or her students. The CMS technology merely replaced what we had always done in other ways. So I think we should learn from that and examine the possibilities for real change with mobile media. We should be aware of how the various disciplines begin embracing the opportunities they have with these technologies. Disciplines will pick up on these possibilities differently; maybe not so much based purely on instructional needs within an academic discipline, but based more on the impact mobile media have on the discipline in general.

Broadcasting is a terrific example. You used to need all sorts of sophisticated cameras and recording equipment—and people to operate them—to file a news story in the field, but now you will find lone reporters creating remote news feeds from their cell phones.
A Special Supplement to Campus Security

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COMMENTARY

THE SOUND OF SAFETY

BY SHERLEEN MAHONEY, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

IN THE WORLD OF CAMPUS SECURITY, ONE OF THE MOST TALKED-ABOUT CODE CHANGES IS THE 2010 EDITION OF THE NFPA 72 NATIONAL FIRE ALARM CODE. THE NEW EDITION ENCOMPASSES A BROADER SCOPE TO INCLUDE WARNING SYSTEMS USED FOR WEATHER, TERRORIST, BIOLOGICAL, CHEMICAL AND NUCLEAR EMERGENCIES, AND WILL BE RENAMED THE NATIONAL FIRE ALARM AND SIGNALING CODE.

The updated code introduces a new chapter called Emergency Communications Systems, which includes requirements for the design, installation and testing of mass notification systems and is divided into four sections: one-way communication, two-way in-building communication, information command and control, and performance-based design.

One change specific to campus applications involves high-powered speaker arrays that broadcast voice messages or tones to a specific area to provide critical information about an incident. The code requires the speaker arrays to be positioned in a manner that delivers voice intelligibility. The question of quantifying voice intelligibility has been a source of debate for the past three revisions. Is it enough to test the system in an area and simply listen for whether the messages can be heard and understandable, or should there be a required specific measurement of intelligibility? For example, the 1999 edition proposed defining intelligibility with a score of 0.7 on the common intelligibility scale, but the requirement was ultimately rejected.

In the new edition, the committees decided against setting measurement requirements and settled on general requirements. For a voice system to be considered intelligible, the audio voice communication simply had to be heard and understandable.

Quantifying a specific level of intelligibility adds another layer of protection. The last thing any campus wants is for critical messages to fail to alert or be unclear during an emergency. Establishing a researched minimum score instead of relying on arbitrary human-based testing to define whether a system is intelligible sets a nationwide safety standard.

Unfortunately, current methods of measuring speech intelligibility need vast improvement in speed and accuracy. Once technology catches up with the need, their expense may be restrictive to some jurisdictions, but failing to do everything possible to limit injuries and casualties during an emergency can illicit an even greater cost.
SAN DIEGO STATE STUDENTS FIND SCHLAGE BIOMETRIC READERS HANDY WAY TO ENTER REC CENTER

CARMEL, Ind.—Ingersoll Rand Security Technologies announced that San Diego State University’s Associated Students has just celebrated 11 years of using 12 hand geometry readers to provide easy access into the six entrances at the Aztec Recreation Center plus the Aztec Center bowling and games facility and the racquetball court inside the center, as well as the four entrances to the Aztec Aquaplex.

Instead of verifying a card or code, the Associated Students’ HandKey readers verify the person who is at the entrance by looking at the 3-D size and shape of a member’s hand. The result of 90 hand measurements, including length, width, thickness and surface area, is converted into a 9-byte mathematical representation of the hand, which is stored as a template for later use and verification.

“The HandKey readers minimize people’s ability to transfer IDs for admission into our Center,” said Vicki Greene, member services coordinator for the Associated Students of SDSU. “ID switching is very big in the fitness club industry. The hand readers also allow us to provide better service. No longer do our members have to remember to bring an ID card. This also means we don’t need an employee out front checking cards.

“We feel that hand geometry is the least invasive of the biometric technologies and seems simple compared to the others. We average 4,000 entries per day and have 16,000 active enrollees.”

SURVEY: NORTHEAST K-12 SCHOOLS HIGHLY CONFIDENT IN ABILITY TO DEAL WITH SECURITY THREATS

ATLANTA—Wren, a provider of enterprise-class video surveillance solutions, recently announced the results of the Northeast School Security Survey, the fourth in its School Security Research Series.

The survey polled administrators and school resource officers in K-12 schools in nine Northeast states on issues from emergency preparedness to their ability to combat campus threats.

When compared to the results of the company’s prior regional surveys, particularly in the Midwest and Texas, the survey revealed schools in the Northeast have greater confidence in their ability to deal with security threats. Of schools responding, 69 percent currently use video, with 79 percent of those schools using video to monitor entrances and exits to support access control. Another 59 percent of schools reported using it to prevent student misconduct by letting students know they are being monitored.

Eighty percent of respondents indicated that if they could select just one tool to help improve security on campus, they would invest in video surveillance over intrusion alarms, metal detectors and identity badges.

Whereas only 15 percent of respondents from the Midwest felt extremely confident in their ability to deal with security threats, 26 percent of respondents in the Northeast felt extremely confident in their ability to deal with a student abduction; 31 percent felt they were extremely prepared to deal with an armed intruder on campus; and 61 percent felt extremely prepared to deal with a student physically attacking a teacher.

Schools in the Northeast are dealing with more security threats than their counterparts in the Midwest and Texas. Nineteen percent of respondents in the Northeast reported experiencing gang activity in the last 12 months, compared with only 1 percent in the Midwest and 4 percent in Texas. The Northeast respondents also reported higher rates of violence, theft and student bullying.

