

eCommunicator

Student Edition – Fall 2006

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When Should I Upgrade to Microsoft's New Operating System, Vista?

Microsoft's highly anticipated operating system, Vista, is currently available for purchase, but does that mean you should immediately line up for the upgrade? Not necessarily. While many users want to utilize the most current software, experience shows that software companies often need time to work out kinks.

NUIT is testing all centrally supported applications and recommends waiting at least three months or until Service Pack 1 is released to upgrade to Vista. When you upgrade, you will benefit from expanded security efforts, including new outbound filtering in the firewall and a defender that detects potentially suspicious software.

Before you upgrade, ask yourself if this operating system is right for your needs. Do you really need to upgrade? Is your system capable of supporting Vista? Microsoft representative Troy Sharpe addressed these questions at a recent [NUIT Tech Talk](#), where nearly sixty people filled the University Library Forum Room to hear about several of Vista's features, including:

- Aero glass: a visually dynamic translucent effect
- Sidebar: increases productivity with instant access to gadgets
- Gadgets: customizable mini-applications that offer information at a glance

Want to know more about Vista? A Microsoft representative is returning for another NUIT Tech Talk: Vista on January 31. To attend this event, please [register in advance](#).

Wireless Upgrade — No VPN Required

Still using VPN for wireless on campus? With the upgraded wireless network, you might not need to. This summer, NUIT implemented new wireless network standards, so users accessing these connections no longer need to use VPN.

You might have noticed there are more and more places to get wireless access on campus than ever before, as NUIT is continually working with schools and departments to identify new wireless locations. In fact, more than 600 access locations are available on the Chicago and Evanston campuses; 300 of them can be accessed by the NU community, and 300 of them are designated for school, classroom or administrative-specific uses.

If you are looking for wireless access, just find a "NU Wireless Zone" sign or view the [campus maps](#) and [building lists](#) on the NUIT Web site.

All these access points now support a more secure standard, called Wi-Fi Protected Access 2 (WPA2) and 802.1X. With stronger data security, the standards prevent wireless devices from connecting to the Northwestern network unless the user has authenticated with a valid NetID and password.

The upgraded network has a new Service Set Identifier (SSID), Northwestern.

To connect, your computer or mobile device may need to use a different configuration than before. [Setup instructions](#) are available on the NUIT Web site.

In addition, your mobile device, computer, or wireless adapter must be compliant with the new standards. Unfortunately, not all computers, even recently purchased ones, support the WPA2 standard and some may require updated wireless card drivers. Check the NUIT Web site for instructions on configuring for [802.1X/WPA2](#). If you are unable to connect, contact your vendor to determine your computer's wireless compatibility.

Users who cannot connect to the new Northwestern network can still use the VPN-accessible wireless network on campus, nuwlan.

If you have questions, please contact the NUIT Support Center at 847-491-**HELP** (4357) or e-mail consultant@northwestern.edu.

Laptop ER: A Success

Did you know that 90 percent of incoming freshman use laptops? NUIT does, and has responded by expanding support services for students. The convenient, new laptop drop-in service, Laptop ER, launched on October 18. The service responds to student feedback that indicated laptop technical support expansion was needed for both on and off-campus students.

Since the launch, nearly 100 percent of students have been satisfied with the service, praising its convenience. Says one student, "I don't know what I would have done without a laptop help station. The location was convenient, and I could drop-in when it worked with my schedule."

Laptop ER locations and times during the academic year, excluding finals week and holidays, include:

- **Crowe Café:**
Sundays: 12 – 4 p.m.
Tuesdays: 7 – 11 p.m.
Fridays: 2 – 5 p.m.
- **Lisa's Café:**
Sundays: 3 – 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: 7 – 11 p.m.
- **Plaza Café:**
Mondays: 3 – 7 p.m.
Thursdays: 7 – 11 p.m.

Services are available for laptops running Windows XP or Mac OS X 10.2 or greater:

- Network connectivity troubleshooting
- Virtual Private Network (VPN) configuration
- Wireless configuration assistance, including 802.1x access
- Limited virus and spyware remediation
- NUTV configuration and troubleshooting
- NetPass registration assistance
- Operating system problem diagnosis and assistance

To assist as many students as possible, a one-hour time limit exists for all assistance available at Laptop ER. If a problem cannot be solved within one hour, a follow-up appointment will be scheduled.

