Texas Tech Wiki Technology

One of the most exciting technologies moving into the mainstream of education is that of the Wiki. A Wiki is a web page technology that allows its users to freely edit and update the content in a collaborative fashion. Most of us have seen the results of this process in sites such as Wikipedia. For certain disciplines, this tool can have powerful impacts for student success.

The TTU IT Division, working in partnership with representatives from across the University, conducted a thorough review of the products available for Wiki technologies with the goal of providing this service to the TTU community. The project team included faculty and support staff from across campus. This team defined the requirements that the service must provide, reviewed and tested the products available, and provided recommendations for a solution based on those reviews.

The group recommended that Confluence by Atlassian be implemented to provide Wiki technology for Texas Tech University. The product has been in implementation for development and testing with the review team over the Fall semester. The product is expected to be released by Summer 2011 for TTU faculty who would like to use this technology for their classes.

For more information about the Confluence Wiki technology for Texas Tech University, please contact Technology Support at iteducation@ttu.edu. If you need technical assistance with the University-provided Wiki solution, please contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357) or ithelpcentral@ttu.edu.

Blackboard Integrated with Banner

In partnership with the Teaching, Learning & Technology Center and TTUS Information Systems, the TTU IT Division completed the integration of the Blackboard Learning Management System and the Banner Student Information System late last semester. On November 22, 2010, Texas Tech University culminated a six month planning and preparation process joining Blackboard and Banner to provide vital functionality to our faculty and students.

This integration provided much needed functionality to the Texas Tech University learning management environment, including:

• Blackboard courses are now automatically populated based on student enrollment, eliminating manual data import;
• Course rosters are now current with our authoritative student system, reflecting added or dropped students;
• Faculty are now able to submit grades from the Blackboard grade book directly to the Banner Student Information System; and
• The Banner system now automatically provisions Blackboard courses and the students registered in those courses, and removes the necessity for faculty to manually manage their courses and students.

This project is one of many that increases faculty and staff efficiency, allowing all to focus more effort on business, academic, and research goals. For more information or assistance with the Texas Tech University Blackboard system, please contact the Teaching, Learning, & Technology Center at (806)742-0133. For IT assistance, please contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357) or ithelpcentral@ttu.edu.

TTU Personal Web Pages & TechDrive Transition to a New Service

In early January, key IT staff from Information Systems, IT Help Central, Technology Support, Telecommunications, and TOSM, embarked on the transition of TTU Personal Web pages and file storage (TechDrive) to new services -- MyWeb and RaiderDrive. The transition has been a complete success, and two new services are now available to the TTU community. Highlights of these new services include:

• Increased usability, reliability, robustness, and security;
• Increased storage space. The combined disk quota for these services is now 2 GB;
• Obsolete connection methods replaced by newer, secure technology; and
• Central management of both services through the eRaider Account Manager (https://eraider.ttu.edu).

Additional information about MyWeb and RaiderDrive can be found online at the following sites:

• http://www.ithelpcentral.ttu.edu/solutions/myweb.
• http://www.ithelpcentral.ttu.edu/solutions/raiderdrive.

For questions or additional information, please contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357) or ithelpcentral@ttu.edu.

Message from the CIO

We began another busy Spring semester with the launch of several new services for the TTU Community. In this issue, we discuss some of our new projects and services: Texas Tech Wiki Technology; Blackboard/Banner integration; and MyWeb/RaiderDrive resources. In addition to projects, we are conducting several key software evaluation projects this semester, in collaboration with the TTU Community. As a reminder, higher education is a target for Internet criminals, so be sure to practice safe computing. For safe computing information and tips, please visit http://www.safecomputing.ttu.edu. Here’s to another productive and safe Spring semester at TTU!

-Sam Segran
Associate Vice President for IT and Chief Information Officer
Kickoff for Three Software Evaluations

The campus community will be assisting the TTU Office of the CIO with three major software evaluations this Spring:

- Academic Advisor Scheduling Software – in collaboration with academic advisors and sponsored by Vice Provost Juan Munoz, TTU CIO Sam Segrant, and TTUS CIO Kay Rhodes;
- Learning Management Software – in partnership with the TLTC, and in collaboration with the TTU Community;
- Web Content Management Software – in collaboration with the TTU Community, Communications & Marketing, as well as the TTU system IT units.

As always, we partner with Procurement Services to ensure that our evaluations are conducted according to TTU Operating Policies. If you would like further information or wish to participate, you may contact the TTU Office of the CIO (cio@ttu.edu) or (806)742-5151.

Cyber Criminals Target Higher Education

Trend Micro, a global security firm, regularly releases reports about cybercrime incidents. The most recent information, collected during the first half of 2010, shows that almost half (44%) of malware infections in the United States affected schools and universities. Institutions of higher education are top targets for malicious content for several reasons, not the least of which is a less regulated environment fostering academic freedom.

In addition, some students use outdated software or have not applied security updates, making their systems prime targets for infection. Students and faculty also conduct online research and may visit websites that introduce malware to their systems. Many current application vulnerabilities introduce “drive-by” threats, infecting a system instantaneously upon visiting a particular website. Affected websites may not be intended as infection agents but could have been compromised by hackers.

The TTU IT Division encourages you to “think before you click” and practice safe computing; visit www.safecomputing.ttu.edu for detailed suggestions and information. If you need assistance or would like more information, please contact IT Help Central at (806)742-HELP (4357) or via e-mail at ithelpcentral@ttu.edu

Avoid The Top 10 E-mail Pitfalls
(Adapted from Andrew G. Rosen, USA Today)

The TTU IT Division encourages you to practice safe and considerate computing and avoid the following e-mail behaviors that could be embarrassing at times:

1. Sending an e-mail too quickly, without proper review;
2. Disregarding the importance of a meaningful subject line;
3. Forget to include a basic greeting;
4. Neglecting to put the e-mail in context;
5. Forgetting the attachment;
6. Expecting an instant response;
7. Failing to review all new messages in your inbox before replying;
8. E-mailing when you are angry;
9. Hitting “reply all” unintentionally; and
10. Relying too much on e-mail – some communication needs the human touch.

Mark your calendars for
SHRED DAY
Friday, May 6, 2011

Begin gathering all those unneeded documents and box them to be shredded!

Please review the TTU Records Retention schedule at www.swco.ttu.edu/recordsmanagement/home.htm.

Any questions, contact Technology Support (806)742-1650 or e-mail itevents@ttu.edu.

Contributions by: Katherine Austin Beltz, Ph.D., Pulin Bhatt, Andrew Brooks, Shannon Cepica, Mark Holwerda, Yung Ng, Britta Tye, Laura Webb, and Allen Young.
Safe Computing Practices Committee: Sam Segran, Katherine Austin Beltz, Ph.D., Jeff Barrington, Darrell Bateman, Pulin Bhatt, Shannon Cepica, Paco Diaz, Scott Hall, Mark Holwerda, Michael Horton, Danny Mar, Yung Ng, Randall Osborne, Mike Simmons, Phil Smith, Ph.D., J Stalcup, Britta Tye, John Vandygriff, Allen Young, and assistance from IT Division leadership and staff.