

Minutes of the University Communications Resources Committee

Meeting held: Tuesday, February 22, 1994 - 3:00-5:00 pm

Location: Conference Room, Graduate School
206 Sandy Hall

Present: Marc Abrams (for Ed Fox), David Bevan, Ron Daniel,
Jamie Evans (Acting Chairman), Jo Johnson, Bernard
LaBerge, Judy Lily, Buddy Litchfield, Lenwood McCoy,
Bill Richardson (for Tom McAnge), Mark Sanders, John
Schorger

Guests: Tom Head, Matt Swift

1) Approval of Minutes

The January minutes were approved.

2) Subcommittee Reports

Bernard LaBerge: Did not have a report, but will have a report at the next meeting.

Mark Sanders: His subcommittee continues to talk about network education. The members have surveyed their respective faculty to gather ideas and opinions with respect to network education. They will present some findings at a subsequent UCRC meeting.

3) Communications Network Items (Judy Lilly)

CNS has a request from the commission on university support (chaired by James Armstrong) to give a presentation on the university network. These comments to UCRC can serve as a warm up to that presentation. (Perhaps, in this connection, we could set a time outside the normal UCRC meeting for a training session to actually see some of the network at work. Some folks still have not gotten away from the cbx connections.)

CNS projects another 2000 connections for the next fiscal year. (If anyone wants connections for the summer, orders should be in by May 1st.) CNS is currently investigating atm, fddi and switched ethernet. It is also looking at networking all the dorms. East Payne Hall is currently the only dorm with ethernet. Perhaps one-fourth of the dorms each summer could be wired for ethernet. Student usage in payne is out of 60 connections, 20 are active. Perhaps we should encourage more students to request that dorm to take advantage of more ethernet connections. There was a suggestion to have publicity in the educational publications concerning ethernet as well as to deans directors and heads. Perhaps the Collegiate Times could carry low-level article concerning ethernet, what it is, what it can do, etc. Judy said that they are putting together a quick reference guide, perhaps it could be published.

There is a lack of education all across campus. Everyone needs to be educated concerning networking. The computing center will be hiring students to assist with the 4help line. This will be the first time they have used students. The vttnet and the prompt were scheduled to change February 15, but many people did not receive the information that they needed a PID first, now it will change March 8. Vttermserv will be the new prompt, access

will require a PID and password. Everyone needs to get a PID in essence.

CNS is in the process of putting in the same type system at the Telstar location. It will be put in test during the summer. NoVa will have to pay for service for high speed modem pool access. They will no longer have low speed access.

Q: What effects did the ice storm have on the network?

A: CNS is looking at putting a UPS on major pieces of equipment, getting the network on an uninterrupted power supply (UPS). Switch rooms are on UPS, gasoline generators. Hubs will usually come back up, but the routers have to be restarted by CNS.

In April the electronic drop/add will be opened up to all students. Currently it is just for drop/add, but there is a plan to have registration on-line.

Judy suggested that to show how video operates over the network Gordon Miller could do a presentation in the media lab showing what is available and what is coming. Judy will work on getting such a demo arranged.

4) Printing Services Update (Tom Head)

Printing services has moved off campus to the old K-mart building. Its former campus location is freed for the Art and Art History Department. Printing has seen an improvement in productivity that should be a cost savings. It will make office calls if people need help, just give them a call if you need consulting.

The campus copy centers are going digital. They have a docutech, a 600 dpi scanner and copier, that can be tied into the network for postscript printing so users could send jobs directly to the printer. There is optical storage available on demand. The network access should be up by the fall for these items.

In long-range planning, Tom sees Printing services becoming an archive business. For example, CD-ROM would be a production service for certain items. Major publishers will be out of the printing business, but providing electronic service such as CD-ROM. However, printing services is currently above last years numbers, so business is up. They are looking at the issue of the computing center getting out of the printing business. An investigation into campus high speed printing needs to be performed.

5) Status of Information Systems Initiatives (Carol Eggleston)

The faculty initiative continues. It is slowly getting people off the mainframe. By August 1st, about 250 faculty will have participated in the faculty initiative. Five hundred people have subscribed to the Blacksburg Electronic Village project in the first 4 months, about 50 subscribers per week. Bell Atlantic has donated a high speed modem to each school.

Q: What if someone wants to distribute information on BEV?

A: Andy Cohill is the person to contact. There is a service, perhaps like a computerized newspaper, that he uses to distribute information.

Q: With VM going away, will services now provided on VM vanish?

A: No, while specific application software will likely disappear, the fundamental service will be migrated to the new environment.

(February Minutes approved at the UCRC meeting held March 29, 1994)