



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Infrastructure Steering Committee

MEETING NOTES

August 13, 2008

1:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

Conference Room 3362 Wells Fargo Place, St. Paul

NEXT MEETING: Date: September 10, 2008

Time: 1:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.

Location: Room 3362, Wells Fargo Place, St. Paul

ATTENDEES: Ken Reis, Ross Berndt

ITV: Phil Thorson, Tim Furr, Scott Streebs, Steve Richards, Dan Harber, Charles Kroeger

Approval of Meeting Notes from June 11, 2008 Meeting – Approved with no changes.

1. Final Approval for new improved Charter – Ross Berndt

- As discussed in last meeting, modifications have been made to the committee charter. Al Essa has replaced Bev Schuft on the committee; Al has been made aware of this change. Dan Harber has been added as co-chair to committee. Committee member list has been updated.
- No objections; will upload new charter to website.

2. D2L Fall Readiness – Charles

- Upgrade to 8.0 in June; continuing maintenance releases
- New hardware was recently acquired; application and client servers
- Performed analysis and redistributed sites and load balancers
- Developed a fall readiness communication and contingency plan; also performance metrics to monitor during fall start-up
- Issues: during integration process when holding tank was upgraded, ISRS allows for integration while the holding tank does not, so the integration for that site will fail. Memory errors in IIS will affect D2L as well. Actively working with D2L to determining what the appropriate threshold setting will be.
- Communication is set to release today or tomorrow to D2L administration list, which includes campus administrators and CIO's
- Mike Janke is unable to attend today's meeting due to a mandatory training, but he has provided an update regarding D2L that Ross will send out to this committee via email. Charles' summary covered all the points in Mike's email.

3. Microsoft Contract – Ken Ries

- Continuing to move forward with enterprise-wide Microsoft support contract that will be available to all institutions. We have received quote from Microsoft to add a separate schedule, or separate pool of resources under Office of the Chancellor contract. We are in the process of getting PO issued; once that is complete a schedule will be put into place. Through this contract, all campuses will have access to the highest levels of support from Microsoft.
- \$56,000 will be available in campus schedule. We want to use it equitably and get the best system use out of it as well.
- Microsoft will provide both reactive and proactive services. On the reactive side, the best use was a pool of support that would be available to campuses. Campuses would

be invoiced for the services used and then reimburse Office of the Chancellor for those resources used. Support would be provided on an “on-demand” basis, so campuses would pay for only what is used. Since only SCSU and Winona currently have contracts of their own, this central contract through Office of the Chancellor would be more cost effective for nearly every campus. All campuses could participate. The contract will be made available once the PO is signed; the PO will be hopefully issued yet this week.

- Since institutions would reimburse the Office of the Chancellor for services used the money in the account should be the same at the end of the year as the beginning--\$56,000. At this we would look at the money that is left and how it can be best used for the benefit of the system. We would look at proactive services such as Identity Management, scripting, etc.
- Someone at Office of the Chancellor would be responsible for getting campus contacts to Microsoft. CIOs would name campus contacts.
- We are aware that SCSU is sitting on contract right now. Jeff has been contacted and is aware of where we're at.
- All institutions will benefit from proactive services regardless of whether or not they ever use the reactive services.
- Campuses would like to be able to actively use reactive services next week. Ken has expressed this concern to Al; he will check with Dale Johnson to see where PO is at in the process. Ken has made sure managers are well aware of SCSU's issues.
- Charges for reactive services will be approximately \$230 an hour. Rate is same for both proactive and reactive services.
- There are many advantages to an enterprise contract.
 - For example, if seven institutions log same issue, Microsoft will only bill that issue once (not per campus). They will also not bill for a Microsoft bug or issue; such an issue would be billed back to Microsoft internally.
 - Dedicated account rep with Microsoft to check who (which person/department within each campus) has used services and how they were billed.
- This purchase will increase resources available from Microsoft. We will have access to system-wide Microsoft training efforts, etc.
- Once funding is set, Ken will bring it to a CIO meeting and they will decide what to do.
- Note—this contract is NOT for non-critical support issues. It is a 24/7 contract; Microsoft will stay engaged from the time they are notified until issue is resolved, but they will expect campus staff to stay engaged as well, which has been an issue in the past.

4. System Steering Committee: RDB to Oracle Update – Ken Reis

- There are still many issues present with regards to Uniface. We did receive a patch from Uniface that is supposed to solve all problems, but we don't have a lot of confidence that patch will work. It is being tested now.
- The decision has been made to move institution by institution rather than regionally, but the conversion has been put on hold due to Fall Readiness.
 - Will most likely not make October date. Subcommittee is deciding next best window of opportunity for conversion. They are looking for something after Oct. 4 but before February, 2009. If anyone wants to be a part of this they can. This is the largest conversion that we have tried to get through as a system in quite some time, and it is also fairly high-risk; everyone is encouraged to be involved in meetings and process as we move forward.

