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Drop-in and Get It Fixed: After-hours Support Continues through Spring

March 28, 2006

Students call it a lifeline for computers on the fritz, with great service, convenient hours, and expert staff. Fans of ResNet’s Drop-in Service have found a quick way to get their laptops fixed after hours.

Whether you live on or off campus, the Drop-in Service can help you fix your misbehaving machine. Stop in for technical support at two campus locations, Kresge Hall, room 1-440 on Tuesdays from 5 to 8 p.m., and at Lisa’s Café on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Available though the end of Spring quarter, the convenience and quality of the Drop-in Service has impressed many users. According to one student, “My experience (with ResNet Drop-in Service) was great, it was fast, efficient, and helpful. I would definitely come back.”

The service is becoming well known for speedy repairs, and students should expect to stay with their machine while ResCons work. One student reports that “the ResCon was extremely helpful and I was in and out in five minutes.”

For more information, contact the NUIT Support Center at 847-491-HELP (4357) or consultant@northwestern.edu.
‘De-stressing’ Main Mail Servers Radically Reduces Junk

March 28, 2006

If you think your job is stressful, imagine handling thousands of e-mail messages on a 24 x 7 schedule with no time off, as NU’s main mail servers (casbah, hecky, lulu, and merle) do. Adding to the stress, some very determined spammers have been bombarding the servers with junk e-mail.

Fortunately, the E-mail Defense System (EDS) has been working just as hard. Over 2,000,000 pieces of junk e-mail have been quarantined each week since NUIT launched the EDS last fall, and more are being caught every day. If you need proof besides a noticeable lack of junk in your inbox, you can check your daily EDS quarantine digest. It’s become much shorter, in many cases down from two or three dozen messages quarantined per user to fewer than ten.

If you don’t read your quarantine digest, we recommend that you opt out of receiving it. Delivering fewer digest messages will lessen the load on the mail servers. To opt out, log into the E-mail Defense System (https://eds.northwestern.edu:28080/options.cgi) and uncheck the box labeled “E-mail me the EDS Quarantine Digest, a daily notification of junk e-mail blocked by EDS.”

Recently, NUIT took action to further de-stress the mail servers and keep things running smoothly:

- All e-mail with an EDS junk probability rating greater than “99” is now deleted before reaching the servers, reducing the number of quarantined junk e-mail messages.

- Anonymous off-campus LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol) queries of the NU Online Directory are being blocked to help prevent the harvesting of northwestern.edu e-mail addresses by known spammers, which has contributed to the increase in junk e-mail.

When anonymous queries are allowed, the directory cannot tell whether an e-mail client such as Outlook, or harvesting software, is making the query. Users on the NU Network are allowed to perform anonymous LDAP queries, but this capability is not available from an off-campus IP address. Find more detailed information on NUIT’s “Get Control” site at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/security/spam/directory.html.

Off-campus University users can use Virtual Private Network (VPN) to connect to the NU Network to enable access to the LDAP database.
‘De-stressing’ Main Mail Servers Radically Reduces Junk (*continued*)

To enable access to the LDAP database, and to ensure safe and secure access to all NU networked resources, use Virtual Private Network (VPN) when you connect to the NU Network from off-campus. If you need instructions for downloading and configuring VPN, visit http://www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/vpn/index.html.

For details about NUIT’s recent anti-junk mail initiatives, visit “What’s New & Changing With Technology @ NU?” at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/transitions/2006/eds-security.html.
Save Big on the Software You Need

March 28, 2006

WildCARD discounts aren’t the only money-saving benefits at Northwestern; students can also save on popular software packages. Get the best prices around* on software from e-academy, a partner of NUIT. It is easy to get the software you need from the NUIT Web site, and programs are available either by downloading or ordering CD copies.

