
One of President Keith T. Miller’s priorities for VSU is to design a new web site. Over the past year, Technology Services and the University Relations Departments have been working collaboratively with Digital Wave, a strategic web and architect design company, to design the new VSU web site. The new VSU web site will be a recruitment tool for prospective students and parents, as well as, a resource for prospective employees and faculty members.

The Web Services team will also introduce a new Content Management System, called Cascade Server, which will replace the current Site Builder system. The Cascade Server software will allow for decentralization of website management, ensure consistency in layout and accuracy of content, improve search capabilities, and improve workflow for publishing content.

Within the next two months, the Web Services team will be contacting the Web Content Manager for each department. We will need all the owners of the content on the current VSU Web Site to start updating the content on their sites, as well as, decide on the content to be moved to the new VSU Web site. This will ensure that the content transition from the old to the new site will be smooth.

If you have any questions about the new VSU web site or the existing VSU web site content, please contact webmaster@vsu.edu.

Thurgood Marshall College Scholarship Fund

The Thurgood Marshall College Scholarship Fund (TMCF) has awarded Virginia State University with a grant for $209,808 in Microsoft Software. This grant will be used to develop a Business Intelligence solution and a Unified Communications and Collaboration System (UCCaS) solution for students, faculty, and staff. These solutions will aid in communications and collaborations on academic and research projects and for running the administrative functions of the University.

TMCF's longstanding partnership with Microsoft is part of the fund's Technology Initiative which aims to provide staff and students of member institutions with access to current technology for rigorous educational purposes, provide instruction on the usage of new software, and offer residents of the surrounding communities access to the institutions' IT resources. "VSU students, faculty, and staff are the prime beneficiaries of the University's partnership with Microsoft and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund. Through our relationship with TMCF, VSU was awarded this Microsoft grant which will enable Technology Services to transition VSU business units into making data-driven decisions" says Hubert Harris, Associate Vice President and CIO.
Technology Services at Virginia State University  

Since November 2011, the University began using the live data entered in the Kronos timekeeping system to process payroll for hourly and student employees. With this new technology, the institution will save $200,000 annually, minimize payroll errors through standardization and automation of the payroll processes, and improve tracking of hourly and student employees’ time and attendance. More importantly, the payroll staff members are now able to spend more time creating other operational and organizational efficiencies within their areas.

"We are excited about implementing Kronos as it will help us achieve immediate savings as well as enable us to meet our long-term goals without requiring additional resources," said David Meadows, Vice President of Administration and Finance.

The next step is to automate employee leave requests and provide real-time leave reporting, to help ensure the accuracy and timeliness of the process and compliance with federal, state, and other labor laws and regulations.

New Teaching Tools

Blackboard – NBC Learn

Blackboard and NBC Learn have partnered together to help faculty members easily locate and incorporate real-world event videos, which are relevant to course curriculum across all academic disciplines, into their educational content in order to increase student engagement in the classrooms. In Blackboard, the NBC multimedia content is easily accessible and frequently updated. It includes video clips on historic and current events, articles, cartoons, photos, and critical analysis and mini documentaries from shows such as the NBC Nightly News, the Today’s Show, Meet the Press, Dateline NBC, and other many NBC shows.

VSU Library Services has recently purchased a subscription to NBC Learn. It is available in Blackboard. For more information on how to incorporate NBC Learn into your class, contact Shahla Roayaei at sroayaei@vsu.edu

Qualtrics – Survey Tool

Qualtrics is web-based survey software available for use by all VSU Faculty, Staff, and Students to support teaching and research projects on campus. The Qualtrics survey software, which is similar to Survey Monkey, can be quickly created and distributed by anyone with a user account. Qualtrics has been used for many purposes such as electronic course evaluations, undergraduate and graduate research projects, and customer satisfaction surveys. To learn more about Qualtrics, contact Art Fridrich at afridrich@vsu.edu.
Congratualtions, Terrell!

Using the experience he gained working in Technology Services, Terrell C. Jones, was hired by Northrop Grumman in December 2011 as a Security Operations Analyst. He came to work for Technology Services as an IT Support Specialist Intern in May 2011. Terrell set up computers, helped to troubleshoot computer issues, inventoried computers, deployed iPads to faculty, and many other tasks.