The security concerns reported as most critical by respondents were unauthorized people entering the school (49 percent); compliance with fire and security regulations (40 percent); and student bullying (51 percent).

When asked how they would fund equipment purchases, 35 percent of respondents indicated that no funds are available.

“The disparity between the Northeast survey and the Midwest and Texas surveys may be due to the fact that schools in the population-dense Northeast are dealing with a greater variety and type of security breaches on a regular basis and therefore they are better prepared,” said Andrew Wren, president of Wren. “The survey also found that Northeast schools are using video more frequently and strategically, which is likely a contributing factor to their higher level of confidence to deal with security threats.”
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LOCKDOWN

Today, schools and universities can maximize security like never before

BY KIM RAHFALDT

Access control and video use in K-12 schools and universities has continually increased since that day in April 1999. While both technologies have proved a useful tool in monitoring and encouraging appropriate behavior among students, there is still a long way to go.

Deep Integration

Schools and universities operate on a tight budget and therefore need to stretch every penny and spend wisely. Often, only limited funding is allotted for a security system, let alone a good security system.

After analyzing security needs and researching technology, schools find that choosing a deeply integrated security system from one company is often the best place to start. An integrated solution is a single fully functional management interface that includes access control and video in one system. Additional components such as intrusion, audio, building management and human resources can be integrated to provide a highly efficient security management system. The ease of communication between these systems saves time and money.

A deeply integrated system also provides a faster response to incidents. If an access control alarm occurs, it immediately communicates with the video system and an automatic pop-up window appears on the computer monitor. Security staff quickly reviews the situation and takes appropriate action. Officials save time by knowing the details of the event before choosing whether or not to dispatch a security guard.

The time saved results in higher productivity. This is especially important when there is a limited security staff.

Portland Community College recently integrated its security management system with student registration software. PCC uses the Banner Student Information System to manage all student records, including applications and admission, student course registration, student accounts receivable and scheduling. Once students have registered, they can go to any badging client, have their cardholder record called up by searching for each student’s number or name, and have their picture taken and ID card produced. The security department saved many hours by not having to re-enter each student’s data into the security system.

“Once the interface to the Banner system was installed and configured, the badging process was simple for the college staff to operate,” said Craig Ehrich, Entrance Controls’ senior applications engineer. “Since all cardholder information was in the access control database, all that was required was to call up the cardholder record, take a picture of the student and print the card. Since no data entry is required during badge production, the process moved along quite quickly.”

Video as a Tool

Previously, video was used as a forensic tool to review past events. While that capability is valuable for viewing behaviors and gathering data, today’s challenge is to use video as a proactive tool.

One way a school or university can make video proactive is to link the video system to an event. For example, the security team can tag a video clip every time a door is opened. So, an image of the door will be displayed on the video matrix. If that door is held open for more than the expected time—20 or 30 seconds—then the video feed will pop up in a large window on the virtual matrix in the control room and prompt an alarm. The deeply integrated system allows the alarm to communicate with the video, providing instant notification to the security staff.

The same protocol can be established if a door is forced open, such as a fire exit or lab door. Where there is an alarm, time is of the essence and the security staff must react quickly. Video provides the eyes to see what’s happening instantly and the knowledge to determine how to respond. Without video, a guard would be dispatched to the area in alarm to investigate. This wastes time, and often the manpower isn’t available to immediately investigate.

An increase in the number of cameras monitoring a school poses new challenges for school administration and security departments. How do you monitor all those cameras and maintain tight security throughout the campus? For school districts, the video monitor is often locked in a closet or sitting in an administrator’s office. School staff is relied upon to be the eyes and ears of the school and report incidents. But smaller school districts just don’t have the budget to hire a security person to monitor video.

Large school districts may have only one security officer or a few guards to monitor access control alarm and video activity; however, it is difficult for one person to monitor several cameras at once. And most likely, that person is tasked with...
other responsibilities and cannot devote 100 percent of his or her time to monitoring video.

Large universities have on-campus police departments and roaming security guards, but it is still difficult to monitor 50, 100 or 200-plus cameras at once. Studies have shown that a person can only view a monitor for 20 to 30 minutes until fatigue sets in and they start to miss events.

Today, cameras are being installed on the IP network along with a district’s computer equipment, which means IT departments are getting involved and working with security departments to make sure needs are met for everyone. Whether they like it or not, security officers are learning the technical aspects of how security technology operates across a network, and the IT staff is learning how to best manage the security needs of a K-12 school district or university. This can be challenging, but an open mind and willingness to work together can overcome these challenges. In the end, having a safer campus operating effectively across the network is everyone’s goal.

With the explosion of cameras on the IP network, schools must plan wisely for their future security. Schools must choose a deeply integrated system that can grow with them not only in size but also in technology. Most schools are using analog cameras, but technology is moving to the network. Schools must choose a security management system that can support analog and IP cameras from leading manufacturers that operate on the network. Choosing this type of system will allow a school to upgrade to IP as budgets allow. Whether it’s three new cameras a year or updating one building per semester, administrators can plan budgets, upgrade technology and keep students, staff, assets and buildings safe.

Back it Up
Due to the increased bandwidth available on wide area networks, many school districts and universities are centralizing security. Schools can now choose encoder technology with a unique back-up feature, in which video is recorded on a server in the central location or the security control room. At the same time, it is recorded on another server in each individual school or facility. This Fault Tolerant Streaming™ provides a backup should the central server fail due to disaster, ensuring there is a copy of video at all times.

Technologically advanced encoders now use H.264 for recording video. H.264 is the next-generation video compression technology that delivers excellent video quality across a bandwidth spectrum. H.264 uses smaller file sizes, reducing the amount of space needed to operate on a network. Less storage space is required as well, due to the smaller file sizes.

