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Net neutrality

Engaging the debate over network neutrality, Kyle Dixon, an attorney in DC wrote the "point" vision for the issue in the *Winter Virginia Issues & Answers* and Brenda van Gelder and Erv Blythe provided the counterpoint, "Neutrality matters." [<http://www.via.vt.edu/>]. The debate pits giant vs. giant—e.g., telecommunications carriers and big companies with content, and also engages all users and potential users of the Internet.

ACCS Conference

The 2007 ACCS Conference is held each April, this year April 18-20 at the Doubletree Inn in Charlottesville, hosted by the University of Virginia. Keynote speakers are Rachel S. Smith, Director of Special Projects and Publications for the New Media Consortium, and Brett Leake, a standup comic, motivational speaker, and deliverer of 'philosophic lecturettes.'

Presentation proposals are being accepted through January 31. A workshop may be a formal presentation, a panel discussion, or a group presentation. Visit the ACCS website at <http://accs.virginia.edu>.

Faculty Development

Spring 2007 topics range over essential skills (security, Acrobat, PowerPoint, Word, OneNote), digital media development (podcasting, Photoshop, video), web development (accessibility, Dreamweaver, design), teaching and technology (Blackboard, ePortfolio, Scholar, concept mapping, evaluations, blogs & wikis, tablets), research and technology (resources, bibliographic tools, surveys, images, visualization), and research administration (finding funding, writing grants, compliance, human subjects, export controls). Partners in the institute include the library and sponsored programs.

LabView

Information Technology Acquisitions is piloting the distribution of LabView software to students in the College of Engineering this spring. The LabView license is the first student software to include a locally managed license activation process tied to machine installation for large numbers of users. Enterprise Systems Support has worked with ITA to develop a scalable system for the distribution and license activation of the software. LabView, a graphical development environment, is used by engineers and scientists for signal acquisition, measurement analysis, and data presentation. It is a product of National Instruments. The College of Engineering is piloting this software this spring with the intention to include it in the Engineering Freshman Bundle in the fall.

Transitioning “Departmental PIDs”

“Departmental PIDs are going away.”

This proclamation sent trembling through the DCSS audience a few years back, as it failed to communicate an understanding of the functions of these credentials. Yet the words pinpointed the shortcomings in security and accountability of “departmental PIDs” and began a new way of thinking about them.

The functions that departmental PIDs serve include:

- Providing an e-mail address that multiple members of a work group could access;
- Providing credentials for individuals who are more “loosely” affiliated with the university than faculty, staff, and students; and
- Providing credentials for particular resources.

These abilities do not go away with the “end” of departmental PIDs. To improve security and accountability—primarily by associating logons with known individuals, departmental PIDs are transitioning to three newer methods:

- VT PACE addresses permit workgroups to manage who accesses shared e-mail without sharing a single ID and password (See *computing.vt.edu*, E-mail & Calendaring).
- Virginia Tech departments may sponsor a person for a PID and negotiate for services for that individual as needed (See *computing.vt.edu*, PIDs).
- The Enterprise Directory supports *ad hoc* groups such that a group ID may be authorized for a particular resource or service, yet each person logs in as him- or herself. (To submit a request, use the 4Help form, noting “ED-Group” in the subject line.)

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Starting in the spring of 2007, daylight saving time starts three weeks earlier, 2:00 am on the second Sunday in March. This year the date is March 11.

PDC password resets

The Student Telecommunications (StuTel) Office is available during published hours to reset forgotten passwords for personal digital certificates (PDCs). New PDCs will also be issued during these hours, published at <http://www.pki.vt.edu/pdc/schedule.html>.

Longer hours will be in place later for the university-wide implementation. If the current schedule does not accommodate your needs, please work through your manager and the StuTel office to schedule a convenient time.