



# Saint Mary's University

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS AND SUPPORT



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### Selection of an Enterprise Resource Package

By Jim Thompson - Director, ITSS (420-5474)

The Steering Committee for the selection of an Enterprise Resource Package (ERP) has concluded with the decision to choose the **SCT Banner** suite of software applications to meet the needs of the university administration systems over the next 15 years and more. This decision did not come quickly, coming at the end of a thorough selection process over the last year, plus some!

The process included a Request For Expressions of Interest (REI) last year leading to a short list of candidates and a Request For Proposals (RFP) this year. The steering committee membership included: VP Academic, VP Administration, VP Finance (Executive Sponsor), VP (Associate) External Affairs, Director ITSS, Director Finance, Director HR, SMUSA Executive representative, Faculty representative, Director Residence, Director Ad-

missions, Assistant Director ITSS (MIS), Assistant Registrar (Systems), Manager of Procurement and Manager of Planned Giving.

The next step of this process is to have the SCT experts in to create the final project plan for implementation. This will happen over the next couple of months.

This ERP implementation will involve many people and in the end will have an impact on all of your daily routines by making information flow easier and be more accessible to all faculty members, students and staff.

Stay tuned for more updates on the progress of the largest single administrative systems project ever undertaken at Saint Mary's University.

### Did you know?

**On average, every computer on the Internet is scanned 14 times per day and is subject to an attack every 3 days!**



### "Can" the SPAM

By Perry Sisk - Assistant Director, MIS (420-5272)

SPAM is defined as unsolicited email. Often it is selling any number of products and services. All of us get it and none of us wants it but it has become a fact of life on the Internet. We estimate that Saint Mary's receives about 60,000 SPAM messages each week.

To reduce the amount of SPAM being delivered to our mail boxes, we have subscribed to a service called MAPS ([www.mail-abuse.org](http://www.mail-abuse.org)). MAPS tracks known SPAM generating sites, opens mail relays and dial-up sites where SPAM originates. Each email received from the Internet is checked against the MAPS list. If the originating site is on the MAPS list the mail is returned to the sender with the rea-

son why the mail was rejected.

Because SPAMers are constantly changing their locations, the MAPS list is always growing but can lag behind. So this method of filtering is not perfect but our tests showed that it reduced SPAM by 50% to 90%. MAPS is proving to be reliable without having a large number of false positive SPAM identifications.

SPAM filtering is not an exact science. Typically the SPAM filtering solution has multiple layers using multiple products. We will continue to work on other solutions to augment MAPS. Maps will be implemented in October for all campus email.

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## Web Project Update

By Jim Thompson—Director, ITSS (420-5474)

The web strategy project (1<sup>st</sup> phase) has completed and (at the time of this writing) awaits approval from the Executive Management Group (EMG). This study was performed by the Director of Student Recruitment, Director ITSS and expert staff from both departments.

In all, over 250 people from all representative groups including 2 high schools answered the on-line survey and more than 70 attended our town hall sessions to add more meaning to our web strategy. The results are very pleasing and the messages were clear. We now feel confident that we understand how our web strategy must meet stu-

dent, academic, external and internal needs and what the mechanisms are to ensure that these outcomes are met. More on this later.



Thanks to all of you who participated in this important study. The next phase will include communication to the campus community and implementation of the appropriate organizational resources to carry out the plan.

## Evergreen—Still Growing

By Dan LeBlanc -Manager, Desktop Technology (420-5484)

This year's Evergreen Leasing Program project is a big one! Between April and September, the ITSS desktop team has been and continues to be undertaking the project of pulling back and replacing approximately 490 leased computer systems throughout campus.

Due to a recent merger between Hewlett-Packard and Compaq, the newly leased commercial grade computer systems coming to our campus will sport the Compaq brand name. The majority of systems will have following specifications:

- ◆ Compaq EVO D510 Convertible Desktop/MiniTower System
- ◆ Intel PIV 2.4 GHz CPU
- ◆ 256-MB DDR ram
- ◆ 40GB Hard Drive
- ◆ CD-RW Drive
- ◆ 3.5" Diskette Drive
- ◆ Scroll Mouse and Keyboard
- ◆ WindowsXP Operating System



IT Systems & Support would like to thank you for your continued assistance in making Saint Mary's University's Evergreen Computer Leasing Program a success!

