Information Technology Support Guidelines

Technology Planning Guideline or Document

The issue of central versus local support of computing in a distributed environment is a complex one. Each approach has many advantages and disadvantages. The solution which has the greatest potential for maximizing advantages while minimizing disadvantages is to not use either approach exclusively, but select the best solution in each instance. In general, those technology functions and services which are campus-wide in nature or which have an institution-wide impact are best managed centrally by Information Technology Services (ITS). But specialized, discipline- or department-specific functions and services are generally best managed by the local unit desiring the function or service.

To provide guidance to the University community, six categories have been defined in terms of campus responsibilities for technology support. The Associate Vice President for Information Technology Services shall make decisions regarding the implementation of these guidelines. If there is need for changing the guidelines, the unit Vice President shall submit the proposal to the Planning and Policy Committee for Information Technology (PPCIT) for consideration. Adoption of these guidelines will have financial and organizational implications which will need to be addressed in a more detailed implementation plan.

The six categories are:

- Functions and services that ITS is charged to manage and control centrally in consultation with local units.
- Functions and services that ITS shall provide, but that also may be provided, supplemented, or acquired elsewhere.
- Functions and services for which ITS must be informed (Units should feel free to consult with ITS if they desire).
- Functions and services performed at the division or college level alone.
- Functions and services in which ITS and local units share joint responsibility.
- Functions and services performed by the individual user.

All other functions and services not covered by these categories will be the responsibility of the unit(s) desiring the function or service. Those units may consider providing support wholly on their own, through an off campus provider, or by approaching ITS or other units to partner. Decisions by the local unit on which approach to take should be based on the total cost of ownership for local, off campus, or ITS management; and the extent to which local control would achieve better or more responsive results than central control.

- Those functions and services that ITS is charged to manage and control centrally in consultation with local units:
  - Network infrastructure (fiber optic and telephone wiring plant, routed protocols, network device registry, directory services, hubs, routers)
  - Network infrastructure security
  - Disaster recovery for ITS managed systems
  - ITS Student Computer Centers (SCCs)
  - Backup and restore LAN servers of institutional scope*1
  - The following aspects of Administrative Systems of Institutional Scope:
    - File server acquisition, installation, and administration
    - Database management
    - Application software installation and upgrades (server level)

    - Telephone system
    - Database of centrally assigned usernames and passwords
    - Monitoring the plans and use of technology across campus
    - Training and communicating with technology Liaisons on campus-wide applications
    - Central computing hosts and associated services (eg. IBM and DEC)
- Those functions and services that ITS shall provide but that also may be provided, supplemented, or acquired elsewhere:
    - Training for ITS supported*2 software
    - Emergency personnel backup for ITS supported hardware/software
    - Installation*3, support, and repair of ITS supported hardware and software according to ITS specifications
    - Consultation for special technology needs
    - Capacity and performance management of, and consultation on, servers
    - Research, evaluate and recommend new technologies
    - Network troubleshooting
    - Backup of LAN servers that are not institutional in scope
- Those functions and services for which ITS must be informed (Units should feel free to consult with ITS if they desire) are:
    - Acquisition and installation of servers that are not institutional in scope
    - Instructional software acquisition with campus-wide impact
    - Development of the UNI web sites which appear on the UNI home page
- Those functions and services performed at the division or college level alone:
    - Application, system, and user administration of division and college LAN servers not of institutional scope
    - Support for discipline specific applications, hosts and resources
    - Support for non-ITS supported applications
    - Front line/on-site user support
    - College and division web site development and administration
    - Implementation of standards set by ITS
    - Inventory of local technology resources
    - Management of maintenance and service contracts for locally funded technology
    - ROD Library software and hardware for dedicated library systems such as UNISTAR
    - Support for College Student Computer Centers
    - Personal software
    - Decisions on level of support provided by the local unit to individuals (eg. Desktop PCs, client software, and PC backups)
    - The following aspects of Administrative Systems of Institutional Scope (and all other systems as well):
        - Training users of administrative applications
        - Client application software installation and upgrades
        - Day-to-day systems operation (scheduling jobs, running reports, and distributing output)
        - Adhoc reporting
        - Release of data
- Those functions and services in which ITS and local units share joint responsibility:
    - AccessUNI (campus decision support and data interface systems)
    - Evaluation and selection of campus-wide hardware, software, and networking standards (eg. PCs, e-mail, web tools, calendar, and networking operating systems)*4
    - Campus-wide and local strategic technology plans
    - Disaster recovery plans for local units.
    - Repository for site licenses, maintenance and support agreements

    - Web business processes, especially those requiring confidential information such as social security number, credit card, or PIN
    - Assessing total cost of ownership
    - Administrative software acquisition, design, and development
    - Develop implementation plans, including financial and organizational components, to implement these guidelines.
    - Identify the total cost of ownership (including requisite personnel support, training, maintenance, replacement or upgrade, as well as acquisition costs) for every proposed new system.
- Those functions and services performed by the individual user.
    - Know and understand how to use a personal computer and systems necessary for performing one’s job.
    - Enroll in appropriate training as necessary, to learn applications basic to performing one’s job.
    - Keep up-to-date with changes in technology relevant to the performance of one’s job.

Footnotes:

*1 A system is institutional in scope if either of the following conditions are met: 1) users outside the local unit require access to any aspect of the system's data, or 2) the system has an interface with systems outside the local unit which must always be available.

*2 ITS supported systems are those which ITS endorses and for which ITS will develop the necessary expertise to provide training, consulting, and troubleshooting assistance.

*3 For PCs, installation will be done in a standardized manner by ITS for those local units desiring that type of installation.

*4 Unless an articulated and compelling justification for uniqueness exists, standard hardware and software is easier and more cost effective to support, and is therefore preferred.

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