New Challenges
K-12 schools continue to experience budget constraints. Administrators understand that security is a higher priority now than it was 10 years ago; however, money is tighter than ever. Federal funds have been slashed over the years, and although money was allotted in the stimulus package released by the Obama administration for schools to use for possible security installations, it is still unclear exactly what that means for districts.

Watertown Unified School District in Watertown, Wis., has been facing a growth crisis for the past 10 to 15 years. Its five elementary schools are overcrowded and old. Riverside Middle School is at full capacity now, and larger class sizes will be coming through the school in a few years. After several years of hard work, WUSD just passed a referendum that includes upgrading the HVAC system, roofs, windows, doors, bathrooms and security in all of its schools. The three largest elementary schools will receive building additions to help accommodate the community’s explosive growth. All schools will be increasing the number of doors controlled by access control and the number of cameras in use.

Security has become a more significant part of this referendum, but it still has its challenges.

“Security has really been brought to the forefront,” said Doug Linse, WUSD director of business services. “A large number of metropolitan schools have taken measures to address security issues, while rural districts have lagged behind. However, today’s environment and recent incidents have made security issues a priority to metropolitan and rural districts alike.”

Linse is referring to the 2006 school shooting that occurred in Weston, Wis., a community of 300 people located about 60 miles northwest of Madison, Wis., during which a freshman shot his high school principal. This close-to-home example of how kids and society have changed helped shape the decision to increase security.

As part of the referendum, Watertown High School is adding 32 fixed and PTZ cameras to its existing 16 to monitor parking lots, entrances and places where students congregate. Each elementary school is adding cameras to its existing security plan.

“I don’t want to give the impression that our schools are not safe,” Linse said. “We want to take the necessary precautions to ensure the safety of our buildings. We want parents to know their children are in a safe learning environment.”

While the mindset may be slowly changing in rural communities, many K-12 school administrations still believe that having a lot of security may not be a good thing. Parents also like that schools are open so they can come and go as they please. Some parents get frustrated when they can’t freely enter their child’s school building at any time of the day. Other parents appreciate the locked doors and feel their child is safe behind them.

School administrators must find a balance between security and working with the community. For those in the security industry, it seems clear that districts must do everything they can to keep students, staff and buildings safe.

Kim Rahfaldt is the public relations manager at AMAG Technology.
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A TALE OF THREE CAMPUS

What are security officials and students saying about mass notification solutions?

BY SAMUAL SHANES
Last fall, after the tragic events at Virginia Tech University and Northern Illinois University, Congress passed an amendment to the Clery Act, mandating all campuses to install mass notification systems to enable security to quickly notify the campus community of an ongoing emergency.

While each of these systems involves security and communication, they are in fact, a mirror image of each other. An emergency phone system allows a person in need to communicate quickly with campus security. A mass notification system allows campus security to communicate to the campus community at large, relaying information that it needs to know to protect itself during an ongoing emergency.

How is the role of mass notification continuing to evolve today?

The following includes quotes from campus chiefs of police and students sharing thoughts and their opinions on Talk-A-Phone’s WEBS mass notification systems installed on their campuses.

Samual Shanes is the chairman and CEO of Talk-A-Phone.

Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma City

Chief Lyndel Harris has installed a Talk-A-Phone WEBS mass notification system, integrated with emergency phones.

“Our student population is around 3,700, and one of the reasons why we decided to go with Talk-A-Phone is because we could generate broadcast announcements on them,” Harris said. “They could be used for information and also emergencies. Someone new to campus could hit the information button and be directly connected to our switchboard, and from there, they can receive information about the campus.

“One of the things I like is the capability to single out an area that you want to broadcast to. If you want to disperse a crowd or send a notification to that crowd, we have the capabilities to do that. “We’ve got 18 of these phones around campus. And plans are to install two more phones on the Culxberry Corner Apartments located on the west side of campus. Eventually, we’re going to have a broadcast system in every building on campus. That will allow us to broadcast messages through the phones. For example, if we have an active shooter, everyone will be notified by the intercom system.”

Auraria Higher Education Center, Denver

Chief John Mackey is head of the Aurora campus police department.

“Auraria campus is unique in that we have three institutions on one campus, serving approximately 40,000 students and 5,000 staff,” Mackey said. “So, safety and security are very important to all of us here.

“It’s an urban setting; a very busy campus. As our community needs have grown, the need to communicate has increased. We have approximately 200 Talk-A-Phone towers around campus, in the parking lot and in the buildings themselves. There’s a system in our dispatch center that links an alert to the exact location of the phone, to ensure an officer provides a quick response.

“Getting in contact with the police during an emergency is important to the folks here on campus. The ability to communicate quickly, efficiently and effectively with a broadcast message is important. So, it’s one of the things we’re looking at here on Auraria Campus.”

University of North Carolina, Greensboro, N.C.

UNCG Police Chief Jamie Herring and Captain Paul Lester said that as a part of its undertaking to continue to meet the changing security needs of its campus, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro added 16 WEBS towers to its previous network of 78 standard Talk-A-Phone Emergency Phone Towers.

“Like most universities, we want to be able to notify people in a timely manner, and that includes people not in buildings or unable to receive the other methods of notification,” Herring said.

“My first year on campus, I lived in the residence hall and I noticed the call boxes there,” said Stacy, a student at UNCG.

“There were several in the area, which I was glad to see.

“The new paging system is loud, so you can hear it from anywhere, and that’s a great evolution from the standard call box or something that not every student can get ahold of. On a big campus like this, it’s very easy to think you’re just in this one building—for example, the business school is very cut off from the music building—and so the mass paging system and texting really lets people know in an instant what’s going on. And if you know what’s going on at least you could take measures to avoid the area, or let your parents know you’re OK.”

