

# ← Inside OIRT →

Volume 5, Issue 1

February 2007

## Inside OIRT - Fifth Issue

Welcome to Spring '07 and the fifth issue of **Inside OIRT** - the newsletter from The Office of Information Resources and Technology (OIRT). OIRT consists of University Systems and Security, Computing Services, Telephone and Voice Services, One Card Office, and Management Information Systems. For more information on these organizations and the services and support each provides, please visit the <http://isweb.fdu.edu> website.



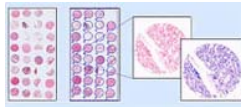
The newsletter will be published twice yearly and will provide the FDU community with useful information related to technology, new services or capabilities, developing trends, how to's, and tips and tricks.

Archival copies of **Inside OIRT** will be available on the <http://isweb.fdu.edu> website. ■

### GRID COMPUTING

*FDU is a member of the World Community Grid*

The World Community Grid's mission is to create the largest public computing grid benefiting humanity. The Grid's work is built on the belief that technological innovation combined with visionary scientific research and large-scale volunteerism can change the world for the better. Its success depends on individuals and organizations - like FDU - collectively contributing their



unused computer time to this not-for-profit endeavor. Many of FDU's computer labs are on the grid, donating their idle processing power to projects that benefit humanity.

Grid computing joins together many individual computers, creating a large system with massive computational power that far surpasses the power of a handful of supercomputers. Because the work is split into small pieces that can be processed simultaneously, research time is reduced from years to months. The first project, Human Proteome Folding, was identifying the proteins produced by human genes. With this information, scientists can understand how defects in pro-

teins can cause disease, making it easier to find cures.

In 2003, with grid computing, in less than three months scientists identified 44 potential treatments to fight the deadly smallpox disease. Without the grid, the work would have taken more than one year to complete.

The Advisory Board is an international group of experts specializing in health sciences, technology, and philanthropy. The role of the advisory board is to establish the criteria and process for soliciting and reviewing research proposals, identifying projects that benefit

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
THEME: MANAGING INFORMATION	
1	World Community Grid
2	Backing Up Your Data
2	2007 Technology Refresh
2	Email Clients
3	Microsoft Vista
3	Microsoft Office 2007
4	The UTAC
4	On-Time Being Phased Out

*Continued on Page 4*

## BACKING UP YOUR DATA

*Protection from data loss.*

Computers can and do fail. Computers can also be lost or stolen. Nasty viruses, worms, or other malware can take down your system by creeping through your antivirus software and firewall. The problem is that you usually get no advance warning of pending doom before it's too late. In an instant your data is gone. Impossible or timely to recreate documents, spreadsheets, presentations, research, homework, thesis, music and pictures simply become no longer available.

This scenario has happened to more than a few people. Some will argue that it is not *if* you will experience a loss but *when* you will experience a loss. In extreme cases, it has put companies out of business, forced students to extend times of study or retake classes, or can cost many thousands of dollars or man hours to recover. And the worst part is this: It's completely avoidable. By backing up your data, you can retrieve all or most of what you lose.

It is important to understand that computers are not 100% reliable and that it is the user of the technology, not the technology itself, that is ultimately responsible for enforcing safeguards to protect valuable information. Develop and execute a robust back up plan which is tailored around your tolerance for data loss. If you regularly make backup copies of your files and keep them in a separate place, you can get some, if not all, of your information back in the event something happens to the originals on your computer.

Deciding what to back up is highly personal. Anything you cannot replace easily should be at the top of your list. Before you get started, make a checklist of files to back up. This will help you determine what to back up, and also give you a reference list in the event you need to retrieve a backed-up file. Here are some file suggestions to get you started:

- Personal projects (documents, spreadsheets, presentations, database information, ...)
- Bank records, and other financial information
- Digital photographs
- Software or music purchased and downloaded from the internet
- Your e-mail, address book, and calendar (for those using Microsoft Outlook, this is the .pst file)
- Your internet favorites and bookmarks

Store your backup copies to an external hard disk drive, CD, DVD, USB thumb-drive, or some other storage media regularly and safeguard. Call the UTAC on x8822 if you need help backing up. ■

## SUMMER 2007 TECHNOLOGY REFRESH

*Upgrading technology with state of the art.*

Staff computers, faculty laptops, and computer lab computers are on a three year refresh cycle. By replacing this equipment every three years, FDU provides students, staff, and faculty with the performance and reliability benefits newer systems and technology has to offer.

