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Oracle Tech Day

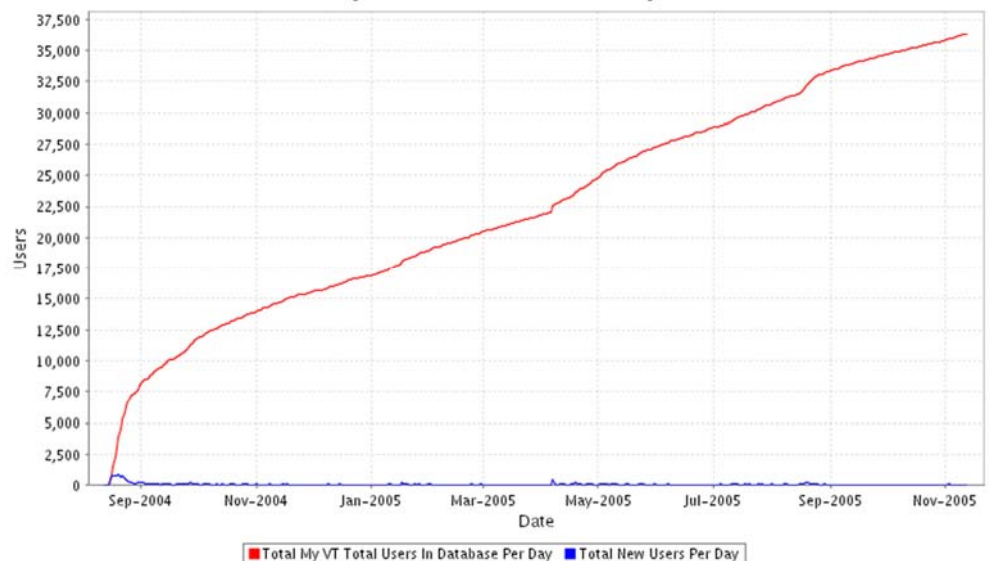
Oracle Tech Day, held October 3, presented information on Oracle products, include new features in version 10g. An overview of Oracle's Service Oriented Architecture and demonstrations followed. Afternoon sessions focused on identity management, provisioning, and end-to-end security. For more information, contact Debbie Fulton (dfulton@vt.edu).

My VT

With the inauguration of the new university homepage that is targeted to external audiences, My VT takes on added significance as the primary site for university faculty, staff, and students. Usage of the portal has continued to grow, and is expected to increase more as internal communications are directed to the site.

The average number of logins per day has doubled from 2004/2005 and usage remains consistent. Near the midpoint of last fiscal year (November 15, 2005), there were 36,364 user accounts for My VT, an increase of 21,588 or 146% since the previous November.

My VT Total Users Per Day



IALR Governor's Technology Award

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR—www.ialr.org) received the Governor's Technology Award in September. Now in its seventh year, this awards program honors outstanding achievements and recognizes innovative technology initiatives in the public sector throughout Virginia.

The IALR was a winner in the "Innovation in Higher Education" category that recognizes the innovative use of technology to support the unique missions of Virginia's colleges and universities. The IALR was recognized for its use of technology in connection with graduate classes received and originated at the IALR. Virginia Tech graduate students working at the IALR on research projects often need to complete coursework associated with their degree. Their participation in Blacksburg campus-based courses is facilitated by videoconferencing classes from Virginia Tech to the IALR. In addition, Virginia Tech has tenure-track faculty in residence at the IALR who conduct research as well as teach classes. The classes they teach include many students in Blacksburg, so the distance is bridged through videoconferencing. The IALR has incorporated Smart Technologies and tablet computers in classes taught in Danville, allowing the instructor to annotate over PowerPoint slides and save those notes for the class. MediaSite technology is used to capture both IALR-received as well as originated videoconferenced classes, including both the instructor-class interactions as well as the slide presentation content. The courses can be streamed live to a website, streamed at a later time, or reproduced on CD or DVD, thus affording students maximum flexibility in how they access information. IALR-based faculty are also utilizing pod-casting to disseminate pre-class assignments to students. These technologies have created greater flexibility for both students and faculty and have allowed instructors to be more innovative while appealing to today's more technology-oriented students.

Information Technology at Virginia Tech

Vice President for Information
Technology
Earving Blythe
1700 Kraft Drive, Mailstop
0169

Phone: 540-231-4227
Website: www.it.vt.edu

The second annual Computer Security Awareness Video Contest is a part of National Cyber Security Month—October. The contest seeks creative, topical, and effective videos developed by college students for college students. Videos must be two minutes or less in length and focus attention on computer security problems and how best to handle them. Students compete for cash prizes, sponsored by the National Cyber Security Alliance. The deadline is March 15, 2007. For full detail, see <http://www.educause.edu/SecurityVideoContest2007>.

October is Cyber Security Month. DCSS, October 17, will feature security topics.

Enterprise GIS

Over a period of nearly three years, a small research project at Virginia Tech to establish a centralized system for the storage and sharing of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data has developed into a grassroots movement with support from multiple departments, both within and outside of Information Technology.

eCorridors staff members, in collaboration with personnel from NI&S, and with support from other university and local government officials, are exploring new technologies to securely host and share spatial data, as well as providing opportunities for work experiences for students. In addition to increasing the efficiency of the university's internal operations and supporting the needs of teaching, research, and outreach, enterprise GIS could facilitate communications and logistics in times of emergencies.

The project grew out of an effort to share data internally among the departments within IT involved in the New River Valley Planning District broadband network project. Almost immediately, it was realized that the same GIS technologies could also be used for mapping NI&S's outside plant assets. eCorridors and NI&S created a prototype multi-user data repository to meet these needs, and over time other administrative departments, academic programs, and University Libraries expressed interest in the system. As the enterprise GIS initiative continues to grow, an opportunity exists for increased collaboration between the university and the Town of Blacksburg.

For more information, contact Brenda van Gelder.