“A lot of the times when I was walking back and forth from my car at night, I would always try and keep an eye to make sure where the emergency lights and phones were,” said Sherri, another UNCG student.

Another student, Benjamin, has high regard for the towers.

“The blue emergency notification lights all around campus make you feel safer when you get out of the car; you notice that its there, you look for it, there’s the blue light, there’s the button I need to push,” he said.

At Oklahoma City University, officials are planning to add indoor WEBS units to their system, to provide mass notification capability for indoor areas such as classrooms and dormitories, Harris said. In this way they can have a single system for audio notification both indoor and outdoor, area by area, building by building, floor by floor or even room by room.

For more information, watch a video of these interviews online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=J7UthLVhLRk.
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Efficient campus security takes planning and practice

BY PATRICK V. FIEL SR.

REPORTS OF A GUNMAN OPENING FIRE NEAR A UNIVERSITY MIGHT FORCE ITS ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF TO LOCK DOWN THE CAMPUS IN AN ATTEMPT TO KEEP ANYONE FROM ENTERING OR LEAVING.

Such a decision may affect the lives of students, faculty and staff, and will certainly be closely scrutinized by the campus trustees, law enforcement, parents and the surrounding community.

Campus lockdowns also can result from other factors, such as tornados and wildfires, chemical spills or bomb threats.

There are no cut-and-dry criteria for ordering a lockdown. Every circumstance is different and needs to be considered on its own merits. Before even considering a lockdown, an emergency plan must be in place.

The first step in creating such a plan is the establishment of a security task force, which should include representatives from every major area of campus. For example, academic affairs, campus police, IT, human resources, mental health services, legal counsel and facilities.

The task force should have endorsement from the highest levels of the university’s leadership, including the chancellor, president and/or board of trustees. This demonstrates that the university considers security a top priority and helps to ensure the active participation of staff. Once the task force is in place, the information gathering process should begin.

Be comprehensive in the approach, considering every possibility, so that the security plan addresses all potential scenarios. Omitting even one potential threat from the plan may compromise security. At the beginning of the risk assessment, one of the most important tasks is to seek the guidance of a qualified and experienced security solutions provider. A quality provider is specially trained in spotting security vulnerabilities and can recommend the appropriate measures to address those situations.

In conducting a risk assessment, talk with the security provider to determine which areas of the campus require particular focus, such as academic buildings, dormitories and parking lots, while also keeping in mind power plants and other infrastructure facilities that affect day-to-day campus functions. Talk with task force members on safety issues in their areas, previous incidents and any areas of concern. Analyze campus crime statistics and, if there is no formal reporting and tracking process, initiate one. It also is essential to review crime statistics in the greater community and to talk to local police officials, businesses and neighborhood groups to determine security issues that could impact a campus. Also be sure to walk the campus. This is a critical step and allows for face-to-face discussions with faculty, students and third-party on-campus businesses.

While creating a security plan, do not forget to tap into one of the greatest resources: the campus staff and students. In the event of a lockdown, faculty and staff can augment the efforts of campus police and other first responders. Many universities have thousands of employees, including students, who could be called upon to assist during a crisis. When the university president announces an emergency situation, staff members step into a different role to meet the demands of a crisis.

Each person’s role must be clearly defined in the security plan, and adequate training must be provided. In creating a plan, do not underestimate the importance of conducting practice drills for all participants. Learn from the drill, and then plan and train again and revise when necessary.

Good communication tools are vital in order to be effective in locking down an area as large as a college or university campus. Look for a Web-based electronic notification system that can alert thousands of people in an emergency situation via telephone, cell phone, e-mail, digital pager, fax machine or wireless PDA device.

Locking down a campus is serious business. But if the need should arise, be ready to do the job right by planning and practicing ahead of time.

Patrick V. Fiel Sr. is a public safety adviser for ADT Security Services.
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phones, and using all kinds of mobile technology to produce content directly. This immediacy changes the way journalists work, and that change must and will be reflected in the academic discipline. And this has implications for finally bringing more student-generated content into the course; there’s potential for real change.

Still, in most cases at this point, we haven’t really changed the way the disciplines are taught in academia, even though mobile media could substantially impact that and better reflect the “real world” discipline and the way we engage students. Maybe that’s yet to come.

Wolfgang: A lot of mobile learning initiatives have taken the easy path and become simply rebroadcasts of lectures; the one-to-many standard. That has its value, but it’s kind of like driving a Lamborghini down the road to pick up some milk. When we do that, we’re really not pushing the technology to a level that we could. Think about directionality. With mobile technology incorporated in a course, student engagement can now move in three directions: teacher to student—for example, the traditional classroom; student to teacher—for example, student-produced materials using Web 2.0 tools; and student to student—for example, using mobile devices for communication. The possibilities for real change are there.

Ittelson: If you think back to the origins of education, the university really began as nomadic scholars who came together in guilds because there wasn’t any other way to share and disseminate information. There wasn’t much of a communications infrastructure to support their research and scholarship, other than coming together in groups. But the unencumbered sharing of information among peers is something good that got lost with the advent of new technologies, like books, that represented knowledge in a static, one-way mode. Now our challenge is to break down those models of static information dissemination. With mobile technologies, the big thing to watch is whether they can help us move out of the current model into something truly new, and maybe revisit some of the richness of the past, when information flowed more freely from peer to peer.

4. Promote Your Initiatives

CT: How do you advocate for mobile learning and advance it on your campus?

