

UAF - Statewide IT Consolidation Quarterly Report - September 2005

1 Narrative

The second and third quarters for 2005 were dedicated to completing Phase I of the UAF/SW IT consolidation. Phase I, Planning and Development, included reorganizing the IT Business Office, renaming the consolidated organization, and assigning targeted Transition Teams to draft the consolidated organization's foundational structure. IT successfully concluded Phase I with the Transition Teams' August presentations.

OIT Consolidation process has also been enhanced through the experience and expertise of Glenn Wilde, our external consultant and Sally Johnstone, Executive Director of the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications. During the latter part of the third quarter, the UAF / SW consolidation has been in the midst of Phase II, Analysis, preparing to move to Phase III, Implementation.

1.1 IT Business Office

SW and UAF Administrative Offices were tasked in December of 2004, to assume support functions for all six departments (1. UAF DC&C; 2. UAF CAT; 3. UAF Telco; 4. SW Operations Services; 5 SW System Services; and 6. SW User Services) included in the SW/UAF IT consolidation by June 30, 2005.

In April and May, the UAF and SW administrative and fiscal employees finalized reorganization and coordination to better serve the UAF and SW IT departments. The IT Business Office was formally introduced in June. The IT Business Office is doing extremely well. Already able to provide exceptional support services, it has consistently demonstrated the ability to dynamically adjust to changing need as the consolidation transforms with each iteration of its progression. IT Business Office employees are a leading example of this consolidation's success and potential for all departments.

1.2 Organization Naming

IT Staff proved their mettle - going above and beyond the call of duty - providing an abundance of suggestions for naming our new IT organization. All submissions were "interesting." Many were humorous. Some were even appropriate. Creativity reigned supreme. UAF and SW IT staffs competed for a complimentary saver mileage ticket with Alaska Airlines by submitting suggestions for the newly-combined organization's name.

Steve Smith announced the merged entity's new moniker on Friday, July 8 at the UAF/SW Summer Social. Approximately 80 submissions were reviewed before selecting "Office of Information Technology" or OIT. Office of Information Technology was chosen because it is both patently descriptive and easily remembered by the University community.

1.3 Transition Teams

Transition Oversight Team - Referenced as the "Core Transition Team" in earlier update documents, the Transition Oversight Team (established in November of 2004) consists of a cross-section of Staff, Managers and Directors. It acts as the overall consolidation coordinating team. Representing SW and UAF departments, services, and staff affected by the SW/UAF IT Consolidation, Oversight Team members serve as two-way communication channels for IT staff.

The Transition Oversight Team is charged with: 1) *Sustaining A Global View*: Ensuring that all aspects of the consolidation are adequately and effectively managed; and 2) *Timeline*

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Development: Establishing, maintaining, adjusting, tracking and communicating consolidation impacts and changes occurring during the consolidation.

Targeted Transition Teams - The Targeted Transition Teams were working groups, assigned to focus on specific integration issues for specific IT areas. The Oversight Team assigned participation, and monitored Transition Team progress. Teams were comprised of volunteers and individuals recommended by supervisors and managers based on a series of agreements pertaining to team size and participations.

Transition Teams were challenged with bringing form and substance to OIT's conceptual reorganization map. From June 20 through August 5, Transition Teams developed recommendations for new departmental structures and identified needed resources. Additionally, the Transition Teams prepared Individualized Departmental Diagrams (IDDs) to demonstrate departmental structures. Initial goals for the IDD included:

- Comprehensively reviewing the SW and UAF IT Organizations;
- Looking beyond *what we have*;
- Listing services provided within the scope of identified teams;
- Identifying resources necessary to effectively deliver listed services; and
- Clarifying surplus and deficit resources.

Transition Teams publicly presented these recommendations to UAF and SW audiences on August 12th, 13th and 14th, bringing Phase I of the OIT Consolidation to a close.

