Residence Halls Equipped with Wi-Fi

Student calls for wireless connectivity in the residence halls were answered this summer. DoIT’s Department of Telecommunications and Networking (TelNet), along with the help of Campus Residences, deployed 1,500 wireless access points throughout Stony Brook University’s 26 residence halls and three apartment complexes. Stony Brook Southampton was also outfitted. Four weeks into the semester, there were 7,200 users (nearly 80 percent of all residential students) benefiting from the convenience of Wi-Fi in the dorms. That number is expected to increase to nearly 9,500 once work is completed in Roosevelt and Roth quads later this fall.

Survey App Available to Faculty and Staff

In July 2009, Stony Brook University cancelled its subscription to Flashlight, a Web-based system for creating surveys and analyzing data that was developed by the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology at Washington State University. In its place, DoIT now offers faculty and staff a more robust, but easy-to-use alternative called SelectSurvey.net.

SelectSurvey.net is a software application that is hosted on Stony Brook servers. The data and results collected from surveys are stored here on campus instead of a server outside the University. Numerous options exist for survey administration, management, deployment, branding, questions, and reporting. Web design skills are not required for creating professional-looking, online surveys.

Stony Brook’s own Teaching, Learning + Technology department is offering a SelectSurvey.net workshop on Nov. 9. To register, visit the TLT Web site at http://tlt.stonybrook.edu and go to Faculty Services > Workshops, Conferences & Events.

A sample survey is available online at http://it.cc.stonybrook.edu/dotisurvey. Not only will you get a feel for the application, you will also be helping DoIT conduct its own research by filling out this short questionnaire. Students can use SharePoint to create their own surveys for course and club-related activities. SharePoint has a unique “surveys” feature that allows users to create public and private surveys. Data that is collected can be exported neatly into Excel spreadsheets.

MS Office Sold at New Location

Employees who wish to purchase Microsoft Office under the work-at-home license agreement can now do so at the Seawolves MarketPlace in the Student Activities Center. Windows and Mac versions are both available for $12. Employees need to show their Stony Brook ID card and can pay by cash, check, credit card, procurement card, or purchase order. This software was previously distributed to employees through Client Support, but the centrally-located Seawolves MarketPlace has agreed to sell the software through its new and expanded “WolfieTech” line of products.

Other Topics This Issue

What’s New?

TLT Hits the Airwaves..................2
Update on MySBfiles ..................2

Did You Know?

Wi-Fi Arrives in Residence Halls .......3
MySBmail Not Only for Students ......3
Where to Go for a Unix Account .......3

Giving Back

DoIT Employees Help Fund Scholarship for Students ...............4
What’s New?

TLT Hits Airwaves with “Innovations in Education” TV Show

S tony Brook University has a new Internet television show called “Innovations in Education.” Its purpose is to feature faculty and staff who are using inventive approaches and applications of educational technology to enhance student learning. Faculty at SB can use the program to learn from one another and share their ideas with instructors from other universities who can easily tune in through any number of online media including Facebook and YouTube. Additionally, professional staff and students may find many of these shows of interest.

An eight-person team from the Teaching, Learning + Technology (TLT) department works to produce the show which is taped once a month in the Stony Brook television studios located in the Educational Communications Center.

Off-Campus Access to MySBfiles Has Changed

Due to a Windows server upgrade, access to MySBfiles from off campus requires a new server address. This is important for users who want to access their MySBfiles from home or from a computer that is not connected to the campus network. This change does not apply to on-campus computers that are connected to the campus network.

Individuals who access their MySBfiles from a shortcut on their desktop or mapped network drive in “My Computer” will not be affected.

As of Oct. 1, the new server address is: https://mysbfiles.stonybrook.edu/home.

For read-only access, enter the new URL into a Web browser. For read/write access, Windows users must add a new network place/location, while Mac users should make sure they are connecting to the new server address.

Related Link:
http://it.cc.stonybrook.edu/networking/mysbfiles

Nancy Wozniak, learning architect in TLT’s Faculty Center and the show’s producer, helps identify faculty on campus who are using innovative pedagogical techniques. She visits classrooms and documents the cutting-edge ways faculty are reaching their students. She conducts interviews and compiles a professional profile which is critical to producing the show, but will ultimately be used for an upcoming active learning Web site.

“We have an idea about the types of questions we want to ask each guest, but we will follow any interesting threads that arise,” said Glynn. “Our hope is to get good examples of all sorts of different teaching, so we try to choose people for a particular talent or a particular area that they’re good in.”

The first 10 episodes were recorded last spring and summer. Another eight or nine are waiting to be edited. Topics so far include:

• active learning in large lectures
• automated lecture recordings
• online discussions
• audio visual technology in the classroom
• plagiarism detection software
• online tools to encourage critical thinking
• course redesign
• educational assessment
• conferencing systems

Participating faculty come from a variety of disciplines such as physics and astronomy, writing and rhetoric, business, biology, biochemistry and cell biology, chemistry and neurobiology. Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Eric Kaler even sat down to discuss administrative policies and support for teaching and learning.

“We’re selecting our guests a number of ways,” said Glynn. “The distinguished teaching faculty are prime targets for this and then we have the people who are working with us in TLT who we know about. But, there are a lot of good teachers out there that don’t fall into either category, so we have to rely on the department chairs to tell us about who they think would be good candidates.”

Episodes are archived in Flash and Windows Media formats on the TLT Web site at https://tlt.stonybrook.edu. Educational technologist Jennifer Adams posts vodcasts of the show on iTunes and uploads each episode onto the show’s Facebook and YouTube sites. More than 300 people worldwide have already become fans of the show on Facebook. There is even a site on Twitter for announcements. This fall, “Innovations in Education” premiered on closed caption TV - Channel 8 on campus.