Wolfgang: In the early stages of a mobile learning implementation, especially because we’re going to be working in a cross-disciplinary realm, we try to involve the people on campus who really want to participate in the initia-

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“Itwhen we deploy mobile technologies—which move the potential of technology outside of the classroom and build links among disciplines—we define a broad cross-disciplinary approach and empower it.” —Jim Wolfgang, GCSU
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5. Innovate, Always

CT: How do you find the opportunities for innovation in mobile learning?

Wolfgang: First of all, we need to focus on adaptation, not replication. Replication means taking something that looks pretty good that someone else did, and putting it in your own setting. Adaptation means taking those concepts and—looking carefully at your own needs—figuring out how they can also work for you. There’s the opportunity to innovate. [Technology] innovation [on campuses] is going to be important for a long time to come, and in mobile learning design it can successfully draw on interdisciplinary collaboration. Consider an application development example: Let’s say you have an iPhone initiative. Even though Apple’s App Store just downloaded its one-billionth application, not everything you need or everything that’s completely appropriate to your needs is going to be right there for you to purchase. So, look for an innovative—and hopefully interdisciplinary—solution. You might team the school of education with the computer science department so that the students in the computer science department can write the apps for mobile learning that are needed by the school of education. This type of strategy not only gets the job done, it also provides students with the experience of working in a true industry, on real project teams that leverage the kinds of multidirectional communications and interdisciplinary collaborations that get you to your goal. CT

“With mobile technologies, the big thing to watch is whether they can help us move out of the current model into something truly new, and maybe revisit some of the richness of the past, when information flowed more freely from peer to peer.” —John Ittelson, CSU-Monterey Bay

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AS MUCH AS IT IS EAGERLY ANTICIPATED, freshman year is often a time of confusion, disorientation, and even alienation for many students.

According to ACT (maker of the ACT college entrance exam), one in four college freshmen will drop out before completing sophomore year. The reasons for this high level of withdrawal vary, but a report by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute suggests that new students often feel overwhelmed and unprepared for the academic and social challenges of college life (see “It’s Not Easy Being Green,” page 38).

Higher education institutions are constantly looking for new ways to help first-year students smooth the transition between high school and college. Many begin before the students even step foot on campus, investing in sophisticated web portals for prospective and admitted students that provide a gateway to relationship building with faculty, staff, and other incoming freshmen. Most colleges and universities also commit administrative resources to helping new students get acclimated to campus, creating departments with titles such as the Office of Retention and First-Year Programs.

Yet not many universities devote the same level of IT resources to students once they arrive, as they do to encourage them to come. And few provide their first-year program administrators with technological tools that will help them proactively support students. At most, freshmen are directed into the same portal all students use, or have access to a static web page featuring a “frequently asked questions” list and links to the offices and groups a freshman might find useful.
Higher ed IT experts can point to a handful of universities, however, that have developed first-year student portals in an effort to reach out to this vulnerable population. The innovative administrators behind these programs have sought to move beyond passive websites to create personalized and event-driven pages with information pushed to students based upon their needs and interests.

While most of these pioneers cannot pinpoint the actual impact of the portals on retention rates (because the programs are either too new or they are just one part of a broader first-year support effort), they believe the portals are forging deeper bonds with their first-year students by proactively targeting their social and academic needs. Here are three case studies.

**Minnesota: Making It Personal**

For several years, officials at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities have been sending targeted e-mails to specified student groups on campus based upon their interests. In 2004, as a logical extension of those efforts, they launched a web portal, called myU, that retrieves personalized information for each student and acts accordingly.

When freshmen log in, for example, the system recognizes them as first-year students and “delivers specific information in a look and feel targeted at them,” says Bill O’Connor, assistant director for communications and public relations for orientation and first-year programs. “Overall, the tone of our content for freshmen is created to help those students make connections and feel more welcome at the university,” he explains.

“Lehigh University’s first-year-experience portal pushes relevant information to new students, helping them learn about the school, manage their time, and make decisions before they arrive on campus.”

“If what you are creating is not relevant, the students will leave. We have already seen some flight.”

—Bruce Taggart, vice provost for library and technology services, Lehigh University

freshmen is created to help those students make connections and feel more welcome at the university,” he explains. “All of our programming focuses on the developmental needs of students, and with new freshmen we know that this can be a very vulnerable time for them.”

Minnesota recognizes that six weeks into the first semester can be a particularly crucial time for new students, for instance, so the school features support, counseling, and connection opportunities on the freshman home page during this period.

“We will even post information about being homesick or struggling with the responsibilities of being away from home for the first time,” says O’Connor.

In addition, freshmen on campus get features to help them acclimate. For example, there is a program through the portal called “Kick It!” which is a sort of treasure hunt to motivate students to get out and get involved in campus activities. In contrast, O’Connor points out that new transfer students prefer more direct and brief information, and are more likely to be commuter students. “For this population we try to encourage involvement and connections, but mostly we make sure they are aware of any tools they will need to be successful at the U of M.”

Students begin using the portal once they are accepted. “Incoming students can start chatting with other students in a discussion board. It’s their first chance to make connections with other students,” explains O’Connor.

There was discussion among administrators about adding social networking tools, but they ultimately decided not to compete with Facebook and MySpace. “Students get a lot of benefit from those sites,” O’Connor says. “We decided to try to fill the gap with information specific to the campus they are not getting [on external sites].”
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The Road to Xavier

**PORTALS**

**The Road to Xavier**

**AT SOME UNIVERSITIES,** officials have noticed that the web portals created for admitted students are having an impact on freshman behavior. Xavier University (OH) developed an elaborate portal, called The Road to Xavier, that acts as a gateway to relationship building for prospective and admitted students. The portal, developed in house, connects prospective students to their admissions counselor, their financial aid counselor, and the chair of their academic department, as well as some current students. The current students submit photos with special Flicker feeds and they Twitter about daily life so that incoming students can get a sense of what day-to-day life on campus is like.