During the initial weeks (August 15 through September 23) of OIT Consolidation's Phase II, Transition Team IDD recommendations were reviewed and refined by the Transition Oversight Team. Identifying methods to provide greater efficiency and eliminating unnecessary redundancies, the Oversight Team developed an organizational recommendation that more fully recognizes the new organization's horizontal aspects. This recommendation is currently under review by OIT managers and directors. The draft revisions will be posted for public comment by October 12, 2005. The IT directors' team will incorporate this feedback into a final plan that will guide the final staffing allocations slated for late November.

1.4 External Consultant

The SW / UAF IT consolidation consultant, Glenn Wilde, arrived in Fairbanks the week of August 8 for a two-week stay. During the 14 days, he observed Transition Team presentation, drafted the initial vacancy descriptions for OIT's Executive Staff, and remained in a general "learning mode" to determine how he could best support OIT's consolidation. As a recently retired CIO for the University of Idaho, Glenn was recruited to provide external views of the consolidation process. Glenn's services for the University of Alaska will include:

- Working consolidation issues with the CITO and Consolidation Coordinator;
- Assessing recharge activity with IT management, recommending future recharge options;
- Creating the initial drafts for OIT's Executive Positions;
- Reviewing policies and regulations affecting the IT consolidation;

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- Identifying and recommending improvements to the consolidation process.

Glenn is scheduled for a return visit October 10 – 14, 2005. His focus for the week will be working with management staff assessing recharge activity. The goal is to identify areas for implementing greater efficiency and improved service levels while better managing internal funding.

1.5 Executive Recruitments

Descriptions for OIT's Executive staff vacancies are in final draft format. Copies have been forwarded for review to Human Resources, Labor Relations and General Council. The four Executive Positions will replace current CITO reports. Although the recruitment will be cast nationwide, internal staff is both welcome and encouraged to apply. Direct Appointment for the Executive Positions is deemed both inappropriate and potentially demoralizing to the newly developing OIT. Full recruitment effort will ensure the four Executive Positions are filled by the most able and skilled leaders who have proven themselves through a rigorous interview process.

The Executive Directors will provide leadership and management for the Office of Information Technology Four service groups: 1) Campus Technology Services, 2) Enterprise Application Services, 3) Infrastructure Application Services, and 4) Technology Oversight Services. The successful candidates will provide hands-on IT leadership and expertise for the transformation and integration of IT services of the statewide system and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. The Executives will be accountable for implementing an integrated vision to facilitate the teaching, research, and service missions for the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Enterprise Applications and Infrastructure Applications will be recruited first, followed by Campus Technology Services (allowing additional time for appropriate campus level feedback). The last recruitment scheduled is Technology Oversight.

1.6 OIT Logo

A second Alaska Airlines complimentary saver mileage ticket was offered to the creative individual who designed the new OIT logo. Staff was urged to submit artwork that respected the following key ideas: unique, memorable, reflecting our IT organization's depth and breadth, a snapshot of who we are, and what we do.

UAF and SW staff submitted 26 entries which were reviewed by OIT staff who selected a "Top 5" grouping which were forwarded to SW and UAF University Relations for review. OIT's final logo was determined by the CITO's direct reports, following approval of acceptable entries from the "TOP 5" category by SW and UAF University Relations.

1.7 OIT Mission Statement

OIT's new mission statement is in late draft format and being reviewed by OIT management for final recommendations. The new mission statement will be shared with OIT staff at the upcoming OIT staff meeting on Wednesday, October 12, 2005.

1.8 UAF IT Council

UAF's IT Council reconvened on Tuesday October 4, 2005. CITO Smith reviewed consolidation status with the council. Members of the Council agreed to review the executive position descriptions; the entire council will review the revised draft organization plan. Working as an advisory council, the IT Council brings faculty, staff, student and IT representatives together to

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exchange information, support professional development, improve communications, and build partnership and trust, thereby enhancing OIT's ability to serve the Fairbanks Campus.

CITO communication with the council remained very good throughout the summer months. Additionally, Council chair, John Lehman has developed an excellent working relationship with both the Consolidation Coordinator and OIT's External Consultant.

