Project Refresh: Enhancing the TTU Web Presence

Texas Tech University is “refreshing” our web presence! President Bailey has appointed a Web Executive Committee to provide strategic oversight as we develop and enhance our Texas Tech University web presence; members include: Provost Bob Smith (Co-chair), Mary Larson Diaz (Co-chair), Dr. Taylor Eighmy, Dr. Michael Shonrock, Dr. Jerry Hudson, Sally Logue Post, and Sam Segran.

Project Refresh focuses on tasks and projects to help improve the Texas Tech University web presence. As part of the project, the staff from Communications & Marketing and the IT Division have already completed several key activities:

- Focus group meetings with area leaders, including deans and vice presidents, were conducted to gather feedback and suggestions;
- A campus online survey soliciting feedback and evaluation from faculty, staff, and students (697 completed the survey);
- Conducted faculty, staff, and student “hands-on” usability studies (with assistance from College of Mass Communications faculty) to examine website functionality, navigation, and organization;
- Updated the “A-Z site index” to include common terms used to locate key resources, based on our evaluation of the search terms used at www.ttu.edu; and
- Added homepage links to TTU social networking sites.

We are also in the process of compiling a comprehensive list of website content owners into a database to facilitate communication and information exchange. We appreciate the cooperation of campus areas and units this summer, as we worked to gather current contact information. In the next year, we have several other major tasks:

- Provide educational materials for area and unit webmasters to help them design effective web pages;
- Ongoing work to enhance search capabilities so that Communications & Marketing can tailor web content to the needs of our target audiences;
- Implement new event software for the TTU community to promote campus events and programs; and
- Deploy a new Google-based interactive campus map application.

Please visit http://refresh.ttu.edu for project updates and information provided by Communications & Marketing and the TTU Office of the CIO. Thank you to all the areas and units for helping “refresh” our web presence, as we prepare for another fall semester!

Message from the CIO

August is always a hectic time on our campus as we close the fiscal year and prepare for the upcoming academic year. For those purchasing new systems, we offer articles in this issue to help you with Buying the Right Computer and to encourage you to use Raider PC Mart to possibly recycle your unneeded computing equipment on campus. As we prepare for the fall semester, we want you to be aware of the TTU Web Refresh Project, an initiative to enhance our TTU web presence, as well as the implementation of an Enhanced eRaider Interface for the campus community. As always, these projects depend on our ongoing campus collaborations and partnerships. Finally, we offer safe computing tips on Recognizing an Infected Computer System, so you can avoid data loss and work interruption during this demanding time of year. We hope you have had the opportunity to get some rest this summer and prepare for another record fall semester!

-Sam Segran
Associate Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer

eRaider Account and Services Website Enhancements

After extensive design, development, and usability testing with the TTU Community, the TTU IT Division has released an enhanced eRaider Account Manager website (http://eraider.ttu.edu). Our staff have been hard at work designing a more functional and robust system for managing eRaider accounts and services. Each TTU area had a representative that assisted us with testing and evaluation; we appreciate and highly value our partnerships. The enhanced eRaider website was released earlier in August; highlights include:

- **More Robust Main Page:**
  See the status of many of your eRaider services, including TechMail, MyWeb (to be released fall 2010), and RaiderDrive (to be released fall 2010), all from one screen!

- **Easier eRaider Password Management:**
  As many TTU faculty, staff, and students have requested in the last two years, you are now able to view when you last set your eRaider password, as well as when it is due to expire.

- **More Password Security Question Options:**
  Based on industry research, our team has markedly increased and improved the list of possible security questions. Campus users now have 30 questions to consider when selecting a security question. We encourage everyone to set a security password; this question will be asked in the event that you forget your password, and will allow you to set a new one automatically and electronically, once you answer the question correctly.

- **Integrated Active Directory Features:**
  Update your personal contact information, add phone numbers, and modify your personal website address from one simple location. For those of you that use the Global Address List (GAL) in Outlook, you will be able to modify the information displayed in that directory.