Visit the Student Software pages of the NUIT Web site to get software for much less than you expected to pay. Popular packages include:

**Autodesk**
- Use: Architectural, mechanical, civil, and animation design
- Cost: Annual licenses – $99 per product; perpetual licenses – $199*
- Versions:
  - AutoCAD 2006 Student Version (SV)
  - Autodesk 2006
  - 3ds Max 7
  - Media and Entertainment Division Superpack
- Details: Autodesk (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/software/staff/dept/autodesksoftware/index.html)

**Microsoft Student Select**
- Use: Install Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Outlook and Excel for communications and presentations
- Cost: $59.80 - $69.80*, depending on version
- Versions:
  - MS Office 2003 Standard and Professional
  - MS Office 2004 for Mac
  - Windows XP Professional Upgrade
- Details: Microsoft Student Select (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/software/students/discount/studentselect/index.html)
Save Big on the Software You Need (continued)

EndNote
• Use: Search and organize bibliographic references and images, integrates with Microsoft Word
• Cost: Free to download
• Version: Endnote v.9.0 with NU Toolkit for searching University Library resources, for Windows or Mac
• Details: Endnote (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/software/staff/free/stud-endnote/index.html)

Symantec/Norton AntiVirus
• Use: Protect your computer from harmful viruses; essential for any personal computer connecting to the NU Network
• Cost: Free to download
• Versions: Symantec/Norton AntiVirus 10.0 for Windows or Mac
• Details: Symantec/Norton (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/software/staff/free/stud-endnote/index.html)

Eudora v. 7.0*
• Use: Upgrade includes enhanced features such as SpamWatch, content concentrator, virus protection, and enhanced filters
• Cost: Free to download
• Version: Eudora v. 7.0 for Windows or Mac
• Details: Eudora (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/software/staff/free/eud/index.html)

* Prices are subject to change.
** Eudora users are encouraged to upgrade to v. 7.0. Future versions of Eudora will not be made available by NUIT after September 1, 2006, and NUIT will support only the current version.
Social Engineering: The Always-Evolving Threat to Your Privacy

March 29, 2006

“Social Engineering” might sound like a term from Poli Sci 101, but in the context of the Internet, it also describes any effort to manipulate you into giving up confidential information. These scams can put your identity or computer security at risk.

If you’ve heard of phishing and spoofing scams, then you already know a thing or two about social engineering—but there is good reason to learn more. Social engineering scams are always changing, from sending viruses a few years ago to more recent phishing e-mails. As soon as the public and the legal system catch on to a particular scam, social engineers find new ways to trick users.

Social engineers rely on unawareness, so your best protection is to get familiar with the warning signs of a scam, including phishing, spoofing and pharming, and keep in mind some simple do’s and don’ts.

Phishing e-mail looks legitimate by using logos and colors you recognize. The “from” field may use a familiar address, and links in the message may appear to direct you to a valid Web site, but it will really send you to a spoof site. One common phisinging message uses University logos and colors, and is signed from “University Administration.” Luckily, many phishing e-mails are automatically caught by NUIT’s E-mail Defense System (see http://www.it.northwestern.edu/security/eds/).

Pharming techniques are more difficult to spot. Pharmers send e-mails containing viruses that redirect your browser to a fake Web site when you think you have gone to a legitimate site. The spoof site will request your login or account information. By first planting virus seeds, pharmers later harvest sensitive information. Learn how to protect your computer on NUIT’s Spyware Treatment & Prevention Web site at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/security/spyware/.
Social Engineering: The Always-Evolving Threat to Your Privacy (continued)

Protect Against Social Engineering

• DO have a security mindset. Always be skeptical of unfamiliar sites and links, suspicious e-mail and IM messages, and any unprompted requests for personal information.
• DO protect information. Keep your NetID password/passphrase secret and be skeptical of any requests for personal information.
• DO use IM safely. Social engineers can send scams via IM, so block IM attachments and filter traffic to only receive messages from trusted sites.
• DO browse Web sites safely. Look for “https” in the address of any site which you enter personal information; this indicates a secure connection.

• DON’T click on links directly from e-mails. Open a new browser and type the address yourself.
• DON’T reply to phishing e-mails. Never reply to phone calls, e-mail, or pop-up messages asking for personal or financial information, and be skeptical of messages from organizations you do business with.
• DON’T let security software lapse. Maintain up-to-date antivirus and anti-spyware software, and keep firewall settings active (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/5steps/).

Learn more about social engineering and how to prevent becoming a victim of an Internet scam on the Security Awareness Tip of the Month at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/security/tip-of-the-month/index.html.
Moving Off Campus? Stay Connected

March 28, 2006

If you are planning to move off campus next year, you’ve got a lot to think about: roommates, grocery shopping, rent . . . and how you will connect to the NU Network. As you know, the network connection you had in the residence hall does not move with you!

