Unified Communications news

Unified Communications is live in two locations. The first installation was The Inn at Virginia Tech and the Skelton Conference Center where new systems and phones were installed in late July. The Inn represents an early implementation in order to work on some of the more complex features involved in a call center environment. Guest telephones as well as those in administrative offices are now supported by Unified Communications.

The second location is 1770 Forecast Drive (formerly known as Research Building XIV). Network Infrastructure and Services employees in this building were the first to experience the cutover happening after business hours. They received new telephones during the evening of Tuesday, September 4. The building provides an environment to go beyond lab testing of the new system into a production environment. This early and limited deployment of UC phones will help test and improve the system.

September 12 marked the transition between Verizon as the university’s telephone service provider and the new provider, Level 3. No significant problems were expected or experienced during the transition. However, there is a chance that isolated instances of telephone companies may fail to route calls appropriately, and that callers from any such system won’t be able to get through to Virginia Tech in the weeks to come. While the problem is not expected to be significant in quantity, any isolated instance may be difficult to learn about and diagnose. Please stay alert for any stories you hear of callers who cannot reach the university, and report them to 231-6780.

TimeClock Plus

The Payroll Office announced the rollout of a new time clock system, TimeClock Plus. The system enables the electronic entry, routing, and approval of wage employee timekeeping. Work to interface TimeClock Plus with Banner was undertaken by the Human Resources Information Systems group within Enterprise Systems. Ongoing management of the system is by the Payroll Office. Information Technology wage employees are familiar with the previous version of the system. Other early users of the system this fall will be Dining Services, Equine Medical Ancillary, University Libraries, Recreational Sports, The Inn at Virginia Tech, and Squires Student Center.


The end of the VT Modem Pool

The Virginia Tech Modem Pool (VTMP) is going away September 30. Once known as the “high speed modem pool,” the near-obsolete VTMP cannot offer the Internet service provider services that commercial and nonprofit entities can. Commercial services in the Blacksburg area are available at competitive prices. The Office of Ordering and Provisioning in Network Infrastructure and Services can assist departments that wish to pay for employees’ connectivity expenses. The office will also assist individuals who need to switch to an alternate dial-up Internet service provider.

Relatively few subscribers remain, and these individuals are being contacted. Information Technology employees can serve as ambassadors to friends and neighbors who may have relied on the VTMP.

IT Fall Reference Guide is posted

The annual reference guide has been posted on www.computing.vt.edu and www.it.vt.edu. The guide has been significantly revised this year, with more information on coming services and with reminders about usage conditions of existing services. The guide is not being printed this year, but can be accessed and downloaded through these websites.