- **Simplified Software Download:**
  The Software Download section of eRaider has been significantly redesigned to improve efficiency, usability, speed, and functionality. Software downloads have been consolidated into the eRaider website, so you are no longer required to re-enter eRaider credentials before downloading software. In addition and at the request of the TTU Community, required software Product Keys are now listed on the same page as the software download link, allowing for easy reference after downloading.

Again, thank you to those of you that assisted with our intensive testing! For any questions or additional information, contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357), via e-mail at ithelpcentral@ttu.edu or online at www.ithelpcentral.ttu.edu.
Recycle Your IT Equipment: Raider PC Mart

In collaboration with Property Management, the IT Division created “Raider PC Mart (http://www.raiderpcmart.ttu.edu),” a voluntary online communication system to facilitate the exchange of computing equipment among TTU departments. Raider PC Mart allows departments to electronically find other departments that may be interested in the outgoing equipment. We invite you to use this service before the equipment is surplused through Property Inventory.

The application allows individuals authorized by the department head to post computer equipment no longer needed in their department, or to review the postings and express interest in equipment posted. While inventory transfer paperwork is a precursor to the exchange, the application allows interested parties to share information and negotiate PC (and peripheral equipment) trades. As with any equipment transfer, all TTU Operating Policies and Procedures apply. Links to the relevant policies are available on the Raider PC Mart homepage.

Raider PC Mart has the following features and operating principles:

- Computers and related peripheral equipment are posted for 30 days and may be renewed for an additional 30 days;
- Posting departments can include pictures of equipment available for exchange;
- Faculty and staff can elect to receive weekly e-mail notifications of newly posted equipment; and
- The application contains an internal mechanism that allows interested parties to communicate directly.

Please note that Raider PC Mart is a service designed to foster communication and extend the life of TTU’s IT capital investment. Each department is responsible for the terms of the exchange and the condition of the equipment. The system is designed only for the purposes of computing equipment exchange.

Dust off that unneeded computer and post it to Raider PC Mart – recycle and save money! Remember, equipment that is old to one area may be more than sufficient for the needs of another.

http://www.raiderpcmart.ttu.edu

Buying the Right Computer

Need a new computer? Not sure where to turn? The TTU IT Division has you covered! Simply point your browser to IT Help Central's website (www.ithelpcentral.ttu.edu) and click the “Buying the Right Computer” link in the left column. From here, you will find links to a wide range of shopping resources for all your computing needs, whether for departmental or personal use. The website includes hardware recommendations for customers who would like to customize their own computer configuration. We also provide bundles that have been tested and approved by IT staff at Texas Tech University for general use in our campus environment. You can also find hardware suggestions for specific colleges and schools at Texas Tech University, such as the College of Architecture and the School of Law. If your college would like to work with us to configure a system that specifically meets the needs of faculty, students, and staff in your area, please contact Shannon Cepica (Shannon.cepica@ttu.edu).

IT Help Central will be glad to answer any questions you may have about configuring a computer for either home or office use. They may be reached at (806)742-HELP (4357), via e-mail at ithelpcentral@ttu.edu or online at www.ithelpcentral.ttu.edu.

Recognizing an Infected Computer

Viruses, worms, Trojan Horses, and spyware can infect your computer systems without your knowledge. Note the following symptoms that indicate you may have a compromised system:

- Significantly slower-than-normal operating system response time;
- Warning messages or dialogue boxes that suddenly appear in an application;
- Slower than normal application response time; and
- Sudden changes in the look of application windows – an additional search bar in your browser – your browser home page changes – a new icon appears in the lower right task tray.

Most people inadvertently infect their systems by opening an infected e-mail attachment or by clicking on a link contained in an e-mail message. The malicious application will either install immediately or at a designated time after it has been downloaded onto your system. You will not be aware that the program is installing on your system; your first warning will be the symptoms noted above. If you experience any of these symptoms please contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357), via e-mail at ithelpcentral@ttu.edu or online at www.ithelpcentral.ttu.edu or your area IT professional immediately.

http://www.raiderpcmart.ttu.edu