UniCom connects the campus

UniCom has begun to show up all over campus this summer. Approximately 15% of the campus telephones have been converted to the new system and UITS is gearing up to have everyone on UniCom by the end of the Fall semester.

For those that may not be aware, UniCom is IU’s term for unified communications, a service that uses Microsoft Lync to bring voice, video and data together in a unified desktop communications system. UniCom allows users to quickly see if their colleagues are available for a telephone call, send instant messages and initiate or join a video conference. People can also use Lync to share their desktop and send files directly to others on all IU campuses.

Since the pilot of Unicom in April, UITS has conducted six training sessions throughout campus. “People have been very enthusiastic,” says Kathleen Weidner, UITS Communications Officer, “I’m really excited to be involved in UniCom training. I believe this new system will help faculty and staff communicate faster and more effectively.”

Kevin Ahlgrim, Manager, Telecommunications Systems, who is spearheading the installations across campus, believes that all users will find something to love about UniCom. “After the learning curve of using Lync is over,” he says, “I believe everyone will enjoy the many additional features that it offers in communication with fellow employees and off campus.”

As progress continues and the UniCom system arrives on every desk on campus there will be many additional training opportunities throughout the Fall semester.

To view the scheduled training sessions, and any other UniCom information, please visit: unicom.iusb.edu

To Get Started with UniCom:

PC/Windows users:
1. Restart your computer.
2. Open any browser and go to the following url: https://accountmgmt.exchange.iu.edu/E911/
3. Login when prompted.
4. Read and acknowledge the E911 statement.
If you get a message suggesting that you install the Lync client, please ignore as your system will update itself the next time it is restarted.

MAC users:
1. Open any browser and go to the following url: https://accountmgmt.exchange.iu.edu/E911/
2. Login when prompted.
3. Read and acknowledge the E911 statement.
4. You will be directed to the Lync client install webpage – please install.
5. If you are not directed to the Lync client install webpage then go here: http://iuware.iu.edu/Mac/Pack-age/1633

Be aware of the passphrase reset this Fall!
See inside for more details.
I’m sure by now most people have heard that our campus is migrating to UniCom, IU’s term for unified communications. UniCom really does bring together voice, video and data in a unified desktop communication system. A big part of UniCom is the replacement of telephones across campus. To give some perspective, there has not been a project of this magnitude involving telephones since 1989.

What besides telephone sets will change? One major change is that all long distance calls will require an authorization code. This 7-digit code is unique for each faculty/staff and will ensure that all long distance calls are billed to the appropriate department. A second change, although not as dramatic, is the campus dialing plan. To call another extension on the IU South Bend campus (or Elkhart) will continue to involve dialing 4 digits – that does not change. However, with UniCom, all off-campus calls will now involve dialing 10 digits. It will no longer be necessary to dial ‘9’ for an outside line or dial ‘1’ and then the area code. This works just like a cell phone.

Microsoft Lync is the system that IU uses for UniCom. Microsoft Lync integrates very nicely with other Microsoft products, including Outlook e-mail and Office. This makes UniCom so much more than a phone system. Other services UniCom readily provides are Instant Messaging (IM), Presence (see instantly who’s available), audio and video calls, conference calls, desktop and file sharing and a list of contacts. More information on any and all of these topics can be found at https://unicom.iusb.edu and http://unicom.iu.edu.

The conversion of the campus to UniCom started in May of this year and will be completed by the end of 2012. So far, the conversion has gone smoothly and we have learned a lot during this pilot phase.

One of the biggest challenges I have encountered is getting people to think about UniCom as a unified communication service and not just as a phone service. Some folks pick up on this right away and love UniCom. From my experience, to get the most out of UniCom, it is best to think of your computer as your phone. The Lync client installed on your computer opens the door to all the rich features offered by UniCom.

UITs is aware that UniCom is a big transition, consequently we are committed to ensuring that the campus is as informed as possible. UniCom was presented to the IU South Bend Faculty Academic Senate in April of this year. A campus town hall meeting was held in May of this year and was attended by close to 70 people. The session consisted of an overview of UniCom with 75% of the session devoted to questions and answers.

UITs will continue to focus on communicating with the campus as we move forward with UniCom. We will provide multiple training opportunities that will be scheduled frequently. UITS will also offer infoshare sessions for those desiring more one-on-one help.

A good place to learn more about UniCom and the scheduled training is to visit our UniCom informational web page at https://unicom.iusb.edu.

Here’s to a step into the future of communications!

Phil Mikulak
Director, UITS Systems Support
IU South Bend

Change your passphrase now to avoid Fall disruptions

Is your passphrase at least two years old? If so, be sure to change it before you head into summer. Starting September 10, passphrases for CAS-authenticated sites will automatically expire two years after they are created. This security measure will protect your valuable data against hacking and misuse.

Retain your access to important resources such OneStart, Oncourse, and Student Information Services.

Change your passphrase now.
You can reset your passphrase at any time with the Self-Service Passphrase Reset tool at:
http://passphrase.iu.edu
Learn more about mandatory passphrase expiration at:
http://uits.iu.edu/passphrase
Joseph C. Haase, Senior Media Production Specialist and Lead Videoconference Consultant, Media Services
Currently I provided support for videoconferencing, digital media production, live and archived streaming, and mobile and digital collaboration technology for distance education and administrative activities on the IU South Bend campus.

