

UB IT NOW 2009

From the Desk of the CIO

Challenging Times Bring Opportunities

In this challenging fiscal environment, I'm happy to report that a great deal has been accomplished toward reducing costs and complexity in campus IT infrastructure services. To-date UB has realized cost savings of more than \$5M as the UB2020 IT Transformation project rollout continues to transform and consolidate commodity services. In addition, UB2020 business transformations such as the [SIRI](#) and [Student Services](#) transformations will continue to improve information, tools, and services for the campus. Finally, partnerships with vendors are helping to improve services, reduce IT purchase costs, and contain service costs. This issue provides news of a partnership with Google that will provide enhanced IT email and other collaboration services for new students next fall at no additional cost to UB. Information on an asset disposal and recovery service for computer equipment, provided via our UB2020 Dell partnership, is also included in this issue.

Clearly, our commitment to UB2020 IT Transformation stewardship initiatives does not preclude the IT organization's commitment to the overarching UB2020 goal of academic excellence. To that end, last summer the CIO office interviewed campus leaders about their top academic and business needs. One of the most frequently mentioned IT needs was for videoconferencing from the desktop linking UB campuses, units, faculty, and students to each other and to scholars around the world, with the goals of



fostering collaboration, reducing travel and costs, and increasing productivity. In this issue we include an interview showing how the Graduate School of Education is using a web conferencing tool to accomplish these goals. In other videoconferencing news, the UB2020 Workstation Standardization Team has added webcams and microphones to many desktop and laptop offerings. Finally, this issue features some free video chat tools for person-to-person videoconferencing from Google, Skype, and Yahoo; information on WebEx, a web conferencing service available via Instructional Technology Services; and an article on the blog and wiki services available in *UBlearns*.

Information on some key findings from recent surveys on students and IT, information security news, and a "Green CCR/Data Center" initiative, funded in part by NYSEDA, are also part of this issue.

I hope you'll find the information useful and welcome your comments and suggestions for future topics as well as feedback on IT services and initiatives in general. You can find previous issues of the newsletter on our web site: www.cio.buffalo.edu.

Elias G. Eldayrie
Chief Information Officer

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Blogs & Wikis on UBl earns

In response to faculty and student requests for increased access to Web 2.0 tools, Blogs & Wikis are now fully integrated into UBl earns. Instructors may choose to use these tools to continue out-of-class exchanges, encouraging students to create engaging content with their peers. This particularly appeals to students who seek opportunities to reflect, then interact, in a less public, non-verbal fashion. Blogs (short for "web

log") is branded "Journal LX" and the Wiki tool is branded "Teams LX" in UBl earns. The [Teaching and Learning Center](#) is offering regular classes in the use of these new



tools; you can view an [archived Web-Ex presentation](#) of a UBl earns Blog & Wiki class, or read the last edition of [UBl earns Update](#) to receive ideas on how to integrate these tools into coursework.

Free Options for Video Chat/Call Services

Many vendors offer free video chat/video call services that are very easy to download and set up. Video chat/call services are single person-to-person live communication services. Here are just a few of them with links to information on how you can get started with video chat/calls.

Skype is a free VoIP (Internet telephone) service for calls from one Skype user to another that was launched about two years ago. UB international students have been using Skype to "call home" through their computers for a while, but Skype now offers video too. Visit the [Skype Video website](#) for information about how to get started using their latest video calling offering.

Google launched a free browser-based video chat service in November 2008. [Gmail Video and Voice](#) offers Webcam-based video conferencing to all Gmail users. The service supports Firefox 2.0+, Internet Explorer 7.0, and

Safari 3.0. [WebVideoUniversity](#) provides a tutorial on setting up the Google video chat service.

[Yahoo](#), [Microsoft](#), and [AOL](#) (AIM) all offer video chat through their instant messaging services. Apple's [iChat](#) for MacOS users works with AIM and Apple's MobileMe. Many other free video chat services are available.

You must have a broadband connection to take advantage of these free services, and please note that in these video chat/call services the person you're connecting with must be using the same service. You should also note that the quality of these free services varies with the service and with the quality of your web cam, microphone and broadband connection.

THINK GREEN New UB2020 Workstation Standards and Product Offerings

Web cams and microphones are now standard equipment on many of the [UB2020 Dell and Apple product offerings](#). All UB2020 laptops and workstations are [Energy Star-qualified](#) and Dell's [Asset Recovery and Recycling Services](#) follow EPA disposal and recycling guidelines.



