
Mary: Hello, my name is Mary, and I am with the Northwestern University Information Technology Communications team, and I am here with Carlo, a senior math major at Northwestern, who works in the Information Technology Support Center. Hi Carlo!

Carlo: Hi Mary!

Mary: We wanted to talk a little bit about what students need to know about technology here at Northwestern. So Carlo, can you tell me what types of technology students will experience in our res halls?

Carlo: There are plenty of technology that NUIT implemented this year and what we’ve had in the past years. We have a high-speed ethernet connection in each room, every dorm has wireless access, and most buildings on campus also have wireless access. They are labeled as wireless access zones. We also improved cell phone reception in all of the living spaces. You guys in the incoming Class of 2012 are lucky not to experience the terrible reception I did when I arrived. Kudos to NUIT for making our lives a little better. Another thing that NUIT offers is NUTV, which requires a wired ethernet connection, and this is where you are going to watch your TV with your computer. Unfortunately we don’t have a connection to your TV directly, so if you want to watch something on your TV to have some type of connection from your laptop to your TV.

Mary: OK. Is there anything students need to do before arriving on campus to facilitate their access to these technologies?

Carlo: Yes, there are a couple of things you should do before arriving on campus. You should bring a long ethernet cable. I’d recommend a size of maybe 25 feet or so - you don’t know yet if you or your roommate is going to be the furthest away from the ethernet jack. You should also bring a computer. While it’s not required, it is highly recommended to bring one. Most people do bring laptops, and I think it is most convenient to have a laptop, obviously to take around while studying elsewhere, but it’s solely based on your own preference on what you want to bring to Northwestern. You should also bring a security cable if you have a laptop so it doesn’t walk away from you. While most living quarters, they are NU-friendly environments, it is better to be safe than sorry. The last thing you should do is download the free Symantec antivirus software off of our IT website. You can get that at www.it.northwestern.edu, and also you should get Spybot Search and Destroy software. You can search for that at Google.com, and it’s freeware, and you should use that, and you should also install that.
Mary: Yeah Carlo, I think there’s also a link from the IT website about that Spybot. So can you tell me, how would a student get help connecting to our network once they arrive on campus?

Carlo: I’d recommend planning ahead. It takes a while to configure our network if you don’t know what you’re doing, so to get the wireless configuration setup manual, you can get it on our IT website I stated earlier, and you can just click on “Get Connected”, “On Campus”, and under the Wireless section, click “Connecting”. You can download the wizard for XP, or just look at the manual setups for Mac, XP, or Vista, and you can just configure it yourself there, picture-by-picture walkthroughs there. Another thing you can do is wait until you’re on campus during your student week. There will be res cons walking around the first day that you move in, and they should be able to help you configure your wireless, but consider that they will be helping many other people so it might take a while for them to get to you. Also, another thing you can do is contact our Support Center at 847-491-4357, and also there’s a chat service that’s offered on our IT website.

Mary: Sounds great. So I’ve heard that in the past, some students have had issues with the university network. They seem to get disconnected after a while. Do you know why this happens?

Carlo: There are a couple of things that can be the reasoning for this. Network engineers survey our network 24/7, just to make sure our network is working as efficiently as possible. And a few reasons that your browsing abilities will be disabled is that: 1. You have an illegal network extension connected to our network. That includes a personal wireless router, a personal router, a hub, etc. Extensions to our network cause many problems and issues for other people to connect to our network, and we don’t want any of that to occur. Another reasoning for your browsing abilities to be disabled is that you’re participating in some type of illegal downloading or uploading of copyrighted material. So these are programs like LimeWire and uTorrent and etc. So the network is a shared university resource, so you want to be responsible and adhere to our policies, and everything should be just fine.

Mary: OK, so I know this is a lot of information, so I’ll ask just one last question. What type of computer should a student bring to campus?

Carlo: So this is one of the biggest questions, err, one of the most important questions that parents have and probably you have as well. The two things that you can get is a laptop or a desktop. I stated earlier, it’s based totally on preference, but I would recommend a laptop, because obviously it’s most convenient to study elsewhere and to bring it to class and take notes. But the pros of a desktop is that it’s easier to customize and it’s cheaper to purchase one with the equivalent or better specs than a laptop. The next question you probably have is: should you get a PC or a Mac? I would say about 30 percent of NU students have Macs, and the remaining 70 percents have PC’s. PC’s are generally cheaper than Macintoshes, but a Mac is well worth the money. Personally, I have a PC; I like the operating system, but I like the Mac operating system equally as well. Both are fully supported by NUIT, so you
don't have to worry about anything, a virus attacking your computer, we can help you out there, as long as they're running supported operating systems. These include OS 10 and higher for Macintoshes, and Windows XP and higher, which Vista is the last operating system that was released through Windows. And that’s about all I can throw out for you today.

Mary: Wow, well that’s quite a bit of information. Thank you so much Carlo for taking the time to chat with us. And I just want to let all of you listeners know that if you have any other questions about what we’ve discussed or need assistance with other university IT matters, you can call 847-491-HELP, or visit the NUIT website at www.it.northwestern.edu. Thank you for listening.

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