1.9 Celebrating Success

Nome Networking

Northwest Campus in Nome was funded through a PT3 grant to improve the general network at the campus. UAF computing worked with the local campus administration and UAF Design and Construction to design and implement the improvements. Historically, UAF Telephone Utilities does not work the remote sites and Statewide Networking doesn't work on the local LAN.

Because UAF Computing is now bonded with UAF Telco and SW Networking, the project was completed to meet the fall deadline by leveraging technical staff from the new OIT organization.

Staff and Management to note:

Josh Steadman: Project Lead, UAF Computing, Manager, Tim Larrabee

Jarkko Toivanen: SW Network Operations, Manager, Mike Brase

Christopher Nicolaus: UAF Telco, Interim Manager Dave Hill

UAF E-mail

On three consecutive weekends, (9/24, 10/01, and 10/08) the UAF e-mail system is being upgraded to improve reliability and efficiency. This was done through joint effort of technical staff from both UAF and SW departments. E-mail stability was one of three priority services identified by the UAF IT Council last spring.

Staff and Management to note:

Walker Wheeler, Project Lead, UAF Computing

Jo Knox, UAF Computing

Daniel LaRoe, UAF Computing

Jim Williams, UAF Computing

Brenda Knavel, UAF Computing (Manager)

David DeWolfe, SW System Services

Kerry Digou, SW System Services

John Mitchell, SW System Services

Fred Smits, SW System Services (Director)

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UAF Student Tech Center

Using a portion of the 2 per cent network fee funds, a student computer support service is being piloted during the fall 2005 semester. A help desk is now stationed in the Moore-Bartlett-Skarland complex to troubleshoot and provide basic computer repair for student owned computers. This new service is available to all students.

During the pilot, Student Tech Center support provides the first 30 minutes of troubleshooting and repair at no charge. Time required in excess of 30 minutes is available at a minimal charge. The pilot is a shared effort charged to UAF Computing and the UAF Technology Center. Services provided as well as staff and customer feedback will be documented through the end of the semester to determine long-term need.

2 Follow-Ups

2.1 Revised Timeline

The revised transition period to consolidate UAF and Statewide IT functions into the new OIT organization is targeted for December, 2004 through June, 2006. This will better allow for fully developed planning and implementation. Consolidation milestones will remain flexible with the various phases' progress. The efficiency of daily operation will continually influence and determine adjustments to these milestones.

The detailed timeline document (attachment 1) is available to OIT staff and the University Community at: <http://www.alaska.edu/itmerger/timeline>

2.2 Department Meetings

Statewide and UAF departments were scheduled for short sessions with CITO and the Consolidation Coordinator. These meetings have been both informative and enlightening. They are proving an extremely effective tool for gathering information while dispelling rumors and addressing concerns unique to individual departments.

Questions asked and answered during these sessions are being compiled into a comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that will be published on the IT Merger website.

3 Meetings

10/03 – OIT Managers and Directors

10/04 – UAF IT Council

10/04 – Conference Call with Wilde/Johnstone/Merdes

10/05 – Alaska CIO Council (Anchorage)

10/05 – Business Council (Anchorage)

10/06 – UAF Strategic Planning Committee

10/07 – UAF Library Transition Team Preparation (CITO / OIT Staff)

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10/11 – OIT Managers and Directors

10/12 – OIT Staff Meeting

10/13 – UAF Library Transition Team

10/14 – OIT Directors

4 Recommendations

4.1 SW IT Advisory Committee

Appoint a cross section of SW staff to an Advisory Council designed to work with OIT in a fashion similar to the already established IAF IT Council. The SW IT Advisory Council would bring staff and IT representatives together to exchange information, support professional development, improve communications, and build partnership and trust, thereby enhancing OIT's ability to serve the University Community. The SW IT Advisory council would participate in a strong working relationship to promote education, programming, and networking opportunities that enhance and advance systemwide IT services.

4.2 UAF IT Council - UAF Network Fee Recommendations.

Charge the standing UAF IT Council with reviewing recommendations for use of network fee funds.