

## Information Technology News - Archives

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Issue Number 1

September 30, 2002

### Welcome!

I hope you enjoy, and find informative, the launch edition of our yet-to be-named electronic newsletter. The staff at MCIS has worked hard to provide you with current information that is both interesting and useful. The focus of our newsletter is intended to be you. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. Please let us know how the newsletter can be made more relevant to you and your work. Also, the staff has decided to allow our readers to name the newsletter. Please access the brief "[Name the Newsletter](#)" form and submit as many entries as you want. The author of the winning entry will receive a \$100.00 gift certificate to the Shriver Center Bookstore. Enjoy!

*William H. Knisely, Acting Director MCIS, and Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Finance and Business Services*

### Problems with MCIS-supported services

MCIS provides a multitude of services to the campus; most of the services are stable and dependable. Sometimes, however, we experience extended problems with services and the road to stability is difficult. When this happens with widely-used services, the entire campus is impacted. In order to keep the campus as informed as possible, the most up-to-date information on extended problems is maintained in the Knowledge Base (found at [kb.muohio.edu](http://kb.muohio.edu)); these topics will be listed under the "Current Interest" heading.

At the time that this publication is being written, the following services have experienced extended problems. The information that is detailed below is a short description of what we know at this time. Please choose the link that follows each explanation to access the information posted in the Knowledge Base on current service problems.

**BlackBoard** - Initial problems experienced at the start of the semester were partially corrected by doubling the number of processors in the BlackBoard server. Poor log-on times remained, however, due to the processor-intensive "My Institution" tab. To correct this problem, the service was modified to default, on log-on, to the "Courses" tab. We have ordered additional CPU's for the BlackBoard server, but not an additional server. It was concluded that a second server at this time would not improve performance. We will continue to closely monitor the service and apologize for the problems that you may have experienced this semester with BlackBoard.

[Up-to-date information on current service problems](#)

**myMiami** - myMiami has experienced a number of technical problems over the past month. myMiami is a vendor-provided product; Miami technical staff and management have made it clear to the vendor that the problems must be corrected or the service will be replaced. The vendor has made significant progress in correcting problems; however, significant service problems remain. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience that the service problems have caused you.

[Up-to-date information on current service problems](#)



### **SCT Banner 5 to Arrive October 7, 2002**

This October Miami University will upgrade our Banner System to a new version. Offices will be relieved to know that they will not experience significant changes in the look and operation of screens. In other words, this is not as extensive an interface change as from Banner 3 to Banner 4 although most of our primary administrative systems will be affected in some way by the upgrade.

There will be navigation training sessions in September for new staff and for those who would like to brush up their skills. There will be two types of sessions listed on the TRAIN registration system: <http://www.muohio.edu/banner/>. For new staff, there will be a class that assumes no knowledge of how to navigate through Banner screens. There will also be sessions available for staff who would like to practice Banner navigation with a coach in the room assisting them as they go through SCT's Banner 5 computer based training. The CBT will also be available from Miami's Banner page.

This upgrade which will affect admission, financial aid, registration, accounts receivable, university relations, accounts payable, payroll, finance, personnel and other offices, is necessary to continue SCT's support of current products and to install State and Federal regulatory enhancements. Administrative systems will be unavailable from Thursday evening, October 3, 2002 through Sunday evening, October 6, 2002 while the upgrade takes place.

Students will not be able to access Banner Web during this long weekend. This means that if they want to do an online check on the availability of a course, look at financial aid information or their Bursar bills, they will need to do it before Thursday evening, October 3, or wait until Monday, October 7. The administrative offices will, however, be open for basic services. For example:

- The Bursar will accept payments.
- The Registrar's Service Center will accept address changes, graduation applications and requests for transcripts to be processed on October 7.
- The Office of Student Financial Assistance will be available for general questions and counseling, but will not be able to access any data specific to a student.