All this online contact before students arrive is proving beneficial, administrators say. "The orientation team says there has been a huge change," reports Douglas Ruschman, director for web services. "They have a strong sense that the students know each other already when they first arrive." Many students also already know and may have contacted the chair of their academic department or the retention office. "Those connections never used to be made before they arrived on campus," he adds.

Ruschman says the university sees its next challenge as extending the value students find in The Road to Xavier to the portal students use once they arrive on campus. Currently they can find a freshman-only area that contains notices on campus as well as some of their academic department, as well as some current students. The current students submit photos with special Flicker feeds and they Twitter about daily life so that incoming students can get a sense of what day-to-day life on campus is like.

One thing administrators would like in the next iteration is the ability to drill down deeper into the data to better understand how students use the portal. "I can see that a biological science major is on the site right now," O’Connor says, "but I can’t see what he is doing or which parts of the site he is focusing on."

**Lehigh: Making It Relevant**

In 2001 when Bruce Taggart explained what a portal was to other Lehigh University (PA) officials, he remembers they looked at him confusedly, "like the RCA dog, with their heads turned to the side." The university website does that already, they told him. "No," replied Taggart, vice provost for library and technology services, "the website is passive and students have to log in to several systems to find information." He explained to them that a portal would be personalized and integrated, would push relevant information to students, and would be continually updated.

A private university with approximately 5,000 students, Lehigh decided to build portals for several different constituencies on campus. Although its first-to-second year retention rate is quite high at 94 percent, the university started in 2003 by launching a first-year-experience portal, which has expanded every year to include more information. Lehigh next extended the portal to connect to freshmen in several other populations from there.

Lehigh officials decided to start their portal development work with incoming freshmen because those new students "have a lot to learn about campus and many decisions to make in a short period of time," Taggart says.

Using portal technology from its student information services provider (SunGard), the school is able to push relevant personal information to new students. For instance, time management is often a problem for first-year students, so at Lehigh, freshmen students’ personalized calendars use color coding to let them know they should do things in red right away; items flagged in yellow indicate deadlines that are coming up soon.

The Student Affairs Office uses the portal to connect to freshmen in several ways. It uses quizzes and surveys delivered through the portal to get a sense of a student’s strengths, weaknesses, and concerns. Informational literacy tests conducted via the portal give the office an overall idea of how well the new students can cite sources and summarize research. An alcohol quiz helps Student Affairs assess students’ overall understanding about drinking issues on campus. The results can help staff determine the level of outreach necessary.

The office also uses the portal to probe students about the levels of service they receive from Student Affairs and the Registrar’s Office. Information and e-mail links for all the campus counseling services involving sex, drugs, alcohol, and mental health are prominently displayed in the portal.

“One of Student Affairs’ biggest concerns is identifying students at risk early,” Taggart says. After it created the first-year-experience portal, Lehigh next extended the technology to admitted students. “That portal allows them to ask questions of current students, and we were able to deliver many of the orientation features online through it, including a pre-calculus test,” Taggart says. Because some of the orientation process can now take...
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place online, new students come to campus only once in the summer before their first year instead of twice, as they used to (see “Road to Xavier,” page 36, for related story).

Virtually all freshman students use the portal because that is how they get to their grades, finances, and the Blackboard course management system. (Previously, students had separate logins for transcripts and grades, e-mail, and financial systems. Now everything related to academics, including calendars, online library offerings, and Blackboard, is unified under a single sign-on, with customized tools to make life easier.)

But Taggart has noted that student use of technology has changed quite a bit since 2003. For instance, the school started building social network features, but abandoned them because students now go to Facebook for all their social networking. Students also forward their Lehigh e-mail to their Google Gmail accounts because it allows them to store more data. “If what you are creating is not relevant, the students will leave,” Taggart says bluntly. “We have already seen some flight.”

He adds, however, “The good news is that we’re flexible enough that our portal manager can work with SunGard and suggest new features to test that are relevant and useful.”

**Alabama: Making It Connect**

Lowell Davis, assistant director of new student programs at **The University of Alabama**, says that in 2004 UA was seeking to help first-year students “make connections” with other students. But he and his colleagues were also looking for a way for university officials to proactively connect with new students, so that they could better monitor that critical first year.

Created and maintained by software vendor Education Dynamics, the Inside-UA portal aims to provide an engaging online social environment for first-year students by enabling them to create and share profiles, upload photos, use discussion boards, and blog about events on campus.

“We had a goal to make it as personal as possible, so that it would look familiar to them,” Davis explains. “Education Dynamics had somewhat of a template for this, and they worked to provide a localized look and feel and populate it with ‘Bama content.’

The most popular feature is called “AskBama,” which allows students to ask administrators about everything from financial aid and how to change roommates, to how to sell their football tickets.

The administrative side of the portal features reporting tools that allow the program administrator to assess engagement of individual students as well as the whole first-year population.

“We use pop-up questions to make sure students are connecting,” Davis explains. “We might ask if they know who their academic adviser is, for instance. If they don’t, then we reach out to them. We might send an e-mail or ask if they would like to do a face-to-face meeting. This just lets them know that somebody cares about them.”

The portal offers a series of articles about drugs, alcohol, and mental health issues, and even role-playing games around issues like binge drinking. There is a link to the counseling center, so help is just one button push away for students who might be reticent about face-to-face meetings on what they may consider embarrassing topics.

