Engineering Design Center
Winter 2004 Newsletter

New Lab Monitors

As you might have noticed, almost all the Design Center Lab Monitors are new. This is the result of almost all our previous Lab Monitors getting jobs or internships in industry. We bid a fond farewell to those who have moved on and we welcome the new faces:

Zhixuan Zhou, Vaibhav Khandelwal, Henry Huan, Husna Hsu, Shikha Khanna, Sushma Tatiparthi, and Fyza Parviz.

New Helpdesk

We are currently testing a new e-mail and web-based helpdesk that we hope will improve communication between DC staff and users. In addition to a web-based administration page, there is a public user interface. From this public interface, users can create trouble tickets detailing issues for the DC staff to review and correct. To access the system, simply point your browser to:

http://netmon.engr.scu.edu/

and select "Public Helpdesk". Create an account and then login. Now you can submit your ticket and track its progress through the web interface. (You can submit tickets without an account, but you will not be able to use the web interface to track them)

Please feel free to explore the netmon site. Not only will you find news alerts regarding upcoming maintenance, but you can also see up to the second status reports for all DC systems. There is a wealth of information regarding system and network status contained therein.

Upgraded PC Workstations

Thanks to some generous pricing from HP, we were able to replace all 50 workstations in Room 605 and Room 608A. The new systems are much more powerful and should feel much quicker and more responsive than their predecessors.

CPU: Pentium 4HT 3.06GHz
RAM: 1GB
Video: Nvidia Quadro 4 380 XGL
Hard Disk: Seagate 80GB

As before, Room 608A is a native Windows lab while Room 605 is a native Linux lab with the ability to run Windows through VMware.

The end of HP-UX?

Due to several factors, ranging from decreasing vendor support to increasing hardware costs, we are seriously considering phasing out HP-UX in the Design Center by the start of the Fall 2004 quarter. If you have any input you would like to share on this matter, please let us know by May 1st. It is imperative that you inform us of any concerns by that time, so we may have adequate time to plan and implement this change.

Spring Break Downtime

As you begin thinking about and planning for your Spring Break downtime, please keep in mind that we are planning some for our systems. In order to ensure smooth operation during the quarter, we perform all major planned maintenance during school breaks. Spring Break is no exception. We will be applying and testing patches on all of our systems during this time. In addition, we will be installing the new and much nicer partitions in Room 608. We will also be reinitializing the quota system on our primary disk server to correct some improperly counted user quotas. As a result, several Design Center systems will be inaccessible during Spring Break, and occasionally, all systems will be down for a short time. Please take this into account now so you are not surprised when it happens. As always, we will strive to keep as many systems up and available as possible, but during break, maintenance is our first priority. If you will have any specific computing needs during Spring Break, please let us know as soon as possible so we can work to accommodate you.

New Color Printer

Over break we replaced our old color printer. The old Business Inkjet 2250TN had been in service for several years and was beginning to show its age. Thanks to a trade up offer from HP, we were able to upgrade to a new Business Inkjet 2280TN. This should resolve the issues we have been having with color printing. Color print quotas remain unchanged at 100 pages per quarter. If you need more, we will consider requests on a case by case basis.

Design Center Logo Contest

Have you ever noticed that the Design Center doesn't have a logo? Well we don't, and we've decided to remedy the situation by holding a logo design contest. Between now and the end of the 03-04 school year, we will be accepting submissions for a logo. This logo will adorn the main entrance to the Design Center, as well as be used on all Design Center documents. (This newsletter, for example)

So why should you care? It's true that the best entry will receive much exposure as our logo, but that's not all. We will choose three top entrants to receive fabulous prizes. No, not mouse pads or extra disk space. The breakdown is:

$ 1st place - **$250**
2nd place - **$100**
3rd place - **$50** **$**

What are we looking for? We're not entirely sure, that's why we're asking you. As geeks, we're drawn to things sleek and sci-fi, but are not opposed to totally new ideas. The logo should be uncluttered, communicate something about the technical nature of the Design Center, and, frankly, look cool.

The contest is open to all Santa Clara University students, faculty, and staff. Submissions must be made in a vector graphics format (Adobe Illustrator, CorelDRAW, SVG, etc) so the logo may be resized arbitrarily without loss of quality. Compress and submit entries to support@engr.scu.edu. You may submit as many entries as you like. Entries will be judged by the Design Center staff and the Engineering Computer Support Committee, who will pick the three best entries.

Obviously, your work must be your own, and must not infringe upon the copyrights of anyone else. All submissions remain the property of their creators. By submitting an entry, you grant Santa Clara University a royalty-free license in perpetuity to use the entry in any manner seen fit by the authorized agents of the University.

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"Nothing is as simple as it seems at first
Or as hopeless as it seems in the middle
Or as finished as it seems in the end."
--Unknown

Videoconferencing

The College of Arts and Sciences has recently added videoconferencing capabilities to the Wiegand room, located on the first floor of the Arts & Sciences building. It is available for use by SCU personnel and may be reserved online at:

http://www.scu.edu/cas/wiegand.cfm

Spring Quarter Requirements

The Design Center is already gearing up for Spring Quarter. To that end, we are gathering information from faculty about what computing resources you will need to support your spring classes. Please let us know your plans as soon as possible so we can best serve you.

New Desks for 608C

Though ordered last summer, unexpected issues prevented the manufacture and delivery of the new desks for Room 608C. During the fall quarter, we made the best of it with rented tables. But winter break finally saw the permanent desks delivered and installed. They provide much better cable management and ergonomics, while also looking much nicer and more professional.