Transcript: Communicating—Tech Style at NU, November 24, 2008

Mary: Hello, and welcome to the latest NUIT to Go podcast. My name is Mary, and I am a member of the NUIT Communications team, and coincidentally we are talking about NUIT Communications today. I am here with my manager, Sherry Minton, and she is the manager of NUIT Communications, and we are going to find out a little bit more about what this group does. Welcome Sherry.

Sherry: Thank you Mary.

Mary: Can you tell me a little bit about the history of NUIT Communications?

Sherry: Well this group actually, about 10 years ago, really focused on training and teaching people how to use the Microsoft applications and e-mail, and people were just getting started with using technology. It was really new to them. And what’s happened over the years is we’ve taken that technology, and now we teach our users on campus how to best use it to be more productive in their everyday lives. We have added writers to our team. We have a visual communications specialist that takes care of our website and our print materials, and we have three writers that work on our website and a lot of the e-mail announcements that you see on a daily basis, and we just keep up with the many services that NUIT is rolling out on a regular basis here at the university.

Mary: OK, great. I know that we advertise on Facebook, the Daily Northwestern, over at Norris, we advertise everywhere. I want to know how do you choose these communication vehicles?

Sherry: Well it really depends on the audience, and the audience in this case, I mean the users on campus. We have faculty, staff, students, researchers on campus, a wide variety of people. And we do need to communicate to each of these segmented audiences in different ways. Some people read e-mail a lot more than they would read our newsletters, and some people would see our advertising over at Norris. Some people are really getting into the social networking part of it on Facebook. We also have Webcasts and our Tech Talks, and of course we have our website. So basically this is an integrated marketing communications philosophy to really capture as many of the vehicles that we can to reach the greater amount of people.

Mary: Yeah, it seems like we are all about visibility. Just the more visibility we can have, the better, so we do try to advertise all around campus. Sherry, can you tell me what role does the Communications team play in rolling out new services to the University, like a new e-mail service?
**Sherry:** Well, as you know the NUIT organization, and I say organization because we are made up of ten different departments, we have 250 people in this large organization, and we’re rolling out new services all the time. And what we do is we support our departments as well as supporting the University. So we’re kind of this front door to telling the University about what NUIT is doing, but we take that also a little bit a step backwards is we’re part of the rollout as well. So we’ll take a service and we will help brand that service, so we have names like, NU Validate is going to be coming out soon as our new identity management service. We customize these services to Northwestern so that we all are using the same vocabulary in the same way that we all speak, and not just the way a vendor creates their products out of the box. So we really customize it to the Northwestern community. And then we take those communication vehicles we just talked about, deciding which audience needs to know what, and we segment those audiences and talk specifically to them and let them know what they need to know about these new services that we’re rolling out.

**Mary:** Right. So you might see the same mention of a new service in the eCommunicator newsletter, over at Norris, on Facebook, we really try to get them all over campus, no matter what is their preferred method of learning about NUIT. So Sherry, where can we find out more about all these services, new and existing, what would you recommend users do?

**Sherry:** Well, everything is housed in the NUIT website. So you can always go there to find out everything you need to know, and that’s www.it.northwestern.edu, and when you go there on the home page, it’s a very dynamic home page. It will change at all times. We have our news section right in the center. We call them What’s New and Changing @ NUIT. You can sign up for our RSS feed, and we really encourage you to do that. That way you’ll get the information as soon as we post new items. It will also show up in your browser window, and you’ll be able to keep in touch with that. You’ll see our podcasts on there. We have a blog that’s called the Insider blog, so if you want to find out what we’re working on now, check back with that; we post to that on a weekly basis. We also have different areas on the website where you can, depending upon if you’re a student or a faculty member or a staff member, they’re kind of customized pages for you to see what may really reflect what you’re looking for a lot easier. But everything you want to know, you can find on the NUIT website.

**Mary:** That’s right, and we recommend you bookmark that page and visit us often. Alright Sherry, I want to thank you for your time today, and with that we’ll conclude the latest NUIT to Go podcast. Thank you very much!

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