Visit the [Laptop ER Web page](#) for more information.

Get Software: Recent Additions to NUIT's Software Lineup

Contents

- [Full Adobe Catalog Now Available](#)
 - [Upgrades for Software Security: IE7 and Symantec AntiVirus](#)
 - [Upgrade to EndNote X for New Features](#)
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Full Adobe Catalog Now Available

Want to make your project really shine? Use the slick tools from Adobe, Photoshop, Dreamweaver, or InDesign — and get them for lower prices than you thought.

NUIT recently added these titles to the student-available software offerings, so you'll get the best student discounts on campus*. Just use the [Student Software](#) pages of the NUIT Web site to browse, shop, and order.

Northwestern University students can now order Adobe titles including:

- Acrobat
- After Effects
- Audition
- Creative Suite
- Dreamweaver
- Encore
- Fireworks
- Flash
- Framemaker
- Illustrator CS2
- InDesign CS2
- PageMaker
- Photoshop

* Prices are subject to change

Software Security: IE7 and Symantec AntiVirus

If you think your computer is already secure, it pays to double check. Two important programs you may use on a regular basis, Internet Explorer and

Symantec AntiVirus, recently released updates that will improve your computer's security.

Microsoft recently released Internet Explorer 7 software (IE7), and if you haven't already, take the time to download it directly from the [Microsoft Web site](#). You'll get improved security and stability for Web browsing and desktop operations from IE7.

In addition, make sure you are running on Symantec AntiVirus 10.1.5, which was recently released to the NU community. This is a necessary upgrade to ensure the latest protections for your machine, and you can easily download the program from the [NUIT software Web pages](#).

One note of caution — before you install, check with your local technical support staff and don't forget to uninstall your old antivirus software first. Running two programs at once, even if it is Symantec software, can cause conflicts and put your computer at risk. Find out more from the [Symantec AntiVirus page](#) of the NUIT Web site.

If you have questions about these upgrades, or any other software supported by NUIT, contact the NUIT Support Center at 847-491-**HELP** (4357) or consultant@northwestern.edu.

Upgrade to EndNote X for New Features

The latest version of EndNote for Mac and Windows is available [free for download](#) from the NUIT software Web site with the NU Toolkit. New features include:

- Tools for organizing PDF files with EndNote libraries
- Four new reference types: Grant, Ancient Text, Dictionary, and Encyclopedia
- One-step process for converting existing PDF links to an EndNote-relative link
- Compressed library option creates a single-file backup
- For Mac users: EndNote X for Mac is designed for Intel-based Mac computers

Find more information about these and other features from the [EndNote Web site](#).

Before installing this new version of EndNote, back up existing EndNote library files and customized content files such as styles,

connection files, and import filters. After this, you should uninstall older versions of EndNote before installing the new EndNote X.

Another note of caution — the [system requirements](#) for EndNote X have changed, so make sure your computer complies before you install.

For additional [EndNote support information](#) and assistance, please visit the University Library's EndNote Web page.

Security Policy Development: What You Need to Know

The University supported National Cybersecurity Month in October, in partnership with EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology. Northwestern's role in this international event included producing and distributing promotional materials that advertised basic and sound security practices.

Following up on the month's activity, I'd like to provide some information on the process used to produce information security policy and to answer some of the questions I received regarding policy development. I am the first to admit that policy development might not be high (if at all) on the "exciting topics" list, but I think it is important to know that there is a specific process we follow. Information security policy development is a defined process designed to address known or foreseeable threat conditions to the safety of the University's information assets.

Information and Systems Security/Compliance (ISS/C) is charged with the development and implementation of information security policy and standards for the University. My professional experience is that this is no small task in any organization. The University's highly distributed processing environment, coupled with the autonomy of schools and departments, makes policy development a somewhat complicated and — by necessity — highly collaborative process. However, the proof of its worth is represented in the product of the process, such as the policy [Secure Handling of Social Security Numbers](#). If you have not already done so, I'd suggest you review the statement; after all, every user is accountable for understanding and complying with University policy and standards.

