



Minnesota  
STATE COLLEGES  
& UNIVERSITIES

# THE SCOOP

Office of the Chancellor ITS Department News

January 2009

## Accounting Module Moves Up to JAVA 2EE

If all goes according to plan, by summer 2009, users of the Accounting (AC) module of ISRS will be able to access the module as a new Java-based web application.

According to Bill O'Brien, Finance Division Project Manager, and project manager for this conversion, the accounting web application will feature multi-featured query and update screens and a supporting transaction infrastructure.

A phased pilot of colleges and universities that are part of the user testing community will begin in April 2009. System-wide roll-out of the application

will happen by the end of FY09.

The project team is using an iterative development methodology in which specific business stories are reviewed and selected for development at the beginning of each 6-week increment. The benefits of this methodology include:

- Frequent review with users: acceptance testing every 6 weeks

This conversion provides the foundation necessary to convert and effectively integrate additional finance-related ISRS modules such as accounts receivable, accounts payable, and purchasing.

- Noticeable results that can be demonstrated to stakeholders
- Testing throughout and at the end of each 6-week increment,

eliminating a large testing phase at the end of the project

- Short time-lapse between gathering business requirements and developing code

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## eTimesheet

There are now over 2000 Minnesota State Colleges & Universities employees using the eTimesheet web application that went into production this past summer.

That number includes 1 four-year institu-

tion, 10 two-year institutions and the Office of the Chancellor.

All system Presidents began using eTimesheet with the pay period beginning November 12, 2008.

Six more institutions have expressed interest in coming on board during the next release. We will set up additional deployment opportunities after the next release for institutions who would like to use the system in the future.

The ITS division has worked closely with implementing institutions, training their HR and Payroll staff and assisting the colleges and universities with training their supervisors and employees.

While we continue to work on the system, making corrections and enhancements; the system has been largely positively received by the institutions that have implemented it.

Some comments that we have received about the system include:

"I think it works great."

"The employees and supervisors like it—a lot!"

"It's easy, everything is there."

"I like that you can see your balances, and that once you submit it you're done."

"From my point of view (HR), the system has impressed the employees here."

## What's Inside

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Where Are We?

## Coming soon ... to a campus near you!

Who is the Enterprise Investment Committee (EIC)? How are ITS projects prioritized and funded? What is involved in the EIC governance process?

Attend one of the upcoming road shows hosted by the Portfolio Management Office (PMO), and get answers to these questions and more!

The PMO is hitting the road in February to bring you everything you've ever wanted to know about the EIC governance process, rolled into a lively two-hour event. Each session will introduce how ITS projects are initiated, prioritized and funded, as well as provide an open forum for your questions.

Anyone interested in learning more about the EIC governance process is welcome to attend. Exact dates and locations will be announced via e-mail shortly, so jot down your questions and please stay tuned for more information.

## eApplication Help Desk

A new Online Application Support help line has been implemented to assist applicants experiencing difficulties with the eApplication product.

It was agreed that it would be of great benefit to both the applicants and to college staff to have a number that future students could call with questions in regards to their application and paying the application fee.

And so, a phone was placed in the center

**Any time the help line staff are able to assist the students, they do what they can to help and keep them on their path of completing courses and earning that degree.**

of the ITS office in Granite Falls and an extension was added to the 1-877-GO-MNSCU number. And that is how the Online Application Support help line, aka *The Bat Phone*, was born. The number of

callers grew, as did the questions.

Three Campus Support Analysts based in Granite Falls -

Todd Noble, Rita Christianson and Lisa Carter - have provided assistance to applicants who have questions about everything from creating an account to what date to enter for high school graduation

or GED completion, and they've been happy to help.

The help number is now published on the login page for assistance in logging in for all online processes created and maintained by the ITS Division.

At times, students are directed to contact the college or university as their questions are specific to what the school may need for admission.

### eApplication Help Desk Staff:

**Rita Christianson** - Campus Support Analyst, originally started in March 1998 with the formation of one of the first ISRS Help

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## MnSAT...on the air...on the web...on DVD...

...all with one goal...high quality media service.

Minnesota Satellite and Technology (MnSAT) is a division of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

MnSAT has a full production broadcast studio and is recognized internationally for its quality television service. They produce training and educational programs delivered via KU and C band satellite, on the Digital Satellite Network, and Video Streaming.