What do you like about working in IT at IU South Bend?
When I took this job it was spurred on by my enjoyment of teaching students the skill and art of video production. In the spring of 2002, I served as an Associate Faculty Member in the Raclin School of the Arts. I’ve also served as an Instructor for IU South Bend’s Mini University. It’s an overlooked part of our job sometimes, but there’s nothing like showing a student how to manipulate a piece of video or the proper way to use a microphone or adjust a light fixture. When they see how it adds to the aesthetics of their projects, it becomes more than just an assignment to them. They can see how interesting and fun it is to make your own small movie.

What brought you to IU South Bend?
In September of 1999 I was hired as the Video Conference Consultant in Instructional Media Services. Until recently I’ve been in the broadcasting industry for the majority of my career. I came to IU South Bend after I read an ad in, of all things, a newspaper. I still have the original ad sitting on my desk. IU South Bend was looking for a Video Conference consultant and as it turned out, I was the only applicant to actually have experience with distance learning. I worked on a Japanese Language class we beamed from Bloomington to Indianapolis by microwave. I saw then, back in 1987, the great potential for learning a difficult course via two-way, interactive television.

What do you like to do in your free time (hobbies, interests)?
I enjoy watching movies and going to comedy shows and music concerts. Taking walks along the St. Joe River or Fernwood Nature Trail are among the beautiful places in our area you may find me. I am the Program Director for the River Bend Film Festival held every Spring in South Bend, where we show Independent films from Michiana and all over the country. Also, I’m active with Big Brother’s/Sister’s in their annual “Bowl for Kids Sake,” helping my team raise thousands of dollars for the charity.

Can you tell us something about yourself that might surprise others?
Some people may not know I’ve been a professional actor. I was in New Line Cinema’s Detroit Rock City (The KISS Movie). I’ve also been in some local films, such as Dork of the Rings and Harvey Putter and the Ridicules Premise by Richardson Productions. I’ve done stand up comedy, appeared in numerous local TV and radio promotions and commercials, and have a large list of celebrity impersonations in my repertoire.

IUanyWARE became fully operational on July 10. The cloud-based service provides IU students, staff and faculty with on-demand access to hundreds of software applications from … anywhere. For more information about IUanyWARE go to iuanyware.iu.edu.
How do you use information technology in your work?

I was in the first generation of graduate students who wrote their dissertations on desktop computers. I still remember making the change from writing everything out long hand and typing it, to composing at the keyboard. It changed everything about how I composed, edited, and distributed my research. Today, like everyone else, I’m totally dependent on electronic communication—email in particular. Although it’s beginning to be old fashioned, I still receive hundreds of emails every week. In two short years, I’ve amassed an archive of over 14,000 emails. As a historian, I’m keenly aware that, because of email and other electronic systems, much historical information will simply be lost to future generations. On the other hand, the number of historical documents available on-line is amazing, and my access to professional literature has improved exponentially due to electronic media. My Mac Book goes where I go, and I now carry the dreaded cell phone (though I’ve avoided getting a smart phone). I can use social media, Skype, and video conference. It would be impossible to keep up with my work without solid technology and technology support.

Tell us about a positive experience you have recently had with UITS (IT).

All of my experiences with IT have been positive. Recently we had a crazy situation where my calendars were not talking to each other. But my reliable MAC guy—Andy Walton—patiently figured it out and didn’t even make fun when he realized that I had simply managed to uncheck a box, causing all the trouble.

Everyone in IT is courteous and helpful.

PC or MAC? These days, MAC.

What technology can you not live without and why?

I can live without most electronic technology, but I can’t work without it. I hope to relieve some of my dependence on my laptop with my new Ipad 3—just ordered and eagerly anticipated. I plan to be carrying several pounds less in my workbag next time I travel!

How will your relationship with technology change in the next 5 years?

Who knows what the next five years might bring? I may not be able to hold out forever without a smart phone or whatever the next big communication device might be. It seems to me that it’s getting harder and harder for people to turn it off, unplug, and enjoy the moment and place where they are. I worry about people not conversing face-to-face effectively, about losing the simple joy of the great silence that only stillness in the outdoors can bring, about ignoring the spontaneous opportunities that arise when someone you don’t know sits down next to you and says, hi! My name is .......... Technology could, ironically, make us more provincial rather than more worldly.

HD videoconferencing expands across campus

Under the leadership of Joe Haase, Senior Media Production Specialist and Lead Videoconferencing Consultant, UITS has upgraded the campus’s older analog videoconferencing equipment with a new high-definition system. The new technology makes it easier to read content such as blueprints, spreadsheets or maps, which eliminates eyestrain and “meeting fatigue”. The wide screen enables more meeting participants to be on camera and fully engaged in the meeting. In addition, the smoother motion will make sign language easy to follow for hearing-impaired conference participants.

According to Jim Yocom, the Director of Instructional Media Services, videoconferencing participants report that the new HD system makes it easier to forget about the technology and focus on the message. Yocom says that many IU departments are looking for ways to stretch their travel budgets, and HD videoconferencing can definitely do that. “And, it’s good to go home at the end of the day and feel like we’ve done something to help reduce carbon emissions.”

High definition videoconferencing is now available in Northside 037 and 072, and Wiekamp Hall room 1001, and an upgrade of Northside 038 is currently underway.

CHECK OUT IT TRAINING’S FALL SCHEDULE
VISIT: ITTRAINING.IU.EDU
FOR MORE INFORMATION.