

Report to the Board of Trustees

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Executive Summary: The October Information Technology report to the Board of Trustees provides updates on several technology related areas and highlights new initiatives. A standard feature of the October Board report is an update on funding sources for technology at Ashland University. This report highlights important technology initiatives and funding models as we continue to employ technology as a strategic asset in our recruitment and retention of students and to enhance operational efficiencies. Major advances have been made in areas of campus emergency notification and disaster recovery planning. Highlights of the October report include:

- Implementation of a campus emergency text notification system
- Purchase of a disaster recovery system for the main business system
- Completion of a security system upgrade
- Replacement of over 200 instructional computers and over 80 faculty systems

**Executive
Summary**

Ashland University has made significant progress in the use of technology to enhance the teaching and learning experience. Through careful planning, we have placed technology at the fingertips of the students, faculty and staff members to a degree largely unmatched by schools of comparable size and mission. The pace for technological change shows no sign of slowing and the Information Technology team is prepared for the challenges ahead. Through training and research and in working with students, faculty and staff, this team will continue to offer innovative solutions that meet the needs of the Ashland University community. This is only the start of what we can accomplish by working together.

The Information Technology Team: The Office of Information Technology (IT) is comprised of 26 full-time, one full-time contractual staff member and between 30 and 40 student workers (10.5 FTE). There are also two decentralized staff members (1.25 FTE) that provide valuable technology support at the Ashland Theological Seminary and at the Columbus Center. The primary focus areas for the department include Instructional Support/Training, Web Design/Development, Network Services/Security, Administrative Services, Help Desk, and Client Services/Support..

IT Team

Planning for the Future: It is essential for the IT team must be aware of emerging trends, options and costs. The Office of Information Technology is highly engaged in all aspects of technology needs assessment, acquisition, and lifecycle planning and remains engaged through the following avenues:

Technology Committees

- Technology Planning Meetings - IT Staff members have been involved in meetings with the faculty and staff to address special projects including a new development call center, new athletics video editing systems (football and basketball), Bixler classroom technology, and office moves and renovations.
- Technology Committees - There are several technology related committees comprised of faculty, staff, administrators and student representatives.
- AU Committees - IT staff members participate as requested on campus committees and working groups such as the Faculty Senate, Regional Center Director meetings, ADA Committee, Compliance Committee, Building Use Committee and Academic Council.

Information Technology Projects – 2006-2007: This year marked a shift back into what is considered a more traditional role for the Office of Information Technology – exploring and implementing new technologies that provide a competitive advantage and keep institutional information secure.

2006-2007 Initiatives

Project/Initiative 2006-2007	Status
Extend Microsoft Office licensing to undergraduate students	Completed
Music service for students	Completed
Extend Antivirus software to students (Trend Micro)	Completed
Increase Internet Bandwidth (16mb/s to 45mb/s)	Completed
Faculty computer refresh	Completed
Computer Lab/Classroom Refresh (partial)	Completed
Expand wireless coverage	Completed
Review and revise maintenance contracts	Completed
Finalize technology for new facilities	Completed
Restructure student support and training program	Completed
Staff training for new systems/technology	Completed
Strengthen IT committees/workgroups	Completed
Expand network monitoring/control tools	Completed
Server and network infrastructure upgrades *	Completed
Migration to latest Student, Finance, Fin. Aid version *	Completed
Evaluate alternative Learning Management Systems *	Completed
Restructure of IT group to best meet community needs	In Progress
Budget Management – Development of a long term funding strategy	In Progress
Migration to new email and network operating systems *	In Progress
Major upgrade of network security infrastructure *	In Progress

* Denotes major initiative

Information Technology Projects – 2007-2008: The Office of Information Technology started the 2007-2008 academic year at breakneck speed, building on the momentum set in the prior academic year accomplishing many major initiatives over the summer.