Following are some new features available in the new version of Banner:

- Improvements to the Web interface for those who use "adaptive technology" to access computers; this includes cascading style sheets.
- Enhanced electronic grade book capability that allows viewing course detail in greater depth.
- New search capability.
- The procurement card interface now loads bank credit card data to the general ledger and accounts payable allowing creation of invoices and vendor information.
- Enhanced Banner Student Selective Admission.
- Support for new Immigration and Naturalization Service reporting requirements including SEVIS reporting.
- Technology upgrade to support access to all Banner forms on the web (future).

A complete description of Banner's new features is contained in the product upgrade guides which may be viewed on the Banner web page: <http://www.muohio.edu/banner/>.

Functional changes resulting from the installation of the Banner upgrade will be communicated to the campus community by affected departments. Most of these changes will be made over time as services are added to the system.

### A New Resource for Faculty

AREA 351 Teaching Technologies Center has developed a new website, the Virtual Teaching & Learning Center (VTLC). The goal of the VTLC is to create an online community for faculty to quickly gain access to the information that will help them use technology to improve their teaching. The website URL is: <http://www.muohio.edu/vtlc>

The content of the Center revolves around faculty spotlights, learning strategies, types of technology used in teaching and learning, and action plans.

The concept behind the site is that faculty may come to the site for various reasons- they may have heard about something new from another faculty member. They may have heard about a technology they would like to explore, or may have a particular teaching problem which could be addressed by integrating a specific technology. Regardless of how they come into the Center, faculty will soon discover that it is all inter-related.



Every technology is related to a specific learning strategy, has an action plan for implementation, and gives an example of how other Miami faculty are using this technology. In addition, there are sections on design considerations, assessment and additional resources, especially Miami University resources.

### Gartner Research Available on the Web

MCIS is pleased to announce that research published by GartnerGroup, a leading worldwide technology research and consulting firm, is available to all Miami students, faculty and staff via the following URL: <http://www.muohio.edu/gartner>. The content on our web site is updated weekly, generally by Friday.

You will need to login using your MUnet logon ID and password.

Gartner research will be of particular interest to any student, faculty or staff member learning, teaching or using technology. Areas of focus include E-Learning, Business Management of IT, Security & Privacy, Higher Education, and Emerging Trends and Technologies.

Examples of articles which may be of interest to Miami students, faculty and staff:

- Microsoft Enters a New Era (April 8, 2001)
- Windows XP (October 16, 2001)
- Apple Computer Mac OS X Operating System (September 25, 2001)
- Final Preparations for the Euro (October 31, 2001)
- More Students, Fewer Dollars for Higher Education in 2002 (Dec. 31, 2001)
- Higher Education Predictions: 2002 and Beyond (January 21, 2002)
- IBM: No Longer a Slow-Moving Giant (Nov. 27, 2001)
- 10-Gigabit Ethernet: An Introduction (Sept. 5, 2002)
- Beyond the Hype in a K-12 Mobile Computing Project (Sept. 4, 2002)
- Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 4100 Printers (Sept. 3, 2002)

To locate these articles, once you have signed in to the web page at <http://www.muohio.edu/gartner>, click on 'Search' (bottom left) and enter a keyword or click on 'Advanced' for more search options. You can also browse the research by date (click on 'Date' under 'Research' on the main page; scroll down past the focus group categories)

Three of Miami's benchmarking universities, and six additional Ohio public universities are GartnerGroup clients.

### **MU Knowledge Base Provides 24/7 Online Technology Support**



Want to know how to:

- publish web pages using the personal space Miami provides to all students, faculty and staff?
- check your Miami e-mail over the web?
- post information on your course's Blackboard site?
- get RoadRunner service at a discounted rate through Miami?