The good news is you can quickly cross this one off your list — there are just two easy steps to get connected in your new off-campus home. First, sign up with an access provider, and second, use a Virtual Private Network (VPN) for a secure connection to the NU Network.

Off-campus Internet access is available by subscribing to a residential broadband or dial-up service. A variety of cable modem, digital subscriber line (DSL) and dial-up access options are available in the Evanston area. Cable and DSL services most closely match the connection speed in your residence hall, and some providers offer special nine-month plans for students.

It’s easy to research your options and pick the best plan with NUIT’s Connecting from Off Campus site (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/offcampus/index.html), which outlines available services and providers.

Once you have service, you can access the same University resources of an on-campus connection by using a quick login via VPN. This establishes a secure “tunnel” that protects you and the NU Network from anyone trying to gain unauthorized access to the data you are sending and receiving. VPN software is easy to install, and complete instructions can be found on the NUIT Web site at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/oncampus/vpn/index.html.

For more information about off-campus connections, check out the NUIT Web site or contact the NUIT Support Center at 847-491-HELP (4357).
The VoIP Buzz: A Progress Report

March 28, 2006

What’s the biggest technology buzz on campus? Voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) communication services of course, but when is it coming to Northwestern?

Last fall, NUIT announced a new multi-year plan for communication services at Northwestern University. Tremendous progress has been made by NUIT’s Telecommunications Network Services to upgrade the University communication infrastructure to enable Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) architecture, a key component to VoIP communication services.

Involvement throughout the University is high as NUIT has been working with technology leaders on campus to identify early adopters and pilot users for the first stage of the conversion. Beginning this month, selected pilot users on the Evanston campus will be issued new VoIP telephone sets and given the chance to experience some of the early capabilities and features of the new technology. Users won’t see a great difference over their conventional phone until University telecommunications “closets” (router stations) and telephone switches have been upgraded to fully take advantage of all available features and functionality.

NUIT’s converged communications Web site (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/telephone/converge/voip.html) provides additional information about this multi-year conversion plan for SIP and VoIP at Northwestern as well as an up-to-date list of the building upgrade schedule (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/telephone/converge/voip.html#bldg), so you can easily track our progress.
What’s New & Changing at Northwestern

March 28, 2006

Pubweb Users Find New Tools with Web Hosting Services
Moving content from Pubweb is quick and easy, according to former Pubweb account holders who are switching their site content to alternative Web hosting services.

Although Pubweb served as Northwestern’s Web hosting service for experimental or personal Web pages, its use has declined significantly with advances in Web-related technologies and the increasing availability of hosting services. As a result, Pubweb will be retired on December 31, 2006. Find out more about Pubweb retirement at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/transitions/2006/pubwebretirement.html.

Pubweb account holders can continue to use the service until the end of 2006, but if you haven’t used your account recently, take a few minutes to review its contents and close it permanently. Moving your content to an external provider is quick and easy, and you can find out more about file transfers and hosting services on the Pubweb pages of the NUIT Web site (http://www.it.northwestern.edu/webpub/publish-pubweb/).

Please direct additional questions to the NUIT Support Center at 847-491-HELP (4357) or consultant@northwestern.edu.

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Create a Commercial about the NUIT MediaWorks Lab and Enter to Win an iPod
Have you used the cool media tools in the basement of the University Library? The NUIT MediaWorks Lab dedicates professional production equipment for student use, including tools to edit video and audio, scan and manipulate photos, and develop Web content and animation. Use these capabilities to create a 30-second commercial and get in the running for the top prize of a 60 GB video iPod or the second prize of an iPod nano.

The 2006 NUIT MediaWorks Lab Promo Contest seeks creative spots to promote lab resources and increase awareness. Entries must use MediaWorks tools in some aspect of the work, which will be judged on creativity, strength of production, and overall effectiveness.

“We’ve got the resources to do some very cool things at the MediaWorks Lab, and the Promo Contest is a great way to highlight them,” said Harlan Wallach, NUIT architect for media technologies and director of the NU Advanced Media Production Studio (NUAMPS). “Students can be creative with this, and use the same video, audio, and graphic tools used by industry professionals.”

For complete contest rules and to view past winners, visit the NUIT MediaWorks Lab Web site at http://mediaworks.it.northwestern.edu/contest/index_iPodPromo-Feb-06.cfm or “What’s New and Changing @ Northwestern” at http://www.it.northwestern.edu/transitions/2006/contest.html.