Leveraging the resources made available through the Information Security Advisory Committee and Coordinator network, we were able to collectively hammer out differences and align University resources behind a statement calling for the protection of intrinsically sensitive and regulated data — your Social Security Number. That's correct...your SSN. This policy is designed to safeguard your personally identifiable information, as well as that of other students, faculty, and staff.

A policy in early stages of development is referred to as a draft, moving to a proposal as it nears the final stages. NUIT has a policy

development and approval process that shares the policy proposal with a large population for review and comment for a minimum of thirty days. Any comments are considered for inclusion in the final document. Once approved, the policy statement is then published. The [NUIT policy process](#) is described on the NUIT Web site.

This policy statement, an end product of a fair amount of activity, also represents the beginning of the process known as compliance. But that's a topic for another day.

If you have questions on this process, or any information security or disaster recovery issue, please contact me at david-kovarik@northwestern.edu.

Happy Holidays to you and yours, and remember that ... You're the Key!

Is Your Computer Ready for Winter Break?

Is your computer staying behind when you leave for winter break? Can't blame you for wanting to step away from the computer for a bit; but before you do, NUIT recommends a few safety steps. Following them will make sure your computer is operating properly when you return.

Before you leave:

- Turn off your computer, and unplug from the network. Ensure safety for your system and the NU Network.

When you return:

- Download and install antivirus definitions and any software updates that have become available. There are usually monthly updates, so be prepared for a pop-up reminder.
- Begin your year with a new and secure passphrase/password. As a reminder, make sure it's easy to remember and hard to hack, and keep it to yourself!
- If you live in a Greek house or residence hall, be prepared to re-scan your computer with NetPass.

Follow these simple steps to begin your new year with a safe, secure system. Questions? Contact the [NUIT Support Center](#).

Work for NUIT

Technology is consistently ranked among the fastest growing fields of employment, and working for NUIT is a great way to get started in this area. You'll learn the inner workings of computers, networks, and the Internet, while building your resume, technical abilities, and interpersonal skills.

NUIT is currently accepting student employee applications for winter quarter to staff the Support Center, computer labs, and residence halls. Find out more, and [apply to NUIT today](#).

In the Queue

- [Junk E-mail Increases Worldwide](#)
 - [Cell Phone Coverage Improves in Campus Buildings](#)
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Junk E-mail Increases Worldwide

E-mail solicitation is getting smarter and changing faster than ever before. According to NUIT's e-mail security partners, it is not just your imagination that your inbox is getting more junk, and it is not just at Northwestern — the increased volume is a worldwide phenomenon.

NUIT is working to combat the volume of junk messages in your inbox and seeking solutions for further improving the efficacy of the E-mail Defense System (EDS). These efforts, modeled from industry standards and peer educational institutions, aim to ward off the inevitable slowing of e-mail delivery and reduced network speeds caused by increased message traffic.

Cell Phone Coverage Improves in Campus Buildings

Cell phone users in several buildings on campus will soon have coverage like never before. Working with NUIT's Telephone and Network Services (TNS), several campus buildings may expand cell phone coverage beginning late in the winter quarter. Kellogg's Allen and Jacobs Centers have already verified their participation, and Norris and Medill's Fisk and McCormick Tribune Halls are considering the program. The improvements will take place after installation of the Distributed Antenna System and negotiations with cellular operators are finalized. Look for more information about expansions in the upcoming winter quarter.

What's New & Changing at Northwestern

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- ["Clickers": Not Just for Your TV](#)
 - [Coming Soon: Portal for a Single Point of Access](#)
 - [Proxy.cgi Moves to Online Passport](#)
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"Clickers": Not Just for Your TV

Say goodbye to being put on the spot in class; clickers have arrived. Academic Technologies is currently piloting a new [Student Response System \(SRS\)](#) with instructors on campus. This integrated hardware and software system allows instructors to pose questions and gather students' responses during a lecture. To ensure quality and consistency for students, NUIT has standardized the devices and supporting software from Turning Technologies. Instructors can e-mail [Academic Technologies](#) to request loaner kits for up to three weeks at a time, so clickers may soon be used in your classes and lectures.

Coming Soon: Portal for a Single Point of Access

Finding Northwestern services on the Web will soon get easier. NUIT is working to create the NUPortal, a personalized, role-based, single-point-of-access to online services that are essential to academic, research, and administrative work. The service brings together several Web-enabled University services to a single customizable site.