What's New for IT in 2009

WEB CONFERENCING TOOLS FOR MULTIPLE PARTICIPANTS

A web conference or webinar refers to a multi-person meeting or live presentation over the Internet. Most web conferences include instant messaging/text chat, or use of other screen tools (emoticons, question cue tool, etc.) to communicate without distracting or interrupting the presenter. Other features of a webinar may include slide presentations, application sharing, file sharing, video, polls, and surveys.

There are few specialized hardware requirements, so web conferencing can be used to reach a broad audience. WebEx™

conferencing software is currently available at UB from Instructional Technology Support Services (ITSS). ITSS can assist faculty in determining which conferencing solution to use depending on your needs, as conferencing solutions vary by participants, quality and archival needs. Use the following links to learn more about [UB's WebEx service](#) and [WebEx capabilities and free online demos and training](#). Please contact [Mark Woodard](#) or call 645-2803 if you'd like advice about using ITSS conferencing services.

THE USE OF WEB CONFERENCING SOFTWARE IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION: An Interview with the GSE Director of IT, Michael Tinsmon

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) is using a web conferencing solution, called Elluminate™.

1. How is GSE using Elluminate virtual classroom software in online programs? We are using the software in several

ways. We use it for UB faculty to conduct classes for students in Singapore. This program is in collaboration with the Center for American Education (CAE) in Singapore. We also are using it for faculty to teach non-traditional students closer to UB. And, we're using it for classes in our online programs.

2. Is GSE using Elluminate just for distance learning classes or are you also using it for traditional classes and other collaborative work? All three.

3. Are you also using it in your traditional classrooms for collaboration, i.e., to connect UB students to other students and/or to faculty/experts around the world?

In Singapore the software is being used in a traditional classroom setting (with students in the classroom) to allow a couple of students in Vietnam to attend the class virtually. We've also been doing dissertations in Elluminate, so faculty can "attend" remotely.

4. Do faculty use Elluminate for other virtual meetings and collaborative research? Yes, we've done web conferences from UB to various places in the world. We have faculty that are using it to collaborate on research with GAs who are travelling.

5. What have been the biggest benefits to GSE, faculty, and students from having and using Elluminate's virtual classroom software? Our Singapore program would not be possible without Elluminate. All of the uses mentioned above have begun in just the last three months since our Elluminate instance

went "live". I expect many more uses to emerge as our faculty becomes more familiar with the technology.

6. How do you think the rest of the campus may benefit from using virtual classroom software like Elluminate?

This would be a single solution to all web conferencing and virtual classroom needs.

7. What other web conferencing/virtual classroom products did GSE evaluate and what features of Elluminate led you to choose it? We looked at Skype, Apple's iChat and WebEx.

Skype only allows for one-to-one conferencing, so it was not able to meet our virtual classroom needs. iChat had the same problem as well as being a single platform (Mac OS) program. WebEx, at least the version currently available on campus, would meet our web conferencing needs, but did not have as robust a feature set for virtual classroom use. Elluminate has many more features available in its whiteboard area as well as the ability to host videos, share desktops and browse the web within the Elluminate session. Elluminate also supports easy recording and hosting of all Elluminate sessions for future viewing by anyone who couldn't attend the "live" session. Elluminate is also java-based, so it is truly multi-platform, working equally well on Macs, Windows PCs and Linux computers.

8. Is there any other information you'd like to share about GSE's use of Elluminate? The following page has quite a bit of info. about Elluminate, including a feature summary: <http://www.illuminate.com/products/live/index.jsp>.

I'd be happy to set up a demo of Elluminate for anyone interested. You can contact me at: tinsmon@buffalo.edu.

KEY FINDINGS FROM TWO STUDENT SURVEYS

Two 2008 surveys, the UB Student IT Survey and the national ECAR Students and IT Survey, provide interesting student data on mobile device ownership, use of social networking sites, and perceptions about IT's impact on courses.

