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INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Community Update
RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS)

The University of Saskatchewan is implementing a comprehensive Relationship Management System (RMS) to improve the university’s engagement with prospective students, current students, alumni and community partners.

The implementation of the first phase of the RMS system, Ellucian CRM Recruit, is well underway and the software is currently supporting the admissions management processes for undergraduate direct entry and some non-direct entry programs, including Dentistry, Pharmacy & Nutrition and Nursing.

Prospective students are also using Recruit to create accounts and profiles so they can register for USASK events and self-identify subjects of interest at the university. Recruit integrates with the university’s admissions portal so prospective student’s profiles can continue as they progress from being a prospective student through to being an applicant.

In less than twelve months of using Recruit the university’s database of prospective students has grown to nearly 30,000 contacts. The centralized collection of prospective student information has created new opportunities for the university to develop and deliver targeted communications to prospective students and enhance the student recruitment process.

In the coming months the project’s focus will begin to shift towards improving, the capabilities of the student prospect management process, developing strategies that are aligned with the university’s overall enrollment goals.

University Relations is now in the selection process to determine the RMS product which will be used to track interactions with alumni and donors. The new system will replace the capabilities of Ufriend, which was developed in-house in the late 1990’s and no longer provides the functionality needed to support the university’s fundraising activities. Once in place the RMS product will support University Relations strategic fundraising initiatives and be a key resource in the management of relations with the universities key external stakeholders including alumni, donors, members of the community and government.
MICROSOFT OFFICE 365

Throughout the coming year, the university will be migrating university email and calendaring services from an on premise email provider to the cloud based Microsoft Office 365. The move to Office 365 will improve the security of our email system and allow the university to retire the current aging email infrastructure.

Microsoft Office 365 is hosted in Microsoft’s secure Canadian data centres and will be progressively introduced to all members of the university community over the course of the year.

More details about the implementation plan for faculty, staff and students will be provided later this summer in preparation for the migration.

Learn more about Office 365 at www.usask.ca/ict/services/office365/index.php.

DEVELOPMENT OF CLIENT EXPERIENCE TEAM

As part of ICT’s ongoing commitment to enhancing the delivery of IT services at the university, we recently developed the Client Experience Team. The newly formed team exists within IT Support Services and will focus on enhancing the overall experience of clients who look to us for support while using the services provided in our Service Catalogue. The team will concentrate on adding value and time back to the clients we serve.

The Client Experience Team will be an integral part of introducing the IT Support knowledge base and continual improvement of service delivery at the university.

Contact the team at ICT_ClientExperience@usask.ca
KNOWLEDGE BASE

Knowledge creation and sharing is one of the fundamental activities of our organization. With the broad range of activities occurring across the campus, locating support information for university services is a challenge. The desire to have a single point of contact for support inquiries has lead to the development of an online knowledge base. The knowledge base will serve as a single location for users to search for information about university services across multiple university service desks.

The initial phase of implementing the knowledge base is scheduled to launch this summer and will provide access to ICT and Connection Point resources to help members of the university community trouble-shoot issues and complete IT, Financial Services and Human Resources service requests.

Once established the knowledge base can incorporate resource articles from other university services providers to serve as a one-stop location to perform tasks and get help. The knowledge base will also help consolidate support content that is currently located across multiple university websites into a single location. The content available in the knowledge base will continue to evolve over time as more requests are submitted.

Immediately, the knowledge base will provide the following benefits to:

MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

- Creates a single, organized place for everything people need to know
- Is searchable, users can locate support articles by issue
- Is available 24/7

THE UNIVERSITY

- Provides a consistent level of service to all members of the university community
- Leads to higher resolution rates for common service inquires
- Lowers the cost of providing services to our community

THE SUPPORT PROVIDERS

- Standardizes answers to common questions or issues
- Provides the opportunity for a constant feedback loop between customers and service providers
- Is flexible to incorporate information about a variety of university services including IT, Finance, HR, Research and more.

Knowledge Base is scheduled to be introduced in July and support content will continue to be added as the service becomes more established.
ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

Universities, like many organizations evolve over time to ensure the services they provide continue to meet the needs of the people they serve. New technology systems are often a critical component of the evolution of services as organizations pursue efficient ways to automate processes and better manage their data. Integrating new technology systems into complex IT environments requires a careful oversight of the continued planning and evolution of IT systems.

Think of this like developing a city or neighbourhood. Critical infrastructure such as roads, sewer systems and power grids are integrated into the design in a way that allows for one of them to be repaired or replaced without having to interrupt all services.

ICT’s Enterprise Architecture team is taking on the challenge of organizing the university’s complex IT infrastructure to ensure IT systems are providing value to university stakeholders in an efficient and cost-effective way. This group builds and maintains accurate blueprints of the university systems to understand the lifespan of the service, the integration required between systems and works with university partners to evaluate if the system is meeting the needs of the college or department.

Currently, more than 600 different systems are active within the university’s IT environment. Essential to the university’s teaching and learning, research and administrative activities, many of these systems have been put in place to serve a single purpose without a holistic view of how they work with other university systems. As the demand for data and automation of services continues, a strong foundation of IT systems and policies is required to support the future advancement of services.