Beginning late summer of 2007, FDU will undertake an exhaustive refresh of all university faculty laptops, some computer labs, and many staff computer systems. As we get closer to the refresh, staff and faculty whose equipment comes off lease will be notified regarding the process to replace their equipment.

This Fall students will see new technology in many of the computer labs. There will also be a new capabilities to print in color, at a cost, from the Dreyfuss Building, Dickinson Hall, and University Hall computer labs. ■

## EMAIL CLIENTS

*Choose and use carefully.*

While FDU Webmail offers a nice browser based user interface, many users prefer the look, feel, and features of email clients such as Outlook or Netscape. Email clients offer intuitive and easy to use tool sets for managing incoming and outgoing mail, allows for setting up filtering 'rules,' and have robust file folder management capabilities. Another advantage of a client over the browser is the ability to download your messages and work with your email even while off-line.

In recent weeks, Pegasus Mail announced the discontinuation of their product line. Lack of funds, insufficient market share, and much competition forced Pegasus to close up shop. Also, some users of Outlook Express suddenly found their email client not working due to inherent file size limitations within Outlook Express. While these users may not have wanted to change their email client, they are now forced to do so.

FDU recommends using Microsoft Outlook (not Outlook Express) as the email client. The university has adopted Microsoft Office as the primary productivity tool and Outlook is a time proven and mainstream product not likely to be abandoned anytime soon. It is developed by the world's largest software company, is widely supported, almost ubiquitous on PCs, and interfaces with other vendor products, applications, and services. ■

## VISTA AND YOU

*Perfect together?*

You've seen the ads, heard the hype, and may have even have seen Bill Gates on Comedy Central's Daily Show with Jon Stewart pushing the latest Microsoft operating system — Vista. Even though Microsoft has taken pains to try to remove some of the barriers that often hinder upgrades, most enterprises are taking a 'wait and see' attitude towards adopting the new operating system.



The reasons extend beyond the typical issues that delay major migrations. High-profile new features such as the volume-activation and product-validation tools in Vista, and the dramatically different user interface in Office 2007, are causing some information technology managers to think hard about their upgrade strategies. The new user interface represents a significant change management and training issue.

Many cite traditional concerns about upgrading to Vista, such as hardware and software incompatibilities, the lack of driver support from vendors, increased system requirements (more processing power, more hard disk drive space, and more memory). In addition, some applications may not work properly under Vista so all applications must be thoroughly tested for compatibility. There are also desires to wait for bug fixes that will be in Microsoft's first service pack release.

But a new twist with Vista is its Software Protection Platform technology, a set of built in anti-piracy and anti-tampering tools. SPP's software activation and validation mechanisms are making some customers uneasy as it seems a too complex for some. Simply put, Vista must be activated and pass a validation test within 30 days of installation, or else the operating system will go into a reduced-functionality mode. The goal is to reduce software piracy.

Many of the changes in Windows Vista are positive. There are graphics improvements, both in terms of hardware support and how the software takes advantage of that hardware, and nice changes to the user interface that makes it very pleasant and intuitive. On the other hand, there is not much about Vista that is truly innovative, nor does it contain a must-have 'killer application.'

As a successor to Windows XP, Windows Vista will be a success for Microsoft, even if it may take a while to be widely adopted in the enterprise. FDU

will rollout Vista on imaged laptops and desktops in the Fall of '08. By delaying the rollout, there is time for Microsoft Vista to prove its robustness and viability in the enterprise, and for Microsoft to make any critical fixes to the software. It will also provide time for other software and hardware vendors to catch up and make sure their products are Vista ready.

Vista is a commercial off the shelf product and will be supported by the UTAC, and is supported by CCA in residence halls. However, early adopters should recognize that Vista is new to the support team as well and initially, support will be limited.

Microsoft recommends the following minimum system requirements: 1 GHz processor, 1GB system memory, Windows Aero compatible graphics card, 128MB of graphics memory, 40GB hard drive that has 15GB of free hard disk space, internal or external DVD drive, internet access, and audio output. ■

## OFFICE 2007

*A new look for the suite.*

Microsoft has released a new version of its ubiquitous productivity suite, Office, consisting of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, and Publisher. Microsoft has rebuilt the suite from the ground up, and most features are located in different places than in earlier versions of Office. Gone are the location of more than 1,000 features within top/drop-down menus in favor of functions accessible through a tabbed Ribbon which stretches across the top of the interfaces of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access.