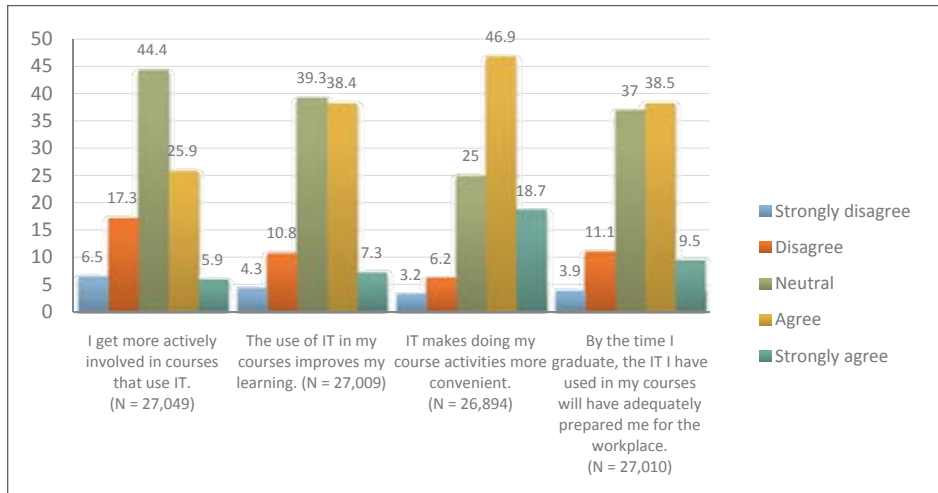
MOBILE DEVICE OWNERSHIP

Mobile device ownership is increasing, with student laptop ownership now exceeding 80% and cell phone ownership exceeding 98%.

Mobile Device Ownership	2007		2008	
	UB Student Survey	ECAR National Student IT Survey	UB Student Survey	ECAR National Student IT Survey
Laptop	79.6%	65.9%	83.5%	82.2%
Cell Phone	97.3%	86.1%	98.2%	-
Internet Capable Cell Phone	-	-	-	66.1%
Activated and use Internet Capability	-	-	-	30.8%
Smart Phone	6.4%	10.1%	8.1%	-

STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF IT'S IMPACT ON COURSES

The 2008 ECAR Survey also probed student perceptions of the impact of IT in courses. The following chart displays these results.



SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES (SNSs)

The 2008 ECAR study found that more than 85% of students use one or more social networking sites, with Facebook being the most commonly used (89.3% of SNS users). Half of SNS users use the sites to communicate with classmates about course-related topics; 5.5% use them to communicate with instructors about course-related topics.

The finding that most students (87.4%) put access restrictions on their profiles is somewhat reassuring.



Additional Highlights

2008 ECAR

Skipping classes when materials are online:

I skip classes when materials from course lectures are available online: 62.3% disagreed or strongly disagreed, 20.6% were neutral, and 17.1% agreed or strongly agreed.

UB IT SURVEY

Students were asked to select and rank the top 3 sites they connected to via their smartphones/PDAs most frequently. Top-ranked items were:

1. UBmail (672 points)
2. UBlearns (490 points)
3. None of the above (395 points)
4. Departmental websites (147 points)
5. Library websites (110 points)

SURVEY LINKS

You can read all the [2008 UB IT Student Experiences Survey findings](#).

The full report of the [2008 ECAR Students and Information Technology Survey](#) is also available.

What's New for IT in 2009

GOOGLE PARTNERSHIP

[Google Apps for Education](#) is a free solution that provides a set of online communication and collaboration tools, including gmail (Webmail service), Google Calendar (shared calendaring, time management), Google Talk (chat/IM), and Google Docs (online document, spreadsheet, presentation creation and sharing). In 2007-08, the CIO Office opened discussions about moving student email to gmail with student leaders who polled their constituencies. Since the polled students were very positive about the move, we continued discussions with the Faculty Senate Computing Services and Executive Committees and with other campus leaders.

Students will continue to have buffalo.edu email addresses and the service is advertising-free while they remain students at UB. When students leave/graduate, they may continue to keep the same buffalo.edu gmail account, however, advertising will kick in.

The [2008 Campus Computing Survey](#) found that approximately 50% of public research universities have

migrated or are about to migrate to email provided by external vendors for their student email, and that the majority of campuses outsourcing student email have opted for Google (56.5 percent). Colleges and universities are switching to Google Apps because of the cost in providing an equivalent email service.

Google offers:

- Increased email storage – 7GB and growing
- Increased services to support student collaborations: calendaring, instant messaging, shared document applications
- Support for a broad range of mobile devices
- Audio and video chat

UB's partnership with Google enables us to leverage Google technology to reduce IT costs and redeploy staff to provide new strategic IT services for students.

The switch to Google Mail will begin with the fall 2009 semester for incoming students. Medical students will not be part of this initial pilot group.

GREEN SUPERCOMPUTING

UB's New York State Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics and Life Sciences has received a \$300,000 contract from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), matched by a \$150,000 investment by UB, to replace older servers with more



energy-efficient ones. This funding will enable UB to realize energy savings of approximately \$150,000 per year. It will also result in increasing the total capacity of resources at the Center for Computational Research from 13 teraflops (trillion floating operations per second) to 20 teraflops. Read more about [UB Supercomputers Going Green](#) in the [UB Reporter](#).