They can help you develop a program, produce, record, caption, and transmit your information. And they'll make the DVD's needed for distribution.

### On the Air...

Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty and other prominent political figures and experts from the education community are part of live worldwide news broadcasts delivered from the MnSAT studio in downtown St. Paul to CNN, Fox News, CNBC, PBS and other international networks.

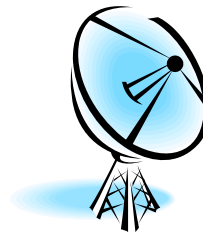
In addition, this live television service also generates revenue to offset MnSAT's operational costs, which is essential during these lean economic times.

**On the Web...**online video production increases...

As an example, over twenty instructional videos highlighting teaching philosophies were produced over the past year for the Center for Teaching and Learning alone. These dynamic teaching stories are told through the lens of a camera using a documentary style approach.

The segments, shot on location at various Minnesota State Colleges and Universities campuses, were created Center for Teaching and Learning online courses and tutorials.

The Teachers Retirement Association is also working with MnSAT to convey engaging online video



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## Spotlight on...Pat Hammer

If you work in the Student modules, chances are good that you have talked to Pat Hammer at some point.

Pat is an Application Support Analyst on the ISRS Help Desk and spends her days helping customers by researching and resolving Help Desk tickets. She works in the new Minneapolis office.

Her Supervisor, Dick McMullin says, "When you need someone who has figured it out before, you call Pat. When you need someone who will think through all aspects of a problem, you call Pat. When you want someone who can laugh courageously in the face of impending doom, you call Pat!"

Pat's family includes her husband Steve, son Colin, and daughter Kate. Colin is a Sergeant in the US Army and is deployed in Bagdad. He is scheduled to return home to his wife Meagan and their baby daughter, London, in February. Pat's daughter Kate is currently a student at MCTC.

When asked about a favorite holiday tradition, Pat says, "I remember learning how to make stuffing from my father. My mother did most of the cooking but he made the stuffing and I learned how to do it by helping him. Over the years I took over the job and now, no matter who does the Thanksgiving or Christmas cooking, I make the stuffing."

Pat is a die-hard reader and reads three different newspapers every Sunday! She

has read all of Charles Dickens' novels with the exception of the Pickwick Papers which,

she says she has tried to get through twice but just couldn't do it.

### Some Fun Facts:

**Favorite Book:** *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving.

**Favorite Movie:** *The Music Man*

**Favorite Vacation:** An Alaskan Cruise in Sept. 2007

**Favorite Cookie:** Chocolate Chip

**Three Adjectives that best describe her:** practical, curious, persistent

**Favorite Ice Cream Flavor:** Chocolate Mint



## PCI DSS Compliance: Doing our part to stop identity thieves in their tracks

Did you know that identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the United States<sup>1</sup>?

According to Javelin Strategy and Research, in 2007 nearly 8.4 million Americans were victims of identity theft<sup>2</sup>.

With identity-related crime on the rise, in-

formation security is more important than ever before — particularly in environments that store, process or transmit credit card data.

### The industry fights back

In response to the escalating identity-theft crisis, the credit card industry collabora-

tively released the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS). Governed by the Payment Card Industry Security Standards Council™, the PCI DSS requirement is in place to prevent security breaches that can lead to identity theft.

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## Where Are We?

Can you guess where this outstate ITS office is located?

- Home to the oldest exposed rock in North America
- Home to congressman Andrew J. Volstead - author of the Volstead Act which launched Prohibition

- Home of the Kilowatts, now The Sting
- One of few communities still using and maintaining a suspension pedestrian bridge
- This community straddles two counties
- Received national attention during floods in 1997 and 2001 and follow-

ing an F4 tornado in 2000

- Hosts a summer festival - Western Fest and a winter festival - Ole and Lena Days
- Home of the national Smoosh Races - held during Ole & Lena Days

### Good Luck!

*(The answer is on page 4)*

We would love to hear from you! Please send your ideas for future editions to: [Valerie.Schmidt@csu.mnscu.edu](mailto:Valerie.Schmidt@csu.mnscu.edu)

## Accounting Module *cont.*

The 9<sup>th</sup> user acceptance testing (UAT) session for the pre-production accounting web application is scheduled for mid-December. Additional UAT sessions are scheduled through May 2009.