## New Core Data Switch

By Steve Smith—Manager, Telecommunications (420-5477)

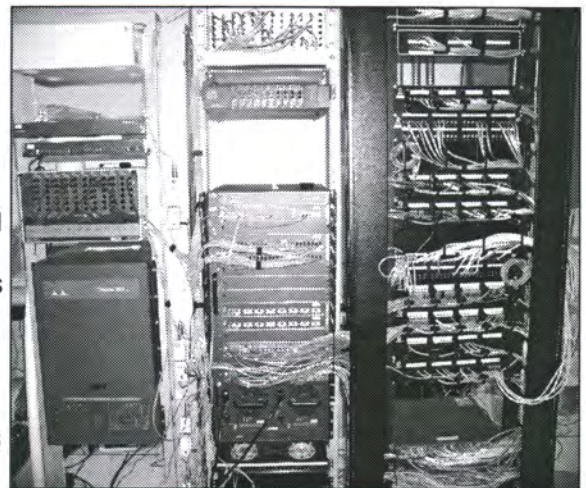
A new Cisco 6513 switch was installed on campus in the main computer room during the study break in February. The new switch is the next generation switch with additional switching capability for passing high-speed gigabit data on campus. The 6513 has the capacity to use more dense ethernet and gigabit cards so we can add many new networks and switch them to higher speeds.

The switch also allowed us to better organize the data/voice cabling in the wiring racks in the computer room. HP network services were contracted to lead the upgrade and cutover of the new switch with ITSS staff providing the content knowledge of the campus

network.

It was exciting to have the complete university network system converted from a five-year old switch to the new Catalyst 6513 in one day. We now have growth capacity and can utilize newer technology such as voice over ip networks in the 6513.

We now send our Internet and CaNet4 traffic to the Gigapop at Dal at gigabit speeds directly from our core switch.



(L) Old Catalyst 5500; (R) New Catalyst 6513



# PassW\*rDs

By Perry Sisk—Assistant Director, MIS (420-5272)

Passwords are the virtual keys to your computer that protect your intellectual property, computer resources and identity. With your computer user name and password anyone on the Internet can gain access to all your files, change or delete any file or data they wish, use your computer for any purpose they want as well as impersonate you. It is important to protect both your user name and your password.

One of the oldest forms of computer attack is to use a readily-available computer program that tries every word in a dictionary as a password to someone else's account. This can be accomplished in minutes. Good quality passwords are essential.

## Good quality passwords should include:

- Nothing from any dictionary, in any language (including names)
- A complex formation (mixture of upper and lower case letters, numbers, special or punctuation characters mixed throughout)
- A minimum of eight characters
- One you have never used before
- No patterns (password1, password2...)
- A random string of characters
- An ease of typing it (to avoid someone looking over your shoulder from seeing it)
- One that is easy for you to remember

## In choosing a password, you should avoid:

- Any variations of your user name
- Dates
- Keyboard sequences (qwerty)
- Sample passwords from a book
- Anything associated with you (phone number, address,

pet's name, license number, etc.)

## How to build a unique password:

There are several techniques to create a password that is easy for you to remember but tough for someone else to guess. Two such techniques are:

- Build a password from a phrase. For example, start with a phrase like, "Today was hot, it hit 28 degrees Celsius.". Take the first letter of each word to have "twhih28dc". Change some letters to upper case and insert the punctuation back in and you get "tWh,iH28dc".
- Use two shorter words with punctuation (sUnny#dAy). If you want to make it more robust, substitute one or more letters with special characters (sUnny#d^y)

Be creative and come up with your own scheme. The key is to make it appear random to others but easy for you to remember.

Regardless of how good your password is, it will be vulnerable if you don't protect it. Think of the keys to your house. If you give your keys to friends, you increase your risk of a break-in, either through lost keys or bad friends!

## To protect your password, you should:

- Avoid writing your password on a sticky note, desk blotter, calendar or storing it on-line
- Avoid sharing your password or account
- Change your password regularly (at least every 90 days)

## One last note:

If you have a need to share data this can be accomplished without having to share passwords and accounts. ITSS can help set this up.

## Help Desk/Classroom Support

By Paul Rooney -Manager, Help Desk / Classroom Support (420-5560)

The number of people requesting assistance from the Help Desk is increasing. The latest statistics show that requests for assistance are up 13% over the same time last year. The Help Desk breaks down the calls into the following categories: Phone, Walk-in, E-mail and On Site assistance. The walk-ins, that is, the people that actually come to the Help Desk window are up 11% over this time period last year, and up an amazing 57% over the same time period in 2001.