"This new service greatly increases efficiency and convenience for our users. There are several customizable options that will truly make this a one-stop site," said Harry Samuels, Application Systems Manager of Information Technology Management Systems."

Several volunteers from the University student, faculty, and staff communities have just completed usability testing. Look for more information about the NUPortal in the upcoming quarter.

Proxy.cgi Moves to Online Passport

Members of the campus community will soon see the NU Online Passport page more frequently when using Northwestern Web sites. As a step towards centralizing access to University-wide systems and services on the Web, Online Passport will now accept services currently managed by proxy.cgi, as part of the retirement of SNAP. New requests for Web access management will also be handled via NU Online Passport. The migration from SNAP to Online Passport will occur with school and department technical administrators. Learn more about [proxy.cgi](#) and [NU Online Passport](#) on the NUIT Web site.

Upcoming NUIT Events

The NUIT Tech Talk series is a chance for you to improve your knowledge about new technology and technology-related issues that impact the academic and work environment of the University. Several Tech Talks are already planned for 2007.

- **January 10 – Get to Know Your Computer**

Have you acquired new technology over the holidays? How much do you know about your new machine? Attend this Tech Talk to find out more about how to:

- Properly transfer existing data to your new machine
- Install appropriate software, including Anti-virus and Spyware
- Automate maintenance to ensure effective use

[Register now](#) for this Tech Talk.

- **January 24 & February 7 – Data Security at Northwestern**

By now you know that Cybersecurity is important for your personal computer — but what about University resources? Every member of the NU community has a role to play in protecting the NU Network and sensitive data. Attend this Tech Talk to find out:

- Facts and trends about threats to University data resources
- Tools and tips you can use to protect your computer and the NU Network
- Resources for faculty and staff in case of a security incident
- Ways to improve University business processes for increased security

Register now for this Tech Talk: [January 24](#) or [February 7](#).

- **January 31 – Microsoft’s Latest Vista OS Developments**

NUIT has invited Microsoft representative Troy Sharpe back to campus to further discuss the highly anticipated operating system, Vista. Stop by to learn more about Vista’s:

- Up-to-date hardware requirements
- Recent support availability
- Licensing requirements
- New gadgets and features

[Register now](#) for this Tech Talk.

- **February 21 – Support with NUIT**

Don't wait until you have a problem to make critical decisions about computer support! Find out what support options are available both on and off campus and which solutions are right for you. NUIT representatives will be available to answer all of your support questions.

Learn:

- Services are offered to the NU community by the NUIT Support Center, NUIT Distributed Support Services, and HomeTech Computer Solutions
- Questions to ask when considering a support provider
- Questions you should be prepared to answer when you call for help

[Register now](#) for this Tech Talk.

- **March 7 – Protecting Privacy: Safe Disposal of Computers and Information**

Computers become obsolete. Private and confidential information often does not. Don't let your information fall into the wrong hands!

Learn:

- How to properly prepare old computers, PDAs, other devices for disposal so the information on them cannot be retrieved
- How to properly dispose of confidential information in other formats (paper, CD, disk, etc.)
- How to protect your personal information online

[Register now](#) for this Tech Talk.

- **April 11 – Spring Cleaning: Keep Your Computer in Great Shape**

All tools need regular maintenance to keep them working their best, and computers are no exception. Your machine can continue to run quickly and safely with an easy-to-complete spring cleaning, no matter what the season.

Learn:

- What aspects of your computer need regular upkeep
- Recommended steps and scheduling of user maintenance
- Suggested programs to run and updates to install

[Register now](#) for this Tech Talk.

- **May 23 – Stay Connected & Secure All Summer Long**

Is your computer set for the summer? Make sure to keep your computer safe and yourself connected to Northwestern when you are off campus. In this Tech Talk, learn about:

- Best practices for safe computing while traveling
- Connecting to Northwestern from off-campus

[Register now](#) for this Tech Talk.

NUIT Third Thursday Club Meetings

Third Thursday Club is an opportunity to share issues and solutions unique to your campus environment. Meetings are held simultaneously on both campuses at 9:30 a.m. on the third Thursday of every month. Look for more information regarding topics and locations on the [NUIT Calendar](#).

- January 19
- February 16
- March 16
- April 20
- May 18