These are just a few of the questions you'll find answers to in the Knowledge Base ([kb.muohio.edu](http://kb.muohio.edu)). The Knowledge Base, a service of Miami Computing and Information Services (MCIS), is designed to put the information you need to use technology at Miami effectively at your fingertips. It is routinely updated to encompass:

- How-to's for new versions of systems/software
- Issues and/or upgrade plans for existing Miami technology services
- Information on new Miami technology services
- Viruses and other security threats seen on Miami's campus

If you can't find what you need in the Knowledge Base, help from the Support Desk is a click away—just click the "Contact the Support Desk" link. You'll get help and help the Knowledge Base grow. Information is constantly added to the Knowledge in response to the questions received by the Support Desk and feed back provided to the Knowledge Base.

A New Look is Coming Soon . . .

In mid- to late- fall you'll see a new look for the Knowledge Base that will make finding the information you need in the Knowledge Base even easier.

### **Finally - Macintosh CBT (computer based training)**

Very few commercial training companies make Macintosh technical training a development priority. Even SmartForce, one of the largest computer-based training companies, does not offer Mac courses. But now VTC, The Virtual Training Company, has added Mac courses to its online training offerings.



The format for the VTC courses is delivered through your browser where you run a series of short movies dedicated to individual course topics. We have ordered these 3 courses and will order the OS X course when it is available. VTC is planning to have more Macintosh specific offerings in the near future.

- Filemaker Pro 5
- Troubleshooting your Macintosh
- Macintosh OS 9.x

These courses are now linked to the Web Based Training link off the MCIS Training page, <http://www.muohio.edu/training>. We ordered these courses so that the campus can try out and text this type of course and let us know if it meets your needs. If the feedback is good, we will investigate investing more in the VTC program. The company is currently working on making tests available for their courses.



### **Use Your Universal Disk Space (UDS) and Leave the Floppies at Home**

Students, faculty and staff new to Miami University (as well as some veterans), may not yet be aware of resources available at Miami University for storing computer files. As students logon to any of the computers in the MCIS/LTC Labs, they are automatically connected to their Universal Disk Space (UDS). This space (also known as "M" drive space) gives everyone affiliated with Miami University 50 MB of disk storage on MCIS file servers. It can be used to publish web pages as well as to simply store files for access from multiple computers. This space is also accessible from anywhere on or off campus, and is web-accessible from: <http://files.users.muohio.edu>.

You are assigned certain storage areas based on your last name, and your UDS space remains assigned to you until you are no longer associated with Miami University.

- A-D, your file storage is located on MUServer2
- E-K, your file storage is located on MUServer3
- L-R, your file storage is located on MUServer4
- S-Z, your file storage is located on MUServer5

You need to know your location as these servers occasionally become unavailable for brief maintenance outages. Electronic messages are sent to users if this is the case.

Recent statistics show that though use of UDS has increased over the years, it is still under-utilized by most of us.

- 58% of all people do not use UDS space.
- 87% use less than 10% of the available space.

The Miami University Knowledge Base contains a lot of helpful information on understanding and making good use of UDS space. For example, it provides details on how to:

- Access UDS from on- or off- campus
- Publish web pages on UDS
- Share files/folders on UDS
- Set up your Eudora files on UDS for access from multiple computers

To find this information, simply go to the Knowledge Base at [kb.muohio.edu](http://kb.muohio.edu) and click on "Universal Disk Space" in the Help With column on the home page. Alternately, you may wish to search the Knowledge Base for "UDS" and any other desired key words.

**Jaguar (MacOS 10.2) is here!**



MCIS has signed an Apple Technology Assurance Program (TAP) contract that allows us to update university-owned Macintosh computers and faculty/staff home computers with MacOS X. The CDs are now available at the University Bookstore for \$15.00. The TAP program expires September 30, 2004.

Faculty and staff can consult the following case in the Knowledge Base for the information they need to purchase at the Bookstore for home use. See [http://kb.muohio.edu/cgi-bin/webcgi.exe?new,KB=MUKB,case=obj\(22170\)](http://kb.muohio.edu/cgi-bin/webcgi.exe?new,KB=MUKB,case=obj(22170))