

ITS3 Report for ICT Forum Michaelmas Term 2010

Staff

While being sorry to lose him, we are pleased to report Rob Zachlod's promotion into our Networks Development team at OUCS in October. This leaves a 50% FTE vacancy in ITS3 which we will be recruiting to fill in early 2011.

Courses

This term saw the first run of the ISEB Certificate Information Security Management Principles (ISMP) course which was extremely well-received and a valuable week of training for all that attended. Another VMWare vSphere course was also extremely successful. We ran the usual New ITSS Induction in September with 17 attending and the pre-year roundup was also a success with 32 present and a good line-up of news and plans from OUCS staff.

Events

The late summer BBQ was a success as ever and thanks once again to Natasha and Ahrum for arranging permission to host it in the lovely garden at 64 Banbury Road. Thanks also to Corpus Christi College for the loan of the gas BBQ.

Events are few in Michaelmas term due to the time required by ITSS to support all the newcomers to departments and colleges at this time of year. We did collaborate with Lady Margaret Hall and LAN3 to deliver a seminar by the internationally-renowned Matthew Gast on the "Future of Wireless". This had an impressive number of attendees at nearly 100 and it was good to welcome people from Cambridge University as well as local authorities, UCL and the Fire Service.

The ITSS Christmas dinner had record attendance this year at nearly 40 people. I think this was largely due to the decision by ICTF steering group to subsidise places for ITSS so that those places cost only £20 rather than the £35 true cost. Christ Church did us proud in quality of food and ambiance. It was good to see lots of ITSS taking partners along to this event.

The IT Suppliers' Exhibition was a great success once again and our thanks go to Mondale for arranging a good line-up of exhibitors in these difficult times, and to all of you for attending in good numbers and nice and early. The breakout sessions were not so well attended, though nonetheless still useful, so we plan to deliver those at a different time next year.

All these events are extremely important in fostering good communications and good relationships among the ITSS community so it's great to see so many of you attending them. If you've not done so yet I recommend you try one!

IT Reviews

An IT review has been completed at one college and discussions are starting with another. Tony is now helping a college he reviewed earlier in the year in devising and implementing their IT Strategy and was pleased to see that College's governing body agree to move forward in making significant IT investment in wireless, virtualisation and self-service network access control at this financially interesting time.

Tony has also been supporting the Colleges IT Funding working group along with several College finance staff and some College IT officers.

Recruitment

ITS3 has been busy with recruitment again and Tony has joined panels for Plant Sciences, Classics, The Oxford MAN Institute of Quantitative Finance and a different part of OUCS this term. Please do contact ITS3 if your unit would like any advice or help in IT recruitment and remember the next ITSS induction is on 10 January 2011.

Future Plans

OUCS moves into the University Administration and Services (UAS) division on 1st January 2011. You probably knew UAS as Central Administration but it is much more than that and includes Finance, Business Services and Projects, Student Administration, Research Services, Estates, Personnel, Occupational Health, the Safety Office and much more. The move of OUCS into UAS will enable much greater collaboration between OUCS and the units already in UAS and hopefully clearer and less complex messages to ITSS from UAS. To that end ITS3 is planning to set up a fairly informal UAS-ITSS communications group which we hope will enable lots of really effective and productive two-way communication between ITSS and all the departments in UAS.

We have two Lunch & Learns planned for later this term and we hope to have them next term for the British Computer Society and about a new bolt-on product for PCounter that enables ITSS to offer driverless accounted printing to users from their own personal computers.

We are negotiating also over delivering the CISMP course again as well as another VMWare course (which was full this term). Please let us know of any other training you want to see us deliver.

Finally

A huge thank you to Malcolm and Elsa who have both worked extremely hard this term while we have carried a vacancy, and to all of you for all the help you give to OUCS in supporting users of our services, dealing with copyright infringements contributing to the ITSS Wiki and much, much more.

We wish you a happy Christmas and a prosperous new year to all of you from all of us in ITS3.

Tony Brett
Head of ITS3
December 2010