Security, Risk Management, & Compliance

DATA SECURITY BREACHES ROSE IN 2008

The non-profit [Identity Theft Resource Center](#) found that businesses, governments and educational institutions reported nearly 50% more data breaches last year than in 2007, exposing the personal records of at least 35.7 million Americans. Educational institutions accounted for approximately 20% of the breaches. A data breach last year at payment processor Heartland Payment Systems may have compromised tens of millions of credit and debit card transactions and may be the largest breach that has ever occurred.

The best practice to detect identity theft is to monitor accounts/bank statements monthly and check your credit reports regularly.

- The FTC provides a website for consumers with [information on detecting identity theft](#).
- The Identity Theft Resource Center provides [prevention tip sheets](#) for consumers as well as [information and solutions](#) for victims of identity theft.

INFORMATION SECURITY CHANNEL

IN MyUB Information Security information has been added to the Computing area in MyUB. To display this information, just click on "Computing" in the left-hand index of the MyUB page. You can make the display of Information Security info automatic, by clicking on the "Content" button near the top of the MyUB page and selecting "Information Security" under the category "Computing".

Dell Asset Recovery Service (ARS)

A timely and secure means to properly dispose of unwanted university owned computer equipment is available through the UB2020 IT Workstation Standardization initiative. In addition to providing an expedient equipment removal service, the Dell ARS service includes a certified process for properly removing data from storage devices.

Under ARS:

- All brands of equipment are covered. ARS services are not limited to equipment manufactured by Dell Computer. Apple, Dell, Gateway, HP, SONY, Toshiba – all brands of computer products can be disposed through ARS.

- Eligible equipment includes computers (workstations, servers, shared storage devices, switches, etc.), monitors and displays, printers (desktop, shared network and high-speed/volume printers), data storage devices, batteries, and other items.

- During the disposal process, data is wiped from storage devices following EPA

guidelines and a certificate of disposal is issued.

- If the equipment is determined to have a resale value, data is wiped from storage devices following EPA guidelines and a certificate of data wipe is issued. Dell arranges to sell the equipment and issues a credit to UB applicable to future Dell purchases. The amount of the credit depends on the age of the equipment and factors such as the type of processor, etc. Equipment over two years old will have little if any value.

- The cost of the disposal service is offset using credits the university accrues with previous UB2020 procurements.

- Prior to the equipment's removal, Dell provides a quotation for the requestor's approval. The quote tallies the credits needed based on quantity and weight and will specify the shipping process. The cost of shipping is included as part of the service.

To request the ARS service, contact UBMicro Repair Service by calling 645-3034 or emailing pcrepair@buffalo.edu. UBMicro will provide you with a form for listing and describing the assets and will initiate the ARS process for you.

HIPAA Compliance. ARS is not an approved means for the disposal of devices storing health data. For information about approved health data disposal and Dell's *Keep Your Hard Drive* service, contact UBMicro Repair Services (see below).

More complete information about ARS and HIPAA disposal services is available on UBMicro's UB2020 web page www.ubmicro.buffalo.edu/ub2020.php and repair service web page www.ubmicro.buffalo.edu/repair.php. Asset Recovery is also a hyperlink in UB2020 system configuration text.

Dell Service Tags

A quick and easy 24x7 technical support service for accessing an up to date profile of university Dell computer equipment is available from Dell Computer. All systems built by Dell are in the database which Dell maintains. No special access approval is required, just the tag number from the Service Tag label affixed to Dell equipment.

The information provided includes the type of warranty coverage, warranty period, options for extending warranties, transferring ownership, a means for identifying repair parts and consumables, and a detailed description of the original system configuration that includes the hardware and operating system installed when the system was built by Dell.

As systems are being assembled and configured in the factory, Dell assigns each PC an electronic and physical service tag with a unique number. Tags provide a standardized inventory record for asset tracking and campus IT support services. Extensive data is recorded including the model number, serial number, type of processor, amount of memory, version of operating system, etc.

Accessing Service Tag information:

The Service Tag is a label located on the top of newer systems, or the back or older systems. The digital tag number is also encoded in the machine bios.

Four easy steps to access service tag information:

1. go to www.support.dell.com
2. Click the **Support** tab
3. Select **Warranty Information** from the bar below
4. From the browser on the left of the page, under Warranty Information click **Warranty Status**

To view the original system configuration:

1. Select **Original System Configuration**
2. Type in the Service Tag number (e.g. J2V81G1)

To view warranty information:

1. Select **Service Contracts and Warranties**