His new position supports the Cyber Security Operations Center/Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT) which is focused on protecting the Commonwealth’s network infrastructure and security of tens of thousands of users on a 24/7/365 basis. Terrell is very excited about his new opportunity.

Going to China!

“This is an experience of a life time! I am getting to learn another culture while also learning global business skills,” said Nakeya Johnston-Peterson, who is Business major and Technology Services Intern. Nakeya and Cierra Wilson are excited to participate in the University Studies Abroad Consortium Chinese Studies and International Business program in Shanghai, China. They departed for China on January 4, 2012 and will return on May 13, 2012. The students are studying International Business and Chinese culture, receiving a minor degree in International Studies.

The Study Abroad program is administered by Dr. Maxine Sample, Director of VSU’s Dr. George H. Bennett Office for International Education. The grant is part of Caterpillar’s support of President Barack Obama’s “100,000 Strong Initiative” to increase the number of American college students studying in China.

In the iPad Xchange, Technology Services want to share and highlight several iPad Applications or “Apps” that might be of interest to the VSU community. The three iPad Apps highlighted are Notability, WebEx, and Art Authority.

**Notability** is an excellent application to capture ideas, share insights, and present information in one place on the iPad. Notability integrates handwriting, PDF annotation, typing, recording, and organizing so you can take notes your way. At ninety-nine cents, the price of this application amounts to a bag of chips, but while a bag of chips will soon be gone, this app will serve your note taking needs for a long time to come!

**WebEx** - For those that participate in webinars or other events using WebEx this free application is the ideal way to connect, with out having to be in front of a computer. If you organize WebEx events, this tool also has many of the functions found in the PC version, including the ability for you to schedule and start meetings from your iPad or iPhone. It works on either 3G or WiFi networks.

**Art Authority** - Whether you teach art or just appreciate it, Art Authority is an excellent application. It provides a virtual art museum filled with works by over 1,000 of the western world’s greatest artists, from ancient times to today. 55,000 paintings and sculptures, organized into eight period-specific rooms, each room a gateway to a whole museum's worth of art. Choose an artist by movement or name, and become instantly immersed in an exhibition devoted just to that artist. Search for and compare different artists' works by title, subject or location, or just wander at random and get lost in the art. This is not a cheap app, at a regular price of $9.99, but it periodically goes on sale for $4.99.
“SECURE IT: It’s your responsibility!”

Best Practices for Recovery from the Malicious Erasure of Files

Cyber criminals can damage their victim's computer systems and data by changing or deleting files, wiping hard drives, or erasing backups to hide some or all of their malicious activity and tradecraft. By wiping, or "zeroing out," the hard disk drives, which overwrites good data with zeroes or other characters, the criminals effectively erase or alter all existing data, greatly impeding restoration. This sort of criminal activity makes it difficult to determine whether criminals merely accessed the network, stole information, or altered network access and configurations files. Completing network restoration efforts and business damage assessments may be also hampered.

The FBI and DHS encourages businesses and individuals to employ mitigation strategies and best practices such as:
* Implement a data back-up and recovery plan to maintain copies of sensitive or proprietary data in a separate and secure location. Backup copies of sensitive data should not be readily accessible from local networks.
* Regularly mirror and maintain an image of critical system files.
* Encrypt and secure sensitive information.
* Use strong passwords, implement a schedule for changing passwords frequently, and do not reuse passwords for multiple accounts.
* Enable network monitoring and logging where feasible.
* Be aware of social engineering tactics aimed at obtaining sensitive information.
* Securely eliminate sensitive files and data from hard drives when no longer needed or required.

For more IT security information: The US-CERT web page at www.us-cert.gov hosts a wide range of tips, best practices, and threat information for business and home users.

Password Resets

The Self-Service Reset Password Management (SSRPM) program, will allow faculty, staff, and students to perform password resets when their VSU Network password is locked out. Accounts can be unlocked from any computer with Internet access. All you need to do is enroll in the system and set up three security questions and answers. If you haven’t enrolled yet, please visit the VSU Self-Service Password Reset website at https://reset.vsu.edu and select Enroll into SSRPM.

1. Enter your VSU Network username, password and enter vsu as the domain.
2. Select continue.
3. Select three questions and enter your answers for those questions.

Now, you’re ready to use your VSU Network password!