While many functions in the new Office are more intuitive, the opposite is true for certain features if one falls back on old habits. For example, the Insert Comment is no longer found within the Insert menu but within the Ribbon's Review tab. Hence, longtime users of Office may be challenged with a learning curve. However, most users can expect to be comfortable and productive within a couple of days.

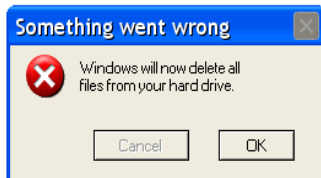
There are also some file compatibility issues between Office 2007 and earlier versions of Office, requiring user attention when saving, sharing, or viewing Office documents.

Microsoft recommends the following minimum system requirements: 500 MHz processor, 256MB system memory (512MB recommended), 1.5GB hard drive space, internal or external CD or DVD drive, 1024x768 or higher resolution display, and Microsoft XP SP2. ■

The UTAC

### **University Technical Assistance Center**

The Fairleigh Dickinson University Technical Assistance Center (UTAC) is the 24x7 university technical helpdesk support organization. Fairleigh Dickinson University students, faculty, and staff must contact the UTAC to initiate support requests for commercial application software, desktop environments and peripherals, network connectivity, computer password maintenance (i.e., Novell, Webmail, Unix, Datatel), hardware and software configuration support, other computer related product and service issues, Blackboard, and cable TV repair requests.



For students, the University ID is your student identification number. For staff and faculty, the University ID is your employee number. It is important for you to remember, and keep for reference, your University ID number now, and in the future, as more and more services will be offered using the University ID number as the key to unlock these services.

The FDU Technical Assistance Center (UTAC) can be reached via phone at 973-443- 8822, from The College at Florham by dialing the digits 8822, from The Metropolitan Campus by dialing #8822, via email at [fdutac@fdu.edu](mailto:fdutac@fdu.edu), or the self service web portal from the <http://inside.fdu.edu> website. ■

### **ON-TIME BEING PHASED OUT**

The shared calendar system On-Time is scheduled to be phased out this year, in favor of using the shared calendaring capability delivered with our new email system. A training program is being developed for users of On-Time to assist with a migration to the browser interface or to Microsoft Outlook. Additionally, there will be support from the technical community to help with the transition.

Users of On-Time will be notified once the migration plans are more complete. If you have questions, please contact the UTAC at extension 8822. ■

***“I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.” Mark Twain***

For comments and suggestions about this newsletter, please contact Jim Lebo at [jlebo@fdu.edu](mailto:jlebo@fdu.edu)

most from grid computing and make the most difference to our world. Current research includes:

- Investigating protein-protein interactions for 40,000 proteins whose structures are known, with particular focus on those proteins that play a role in neuromuscular diseases
- Comparing genomic information to improve the quality and interpretation of biological data and our understanding of biological systems, host-pathogen and environmental interactions. This information can play a critical role in the development of better drugs and vaccines, and improved diagnostic procedures
- Examining tissue microarrays to determine how to improve the treatment of cancer with earlier and more targeted diagnostic tools.
- Obtaining higher resolution structures for specific human and pathogen proteins, and further exploring the limits of protein structure prediction.
- Using computational methods to identify candidate drugs that have the right shape and chemical characteristics to block HIV protease. This approach has already had a dramatic effect on the lives of people living with AIDS.

For information on the World Community Grid, and the work they are doing, please visit their website [www.worldcommunitygrid.org](http://www.worldcommunitygrid.org) ■

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

- *FDU Vancouver is poised to begin offering courses this summer.*
- *Color printing will soon be available to students at the Dreyfuss, University Hall, and Dickinson Hall computer labs. Color printing will be available at \$.50 per page. Ask a student Lab Assistant for more information.*
- *Password resets remains the number one support request type. Please remember, and safeguard, your passwords.*
- *Customer satisfaction surveys collected during the last quarter of 2006 indicate customer satisfaction with technology support services are 4.3 for students and 4.9 for staff and faculty, based upon on a scale of 1 – 5, where 5 is best.*
- *Vista is compatible with Cisco Clean Access (CCA) in the Residence Halls but requires the Symantec Anti-Virus 10.2 antivirus client. This client can be downloaded and installed from <http://isweb.fdu.edu>*
- *Daylight Savings Time starts earlier, and ends later, this year. Computers need to be patched to recognize the time change correctly. We are taking steps to patch server and campus equipment but others need to make sure they patch their own computer. One might also want to pay attention to appointment times during the transition weeks.* ■