Related Link:
https://tlt.stonybrook.edu/FacultyServices/FacDev/TVShow/Pages/Default.aspx
Resident Students Get WolfieNet-Secure

The name given to this encrypted wireless network is WolfieNet-Secure. Students must register with their NetID and NetID password in order to use it.

“The technology we’ve deployed is state-of-the-art,” said John Stier, Director of Telecommunications and Networking. “We are compatible with all the wireless technologies that are available. The wireless network supports the new 802.11n standard that comes with most new laptop computers, but it also supports some of the older standards like 802.11a, 802.11b, and 802.11g that some students have in their computers.”

A pilot program was established last spring to see if wireless would work and how it would be utilized by students. When it was determined that this was indeed a service students were clamoring for, TelNet began interviewing different vendors. The criteria included performance, security, and manageability.

“TelNet is not a huge department, so we needed the convenience of being able to service access points without having to go to every single room,” said Terry O’Connell, Manager of the TelNet Service Desk. “Remote access was one of our requirements, as well as help desk functionality. We needed a product that would allow our service desk and the Client Support service desk to see statistics.”

Aruba Networks offered everything TelNet was looking for. Its powerful monitoring tools enable the TelNet service desk to tell whether an entire dorm is down even before the calls start coming in from students. The service desk may be able to diagnose and fix problems itself, or send a network engineer to visit the building. This level of monitoring has been handed out to Client Support, who generally receives the bulk of calls when Internet access is interrupted on campus.

“Wireless is all about support,” said Stier. “But, the support has to happen where the customer is. The problem does not travel with the computer. The problem is where it is. So, we wanted a way of getting as much information out of the system as possible to try and help the customer without actually making a visit.”

The Aruba access points are known as “thin access points.” In an enterprise setting like Stony Brook, the access points are connected to a controller. The controller is where the smarts are. That is why it is called a “thin access point.” Not everything is there. Part of the capability is elsewhere and that lets TelNet conduct centralized management programming.

In addition to installing wireless in the residence halls this summer, TelNet replaced more than 250 network switches servicing 12,000 wired connections. Information Systems majors Kevin Hennemeier ’10 and Tim Tong ’10 were among nine students hired by TelNet to assist with the work this summer.

The large number of access points purchased (1,500) was necessary because TelNet discovered a penetration/coverage issue in the dorms. They found that when an access point was installed in one room, it did not necessarily cover the next room over because of all the metal in the wall. There is now a wireless access point in each room, except for those suites where one access point can do the job of covering the entire suite.

The impact that this new wireless network will have on faculty, staff, and guests of the University will initially be minimal. AirNet is still the preferred Wi-Fi network that faculty and staff are encouraged to use in the main academic buildings and common areas, while guests are asked to connect to GuestNet. However, Stier intimates that WolfieNet-Secure may eventually supersede AirNet and GuestNet because of the robustness of its security.

“We’ve done the dorms, now people want to know what happens next?” said Stier. “We will certainly increase wireless coverage across campus and I hope that it will be more akin to what we have now in the dorms – using that mode of registration and encryption. We’d certainly like to provide more coverage in classrooms, academic areas, and open spaces. My wild guess is it will ultimately be one big WolfieNet.”
Giving Back

DoIT Scholarship Helps Students Reach Educational Goals

DoIT employees established a scholarship fund in the fall of 2004 as part of the University’s “It’s About Us!” faculty/staff campaign. The scholarship fund offers support towards educational expenses to a continuing student who demonstrates an interest in the field of information technology.

Eligible students must be enrolled as a full-time Stony Brook University undergraduate student with a demonstrated interest in the field of information technology. The prospective student must have completed at least 24 credits prior to the year that the scholarship will be awarded and they must be in good academic standing at the completion of the spring semester prior to the fall semester award.

Applications are due June 1 each year. As part of the application process, students must submit an unofficial transcript of their undergraduate courses and grades. They are asked to attach a resume which includes current and past participation in student and professional organizations. An online application must be completed which includes writing a short essay outlining personal and professional goals as they relate to the field of information technology.

So far, nine students have benefited from the generosity of DoIT’s employees. Josh Lory earned a bachelor’s degree in technological systems management (environmental studies minor) in May 2009 and is one of the more recent recipients of the scholarship. He credits the award with helping him to be able to take a 10-week, first-level Cisco Certified Network Associate course through the School of Professional Development last May. Lory plans to take the certification exam this fall to make himself more marketable as he continues to apply for network administration and information technology project management positions.

“I was surprised I won the award,” said Lory, who held down two jobs while he attended Stony Brook, including IT specialist for Vice President of Student Affairs Peter Baigent. “I said to myself, ‘if they are going to give this to me, then I am going to work hard.’ It gave me motivation to keep going.”

Senior Emilia MacDonald was also surprised to receive an e-mail message announcing she had been selected for the 2008-09 DoIT Scholarship. An electrical engineering major from Acton, Massachusetts, MacDonald brought her love of mathematics to Stony Brook. She is active on campus, both as a member of the marching band’s color guard and her sorority, Beta Phi Alpha.

“I am greatly appreciative for the DoIT Scholarship,” said MacDonald. “After graduation this May, I will be applying for customer-service, business-based jobs in the electrical engineering field. I may even pursue a master’s degree in business.”

The online application for the DoIT Scholarship will be made available this spring. In the meantime, anyone interested in contributing to the fund can contact Rick Guarino or Kathy Weber in the Annual Fund Office at 2-4887.