The Enterprise Architecture team is continually working to update the blueprint for all IT systems at the university. To assist in evaluating new IT systems to ensure they fit with the university’s IT infrastructure, please contact the Technology Assessment team at technology_assessment@usask.ca
IT SECURITY UPDATE

Advancing the security posture of the university continues to be a high priority for ICT. Projects have been launched that will help protect the university and members our community from becoming victims of cyberattacks. A lot of the work is being completed behind the scenes, but all students, faculty and staff have an active role in the university’s defense against cybercrime.

Here's a summary of some of the IT security activities from the last couple of months:

**Device Management** – applying advanced IT security settings to all university-managed computers. These settings help to eliminate the potential for harmful malware or viruses from travelling from one infected computer to other computers or the university network. ICT has already applied the settings to more than 5,200 computers, nearly 55% of all university computers on campus, with the plan to complete the installation of these settings on all university computers by the spring of 2019.

**Network Segmentation** – improving the network architecture to create separate zones, which control access to certain university services accessible through the university network. This work is required to improve our ability to respond to security incidents or threats and isolate risks by specific zones. This will also result in people’s devices being automatically placed in different network zones based on their relationship with the university. This action ensures that only those with permissions are provided access to sensitive services and data required by their role. ICT will be implementing the first network segment this fall with continued segmentation happening throughout the year.

**IT Security Awareness** – an IT Security website is available to help educate members of the university community of the threat of cyberattacks provide strategies to protect against becoming a victim. Education and awareness continues to be the most important aspect of preventing cyberattacks from being successful. The majority of cyberattacks occur when someone from within the organization either clicks on or downloads an infection in an email. Despite filtering out more than 20 million potentially harmful emails on a monthly basis, the threat of this occurring at the university remains high.

Over the past year 47.3% of employees clicked on at least one of the simulated phishing emails conducted by the university. A single click could have a devastating impact on the operations and reputation of the university and continued education will be provided to the university community to reduce the threat.

If you have questions or concerns relating to the IT Security projects, please visit itsecurity.usask.ca for more information or contact IT Support Services at itsupport@usask.ca.
25LIVE

25Live is an all-new course and event scheduling system, which will revitalize the way space bookings are handled across the university.

As a replacement for the current R25i scheduling system, 25Live is a cloud-based application that is fully mobile-accessible, and seeks to ease the process of finding and booking academic and meeting spaces. With 25Live, the power to view, request, and approve bookable spaces is placed in the hands of the user.

Geared toward faculty and staff as the main users of the 25Live system, Room Scheduling and ICT are working with groups from Kinesiology, Education, Edwards School of Business, Engineering, CLRC, and the College of Arts and Sciences to pilot the new system.

25Live promises to enrich and improve the efficiency with which booking requests and approvals are handled, making these administrative tasks faster, simpler and more effective. The application will provide transparency in the room booking process as approval over booking requests is decentralized and the approval responsibility is shifted into the hands of the appropriate academic and administrative units, freeing room scheduling officers to better handle your questions and concerns as they arise.

Additionally, the application provides the capacity for a variety of efficiency measurements from the space usage reports that will provide university insight into how spaces are booked and how efficiently they are being used.

Once the pilot phase is complete, other colleges and departments will be brought onboard with the long-range goal of the system also supporting student room booking requests.
JIRA SERVICE DESK

On an annual basis more than 80,000 IT support requests are submitted to IT Support Services. These requests are received in-person, by phone or email and range in complexity from password resets to asks for entirely new IT systems.

To manage the high volume of service requests, ICT utilizes a technology called Tracks which itemizes each service request and creates a single service ticket to document customer interactions and record the information that is required to help resolve the issue.

Over the past several months ICT and Connection Point have partnered on a project to find a single solution that will replace the current capabilities of Tracks and provide enhanced features so service agents can more efficiently collaborate with other members of the team and access shared libraries of support resources. When put in place the dynamic platform will provide agents with access to the resources they need to more efficiently respond to and resolve customer requests. Clients will benefit from the added ability to check the status of the service requests, view all their past requests and update current requests all through the online portal.

Through this project the university identified Jira Service Desk as the preferred option to replace Tracks. IT Support Services and Connection Point will be the first departments from the university moving to the new platform on July 1, 2018. The flexibility and additional features of the Jira product allows for future integration with other university service providers and eliminates the need for redundant IT systems to support similar activities.

More information about the change to Jira Service Desk will be communicated to members of the university in the coming months to help support the migration of services.

RESEARCH COMPUTING

Researchers at the university have access to a variety of IT resources to enable their research. All connected through the university network, the services include:

- File storage (DATASTORE and Cabinet)
- High performance compute (Plato)
- Hosting for researcher systems (Research Computing Facility)
- Software (REDCap, NVIVO server, LabArchives) and licensed software for research computers
- File transfer throughout the university and to Compute Canada over the CANARIE network

For more information on how best to use these resources, please contact our research computing analysts at research_computing@usask.ca