The reporting tools allow UA to track usage, and it is quite high in the first semester. For freshman introductory courses, instructors often post surveys and questionnaires for students within InsideUA. By the spring semester, however, usage drops off a bit as freshmen become more familiar with the campus and start using Facebook more.

But Davis reports seeing a spike in April, as students look for roommates for the following year and for internships or summer jobs.

Because of its social networking features and because it is populated with information on campus events, Davis reports that some students have told him they would like to continue using InsideUA after their freshman year. Davis himself would like students to be able to keep using InsideUA’s social networking tools because they allow administrators to keep tabs on how well students are doing at staying connected.

“A lot of schools have offices focused on retention and the first-year experience,” Davis says, “but traditionally you don’t see as much attention paid to sophomores and juniors.”

Until then, UA will continue to use its portal technology to actively reach out to first-year students. Because, as Lowell succinctly puts it, “Freshman year is a crucial time.”

David Raths is a freelance writer based in Philadelphia.
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Enhanced Collaboration

Wimba has unveiled the Wimba Collaboration Suite 6.0, featuring enhancements to Wimba Classroom, Wimba Pronto, and Wimba Voice. Wimba Classroom now supports MP4 files, allowing instructors to distribute digital audio and video streams of lectures and discussions to course management systems, YouTube, iTunes, Facebook, or other content management systems. Students can access the content online or offline, not only from their computers but also from their iPod, iPhone, or other MP4 players. Wimba Pronto now features whiteboard functionality, and with Wimba Voice, instructors can now grade voice discussion boards and automatically add the evaluations to the course management system gradebook. Contact vendor for pricing.

Affordable Video Management

CompleteView One, the latest release from Salient Systems, is a full-featured video management system capable of supporting up to 25 IP or analog cameras, at a budget-conscious price point. The edition has the same viewing, investigation, and configuration capabilities available in the company’s CompleteView Pro and Enterprise versions, including the live video client, alarm client, web client, and mapping. The new version also offers incident investigation capabilities such as Smart Search, filtering by recording type, video queuing, motion detection, multi- and single-camera playback, and snapshot with digital PTZ and smoothing. CompleteView One is upgradable to CompleteView Pro and Enterprise editions without complex software installations or extensive training. MSRP: $125 per-video-channel license cost.
Online Content Creation Tool

The latest version of SoftChalk’s flagship eLearning software, SoftChalk V5, is a content authoring solution for educators to easily create engaging online lessons. New features include the ability to perform keyword searches across multiple media repositories at a time, including media from open sources (such as YouTube or Flickr), fee-based premium sources, or library repositories available through the university itself. The new version also offers the ability to embed blogs, polls, surveys, widgets, wikis, and videos in course materials. The included eCourseBuilder tool combines multiple lessons into larger eCourse modules, with automatic calculation and tracking of score information between and within lessons. Education pricing: $550 per license, with discounts available for purchases of more than 10 licenses.

Theft Recovery for Netbooks

Absolute Software has launched Computrace for Netbooks, delivering IT asset management and theft recovery for ultra-mobile computers. The firmware-based Computrace software agent regularly provides the Absolute Monitoring Center with location and IT asset management information, enabling users to monitor, track, and manage a university’s computers from a single web interface, regardless of whether the devices are on or off the network. The solution helps generate accurate inventories to assist in budgeting and refresh plans; provides visibility into the productivity and usage of campus netbooks; helps deter computer theft and recover stolen devices; and assists police in identifying computer thieves and gathering evidence for prosecution. MSRP: $24.99 for a one-year license.

Blackboard on the Go

Blackboard has released Blackboard Learn for Apple iPhone, a free application that allows iPhone and iPod Touch users to access course information on the go. Students can receive updates and alerts on grades, assignments, tests, and other information from courses, as well as information from groups and organizations. In order to protect sensitive information, each student receives information from only the courses in which he or she is registered. Available for download through the Apple iTunes App Store.

IT Automation

Kaseya 6, the newest version of Kaseya’s IT automation solution, enables IT professionals to remotely monitor and manage distributed infrastructure and automate daily IT tasks. The company has re-architected the platform’s base framework, facilitating integration, expanding automation capabilities, and giving organizations more flexibility in selecting which features they need. Feature enhancements include a new user interface, advanced workflow, expanded scheduling, and centralized reporting and messaging capabilities. Contact vendor for pricing.

Classroom Computer Management

Faronics Insight, a classroom technology management solution from Faronics, allows instructors to educate, assist, monitor, and communicate with students from a central computer. Educators can monitor student computers, blank student screens, remote into student workstations, mute sound, limit access to the internet and desktop applications, share their screen with students, and allow students to share screens with each other. The software also provides the ability to send and collect files, ask questions, and broadcast messages. With Faronics Insight v7.21, it is now possible to...
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use an instructor console to manage both Windows (2000, XP, or Vista) and Max OS X (10.3 and higher) based student computers at the same time. Contact vendor for pricing.

**Mapping Ideas**

MatchWare’s *MindView 3* is a mind mapping application enabling users to develop their ideas visually, beginning with a central concept and adding “branches” extending from the main idea. Features of the new version include an intuitive Microsoft Office 7 interface; improved map and timeline layouts; an automatic numbering scheme for clarifying the order of a map’s branches; and new template and layout options. Cost for a single user license: $279.

**Energy-Saving UPS**

Tripp Lite’s *PowerAlert* is a network-based power management system that enables a network manager to monitor and control up to 250 Tripp Lite UPS systems or PDUs and the computers and equipment they support from a single interface. The software now includes an Economy Mode function, helping institutions save on electricity expenditures. The software allows IT personnel to remotely manage the energy-saving settings of Tripp Lite SmartOnline UPS systems in real time or through defined schedules. Free download is available at www.tripplite.com/en/support/poweralert/downloads.cfm.