### **OTHER NEWS:**

A new updated data projector has been installed in the Sobey Conference Room. This high profile room now has a projector two and one-half times brighter than the previous unit. The brighter and more sharp image will enhance the capabilities of the much used room.

An enhanced splitter was also added and allows for the set up of up to four computers at one time. This enables users to set their equipment in advance and, with the turn of a switch, access their individual setup.



From the Director...

Your ITSS staff has worked very hard to bring you a higher level of service and support for your information system, desktop, telecommunication, media and administrative needs. We have received numerous letters, emails and verbal words of compliment and thank all of you for these.

I personally thank all my staff in ITSS for making this possible by continuing to raise the bar on service and support.

Way to go team!

Jim



## The Slowest Path to the NHL

If you answer yes to any of the following questions please accept the invitation below...



- ◆ Do you own a helmet, pair of skates and hockey gloves?
- ◆ Have you laced up the blades at least once in the past 50 years?
- ◆ Do you know which way you shoot?
- ◆ Would you enjoy exercise and playing recreational hockey with Saint Mary's Faculty and staff members?

ITSS has organized an hour of recreational hockey each Tuesday at 3:30 pm in the Alumni Arena (full gear optional) for members of the Saint Mary's Community. We will be starting up again this fall. Hockey players of all abilities come out and we invite anyone else interested to join us for hockey that is guaranteed NOT to improve your chances of playing in the NHL!

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dan LeBlanc anytime by email [dan.leblanc@smu.ca](mailto:dan.leblanc@smu.ca) or phone extension 5484.

## Additional Internet Capacity

By Steve Smith—Manager, Telecommunications (420-5477)

In early April, 2003 the commercial Internet capacity at Saint Mary's was increased from 6 Megabits to 14 Megabits. This was possible through our agreements with our Internet provider at Dalhousie and the ability to negotiate a lower cost per Megabit of additional bandwidth.

The increase was noticed immediately by all users of the Internet on campus. We continue to monitor the Internet peak traffic usage and adjust the traffic flows based on usage.



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Comments/Suggestions about this newsletter or anything I.T.?

Email: [thebrowser@smu.ca](mailto:thebrowser@smu.ca)

## Lab Software

By Dan LeBlanc - Manager, Desktop Technology (420-5484)

On April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2003 our annual general access software meeting with the University community was held to discuss upcoming changes and requests associated with software to be installed on the computer systems located in the labs and classrooms. From this meeting, the following list of software is proposed to be included in the classroom and general access labs for the upcoming academic year:

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ◆ Acrobat 5.0              | ◆ Derive 2.06               |
| ◆ Internet Explorer6.0     | ◆ Matlab R12                |
| ◆ Maple V 5.1              | ◆ Simply Accounting 8.0     |
| ◆ InnuclateIT              | ◆ Library CD-Rom data bases |
| ◆ MS Visual Studio 6.0 SP5 | ◆ TOEFL                     |
| ◆ MSDN Oct 2001            | ◆ MS FrontPage 2002         |
| ◆ MS Office XP             | ◆ Suns JDK                  |
| ◆ MS Project 2000          | ◆ Perl 5.6                  |
| ◆ Minitab v.13             | ◆ GSview 4.3                |
| ◆ Netscape 4.7x            | ◆ Ghostscript 7.04          |
| ◆ Picture Viewer5.0        | ◆ NJStar Asian Explorer     |
| ◆ Quick Time 5.0           | ◆ Borland Turbo Asembler    |
| ◆ Real One                 | ◆ Putty                     |
| ◆ QVT_Net 5.0              | ◆ HP MYCD                   |
| ◆ SPSS v.10.1              | ◆ WinSCP                    |
| ◆ Top Tools 5.0            | ◆ Visual Studio .Net        |
| ◆ Winzip 8.1               | ◆ MSDN                      |
| ◆ WS_FTP LE 5.0.8 (latest) | ◆ XWindows                  |
| ◆ J Builder                |                             |
| ◆ TKSolver v. 4.0          |                             |
| ◆ Fujitsu COBOL Compiler   |                             |
| ◆ Borland C++              |                             |

### Operating System Windows XP

All of these software applications can now be found on each computer in our general access labs. If you have any questions about these software packages or suggestions for the future, please contact Sarah Gough, ITSS, via email to [sarah.gough@smu.ca](mailto:sarah.gough@smu.ca) or phone at 420-5476.