5. WAN Update – Ross Berndt (from Mike Janke's Email)

- Bandwidth upgrade is on hold pending ITS budget allocations. Need to make sure

operational costs are encumbered for this year and the years to follow.

- Currently holding back on project until money is allocated into cost center
- Redundancy project was approved at \$500,000 per year in ongoing costs
 - Committed a large portion to three and five year circuits and equipment upgrades, etc.
- Waiting for final budget to finalize and move ahead.
- As of the 11th, there is a freeze for all updates for anything relating to the infrastructure. There may be some hot fixes necessary to keep things like D2L and WAN functioning
- Currently documenting change process for absolute necessary changes. Must have a very good reason to make an exception.

6. Infrastructure Roadmap subcommittee meeting – Ross Berndt

- Meeting was created from ISC meeting after reviewing ISR roadmap. No hard and fast decisions made; it was more of a review from infrastructure and how what we need of infrastructure is really dependent upon the software.
- Established that we need to look at applications first and then purchase a server that will support. Talk of testing titanium, Solaris, Linux, etc.; testing different applications and portability.
- Discussion of lease on GS1280s and different types of blade technology coming out.
- The fewer operating systems managing the better because there will be more expertise available.
- Should we support only the current version of an operation system? This would force us to stay current with the technology
- Will schedule another meeting; this first one was just a high-level overview. Would like campus involvement moving forward.
- Phil Thorson stated that he has had a hard time on campus with phase in/phase out of operating systems, and problems with support level of new (and old) operating system
- Phil and Ken should definitely be involved in next meeting if possible.
- We don't want to lock ourselves into any niche products. Whatever is chosen needs to be easy to move across the systems.

7. Central Backup Pilot Project – Ross Berndt/Mike Janke

- Has been funded by Enterprise Investment Committee. Business case for project will be distributed.
- Requesting \$148k to do pilot on centralized backup. This is the ability for campuses without infrastructure to backup to a centralized site such as the Office of the Chancellor over the WAN. Half of that money was allocated by enterprise investment committee, so the amount is really more like \$82k. With this change we are not sure how to afford and scale a pilot.
- Mike is owner of project and has submitted the business case. We will want to make sure campus support and input is available once a project manager is involved. Don't know yet how money disbursements will work; may be half now and half later.

8. WBOB/ COB Status – Ross Berndt/Mike Janke

- Brief overview of Sunday's Incident: Sunday morning the U of M had scheduled no-load generator test, but the staff did load test instead of no-load test. When they went to UPS, one or two batteries physically exploded. In that process, we dropped two power distribution units to our area. It didn't impact us that much, except that not everything we have is totally redundant on the other two PDU's. As of now, everything is still being sorted out. Detected outage at 6:30am Sunday; it was 2:00pm before everything was back up and functional again. Still haven't replaced batteries

in UPS's. Looking to do this very soon.

- Communication issues: List server is housed at a West Bank office building, and when there is an outage, we are unable to use this. However, we need it in order to communicate. In the process of moving this to another building.
- Met with U of M staff to figure out what was going on and what could have been done better. There is only one power supply and one generator in building. U of M is committed to adding a generator and another UPS. Worst case scenario is that this could happen during fall start-up.
- Contract with Lyris is in place for one-way push to whichever group needed. Service is available, but no resources currently dedicated into getting it functional. Ross would prefer to have the list located somewhere else as an alternate back-up.
 - Phil Thorson offered to host a secondary list for emergency purposes; he has a resource who could handle this in a couple of hours. Ross will be contacting Phil to set this up.
- Need to determine how long of an outage we can suffer before putting resources into failing over; need to have guidelines and criteria so we are not just doing this in crisis mode.
- There was more to the issue than just operator error. They should be doing full-load tests anyway, so there are clearly some infrastructure issues.
- GS1280 (currently main RDB Uniface client) VMS system and an EVA are both coming off lease at the end of October. Options are being considered; either extending lease or purchasing outright. Leaning toward extending lease on GS1280 until RDB to Oracle conversion is finished and purchasing EVA outright.
- Something else we are looking at for storage area network is upgrading disc drives. Currently three slots available in storage area network; have been purchasing discs and putting them in when needed. We have been doing this with 300 gig drives, but 450 gig drives just came out. Transition to higher density drives will free up slots and mean a longer life. Testing showed no speed degradation by going to higher density drives.

Other Items:

- Ken Reis—MHEC is working on a contract with VM Ware. Information will be kept private until it is signed. Ken states that it is best to be patient but things look good and that VM Ware will be purchased in the next week or two. A substantial cost savings is likely.
- RFP for student communications/email is published and open for response. There are also a number of dates to participate. .

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 2:10pm. Meeting notes submitted by Erin Meyer, erin.meyer@csu.mnscu.edu.