**Unified Campus Alerts**

Omnilert has announced the release of *e2Campus version 3.0*, which unifies disparate emergency alert systems and other campus assets into one management console for improved crisis communications. *e2Campus* now complies with the OASIS Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) version 1.1, the industry standard for exchanging emergency information between other CAP-compliant devices and services. *Version 3.0* integrates with desktop pop-up alert systems, PA systems, mass text messaging and e-mail systems, auto phone dialers, loudspeakers, fire alarms, digital signage, alert beacons, social media sites, and other existing communications infrastructure. New features include the ability to send text- and voice-based alerts to all endpoints from one screen; network services for advanced configuration of individual communication devices and services; pre-written and pre-recorded messages; and delivery reports for tracking message delivery and receipt. Prices vary according to number of users.

**ERP Enhancements**

Jenzabar has announced a comprehensive new release (version 3.0) of the *Jenzabar EX* enterprise resource planning system, featuring updates and improvements within the Purchasing, Registration, Common, Development, and Admissions modules, as well as the Financial Aid Manager. The Purchasing module, for instance, offers new requisition capabilities and a personalized, collaborative environment to provide streamlined workflow for module managers, approvers, requesters, and purchasing agents. Other features include easier access to view finances, automatic line separation for each approver, a personalized alert system to monitor requisition status, and embedded e-mail links throughout the requisition lifecycle. A new personalized navigation window called My Workspace has also been added to provide a customizable user interface and enable users to collaborate with coworkers and achieve tasks more effectively. Contact vendor for pricing.

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**Resources**

- **Absolute Software**: [www.absolute.com/products](http://www.absolute.com/products)
- **Blackboard**: [www.blackboard.com](http://www.blackboard.com). Click on “Teaching & Learning,” then “Resources.”
- **Jenzabar**: [www.jenzabar.net/products.aspx](http://www.jenzabar.net/products.aspx)
- **MatchWare**: [www.matchware.com/en/products](http://www.matchware.com/en/products)
- **Omnilert**: [www.e2campus.com](http://www.e2campus.com)
- **Salient Systems**: [www.salientsys.com/products](http://www.salientsys.com/products)
- **SoftChalk**: [www.softchalk.com/learn.html](http://www.softchalk.com/learn.html)
- **Tripp Lite**: [www.tripplite.com/en](http://www.tripplite.com/en)
- **Wimba**: [www.wimba.com/solutions/higher-education](http://www.wimba.com/solutions/higher-education)
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  Wednesday, July 29 | 3:30 - 4:30 pm
  William Havice, Ph.D. and Pamela Havice, Ph.D.
  Clemson University

Poster sessions:

- **Student Attitudes Toward Lecture Capture**
  
  Tuesday, July 28 | 2:00 – 3:00 pm
  James Craig, Ed.D.
  University of Maryland Baltimore Dental School

- **Web Streaming: The Essential Techniques for Reaching Your Audience**
  
  Wednesday, July 29 | 2:00 – 3:00 pm
  Bob Hillhouse | University of Tennessee

- **Learning Through Advanced Internet Technologies**
  
  Wednesday, July 29 | 2:00 – 3:00 pm
  Anne-Marie Lerner, Ph.D
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Community colleges are, like their institutional brethren, suffering from budget cuts due to the economic downturn. Yet, according to a recent survey from the Campus Computing Project, they are also experiencing an enrollment boom that may be a result of the same economy. The survey, a joint effort with League for Innovation in the Community College (www.league.org) and Pearson Education (www.pearson.com), canvassed 120 community college presidents during late February and early March 2009. Their responses to a range of state-of-the-campus questions offer insight into the dilemma community colleges find themselves in: doing more with less. For the full report, go to www.campuscomputing.net.

Overall Enrollment Leaps…

Ninety-two percent of presidents reported an increase in overall enrollment over last year, across all student categories. Casey Green, director of the Campus Computing Project, suggests that students are flocking to community colleges because they are “buying down, coming back, looking for retraining.” Percentages of presidents reporting increased enrollments, in each student category:

- full-time 86%
- part-time 82%
- transfer 74%
- certificate programs 72%
- reverse transfer from 4-year colleges 62%
- workforce development 77%

And Online Enrollments Bound…

Almost all presidents (93%) reported increases in online course enrollment over last year, with 71% experiencing climbs of over 5% or more. A significant, though not as dramatic, percentage of presidents also reported growth in online certificate (50%) and online degree programs (55%). In a related finding, a great number of presidents said they have expanded or plan to expand over the next year online courses (82%) and online degree programs (75%) as a means of raising new revenues. But most presidents (89%) also indicated that student demand is the real driver behind increasing online offerings.

While Support Declines…

Higher enrollment figures stand in contrast to the budget cuts colleges are enduring. A majority of presidents (57%) said they have had overall cuts in their budgets from last year. They reported decreases in instructional services (44%), IT resources (43%), and admin services (56%). In related findings, while over half the presidents (54%) said they are hiring part-time faculty to keep up with enrollment demands, the same percentage acknowledged that they have no plans to hire more academic (53%) or vocational (54%) advisers. Around a third of presidents also report cuts in clerical support (39%) and facilities support (32%).

Green is concerned that “the absence of the infrastructure creates an incomplete opportunity for students and, by extension, faculty who are dependent on a range of infrastructure services including academic and occupational counselors and IT user support services.” With online education in particular, Green says, “infrastructure issues are critical,” especially for the adult learner who needs “the off-hour support.”

Source: The Campus Computing Project, 2009; www.campuscomputing.net
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