Essentially all AC module screens and transactions will be converted by the end of this calendar year. A new security administration application for both J2EE and Uniface ISRS modules was added to this project's scope; development of the security application will occur between January and April 2009.

The AC module conversion is part of a larger initiative by the Minnesota State Collages and Universities Board of Trustees to convert all ISRS Uniface applications to an open standards technology platform and development language called JAVA 2 Platform, Enterprise Edition (J2EE). J2EE is in common use in the market place, it requires no end user licensing, and it provides functionality to develop graphical, work-flow driven applications for the web.

The conversion of the AC module is co-

sponsored by the ITS and Finance divisions of the Office of the Chancellor, and follows a collaboration between the ITS and Human Resources divisions to convert the payroll (SCUPPS) module and develop a tuition waiver J2EE web application.

For updates and more information about this project, visit the Finance Division website and click on <http://www.finance.mnscu.edu/committees/acctj2ee/index.html>.

## eApplication Help Desk *cont.*

Desks.

Rita took some time away from the ITS Division when she went back to teaching Computer Support at Minnesota West Community and Technical College and came back to ITS when the Campus Support Analyst positions were created.

Rita's areas of expertise are in the Prospect, Application, Admission and Assessment modules.

**Lisa Carter** - Campus Support Analyst,

originally started in March 1998 (along with Rita) with the formation of the first ISRS Help Desk.

Lisa was on the help desk for 2 years before moving into a Technical Writer position within the ITS Division, writing documentation for the ISRS system.

In the spring of 2007, Lisa joined the Customer Relations team as a Campus Support Analyst and specializes in the student modules and student housing.

**Todd Noble** - Campus Support Analyst, started in January 2008 with a background in computer support, networks and management.

Todd is the newest member of the team and eager to do his part to help those needing assistance.

Todd specializes in the student modules.

## MnSAT *cont.*

information to their members and employers.

MnSAT's collaboration with state agencies such as The Teachers Retirement Association (TRA) provides a way to reach out to the broader Minnesota education community.

The videos are shot professionally in the MnSAT multi-camera studio environment

and anchored by Minnesota Public Radio host Cathy Wurzer.

### On DVD...

Currently, MnSAT has several DVD productions in progress for eFolio World and the Minnesota Department of Education in production. The Minnesota Department of Education has adopted the TV magazine/talk show format for educating their audience

and duplicates thousands of high quality DVD copies of each program.

As MnSAT continues to reach out and collaborate with other Minnesota State Colleges and Universities divisions, campuses, state agencies, and world wide networks such as CNN, FOX and MSNBC, one goal remains the same... quality media service.

**Answer to Where Are We?**  
Granite Falls

## PCI DSS Compliance *cont.*

To ensure that our system is in step with this regulation, the Office of the Chancellor initiated the PCI DSS Compliance project, an enterprise-wide initiative that will help all of our campuses:

- Protect private cardholder information
- Reduce the risk of identity theft
- Minimize the loss of sensitive data

### Two-phased rollout

The PCI DSS Compliance project is comprised of two parts; each institution must undergo a discovery phase and an external vulnerability assessment phase.

During phase one, the project team identifies potential gaps where data could be

compromised, and develops an action plan to address these risks.

In phase two, quarterly external vulnerability assessments are performed to ensure that the institution continues to be compliant with PCI DSS.

While the Office of the Chancellor contracted with NetSPI, an industry-certified vendor to facilitate these activities, every campus also appointed a contact person to lead the efforts onsite.

### Greater peace of mind and easier enterprise-wide implementation

From credit card transactions at registration windows to purchases in bookstores and cafeterias, the system processes thousands of credit card transactions daily.

PCI DSS Compliance will provide students and staff with the peace of mind that comes with

knowing their sensitive data is secure. And from a process-improvement standpoint, “Commonalities between different campuses will allow us to put enterprise-wide fixes in place versus every campus having to implement its own,” said Frank Zobitz, project manager for the initiative.

For more information about PCI DSS Compliance, please contact Frank Zobitz ([frank.zobitz@csu.mnscu.edu](mailto:frank.zobitz@csu.mnscu.edu)).

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education (<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/misused/idtheft.html>)

<sup>2</sup> Javelin Strategy and Research (<http://www.javelinstrategy.com/2007/02/01/us-identity-theft-losses-fall-study/>)