Project/Initiative 2007-2008	Status
Emergency text notification system	Completed
Computer Lab/Classroom Refresh (200+ systems installed)	Completed
Selection of new learning management system	Completed
MS Office 2007 productivity suite	Completed
Extend Microsoft Office licensing to all students	Completed
Disaster Recovery System (purchase and activation)	In Progress
Disk Encryption solution Mobile Devices	In Progress

Increase Internet Bandwidth (45mb/s to 90mb/s)	In Progress
Increase Internet Bandwidth at Columbus Center	In Progress
Faculty computer refresh (80+ systems)	In Progress
Restructure of IT group to best meet community needs	In Progress
Budget Management – Development of a long term funding strategy	In Progress
Migration to new email and network operating systems *	In Progress
Major upgrade of network security infrastructure *	In Progress
Regional Center technology upgrades and budget model	Planning
Co-location of servers for Disaster Recovery	Planning
Comprehensive Disaster Recovery and BCCP	Planning
Instant Enrollment and e-Business for Graduate Registrations	Planning
Replace for aging campus telephone system with VOIP system	Planning

**2007-2008
Initiatives**

Growing Technology Needs: Technology needs are constantly changing and always increasing in the university environment. A few years ago, SPAM (unwanted email) and computer viruses were minimal to non-existent and 6 megabits per second for Internet bandwidth was more than enough for our institution. Today, over \$100,000 is spent on software, hardware and staff time to protect the university network and filter well over 10,000 unwanted email and virus infected messages each day. While the cost per megabyte for Internet bandwidth has declined, the overall need has increased and so has the overall cost to provide this enhanced bandwidth. Internet bandwidth at Ashland University will be increased to 90 megabytes per second this year. It is good to occasionally review where we are and how we arrived at this point using a “by the numbers” comparison chart:

**Growing
Needs**

Information Technology by the Numbers

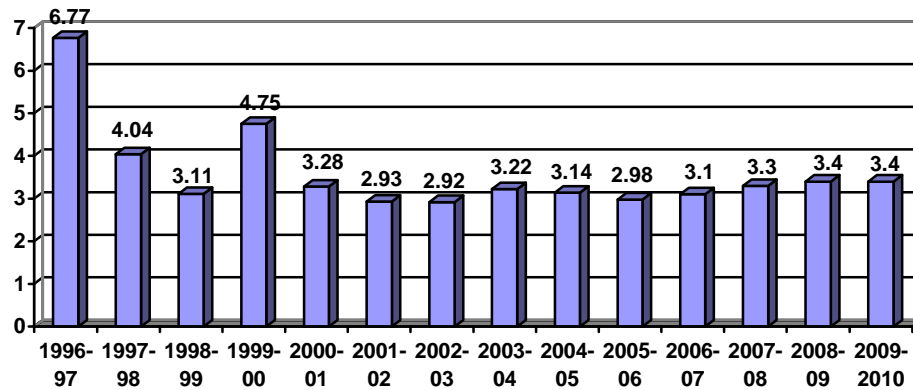
Item	2003-2004	2007-2008
Instructional Learning Environments	136	198
Technology Equipped Learning Environments	62	167
A/V Classrooms Levels	2	8
Projectors In Use	54	240
Web Site Servers	2	28
Web Applications	5	100+
Faculty Systems Refreshed	20+	80+
WebCT Sections (Learning Management System)	59	445+
Departments using WebCT	4	26
Training Classes Offered (Monthly)	10	40-50
Internet Bandwidth	6mb/s	90mb/s
Help Desk Calls (Monthly)	200+	500+
IT Staffing (Full Time)	24	27
IT Student Staffing (FTE)	5.5	10.5

**IT by the
Numbers**

IT Budget Impact: Technology is a key component of the educational experience at Ashland University. This wide-reaching impact is accomplished using a relatively small percentage of the annual institutional budget.

**IT Budget
Impact**

Technology Costs as a Percentage of Institutional Revenue



**Technology
Funding
Sources**

IT Budget Sources: The IT budget is derived from four primary sources:

- Funding for full-time staff and benefits (45% of IT budget for 2007-2008)
- Operational Allocation to cover baseline contracts, support, maintenance (10% of IT budget for 2007-2008)
- Student Technology Fees that are prioritized for initiatives directly benefiting the educational experience (29% of IT budget for 2007-2008)
- Revenue Allocation (3/4 of 1 percent of institutional tuition/fee revenue) is earmarked for infrastructure enhancements and projects (16% of IT budget for 2007-2008)

Summary

Summary: Great strides have been made in the past several years to improve the technology available to students, faculty and staff of Ashland University. This strong momentum is critical as we strive to keep pace with the evolving technological needs of the community we serve. It is important to note that this momentum would not have been possible without the foresight of key members of the institution. The support from the President, VP of Business and other Cabinet members is second to none at this institution. The support and advice received from the faculty members, students and Regional Center personnel is invaluable to our continued success in this area. The foundations have been set and we will continue to build upon our many successes and learn from our few mistakes. Over the next few years a greater focus will be placed on the Regional Centers as we seek to ensure these resources are on par with those offered at the Ashland campus.