Minutes of 12/04/07 Aux Svcs IT Manager Meeting

The meeting was held on the first Tuesday of the month, 12/04/07, from 1:30 - 2:30, at the Printing Services Building. The agenda was three-part, with the bulk of the meeting on departmental tasks for Infrastructure Consolidation.

In attendance were Mary Thurn for Vet Diagnostic, Bill Meyer for General Services, Steve Sherping for R.L. Olson for Bookstores, Tom Quinn for Univ Stores, Ted Sander for Dining, Dennis Miller for PTS-Fleet, and Heather Powell for U Card.

1) Online Payment
Heather Powell gave a brief update on recent progress—a signed contract, laundry controller, and where thought was leading with the web and payment processing of the system.

2) PeopleSoft
Wayne Tauber and Paul Stanley addressed coexistence and transition, for clients and providers as they switch their ordering from CUFS to PeopleSoft. Our goal here is to keep it easy for clients to buy from us, so that they don't get frustrated and instead move to p-card purchases from an external provider.

Paul highlighted how customer accounts for recurring charges (leases, permits, charges against vehicles, fuel keys, cards, or other objects) could be set up ahead of time in our systems. That is a client wouldn't have to come in to have their Budget Charge Card switched over to their new Psft DeptID, but that we would rather draw on the Psft-CUFS cross-reference table to do that. Several people wanted to confirm that providers could send out communication beforehand (months before PeopleSoft goes live), so that a client could proof that those recurring charges would be hitting the correct accounts.

Paul also handed out screen-shots of a web site that William Palmer had put together. This is built over the CUFS-Psft cross reference table. It allows a client or provider to type in different pieces of client information, and get back what would be valid Psft account strings for that client to buy against. This same logic is getting integrated into the order entry screens of those systems that can call it (pretty much only those on our AS/400, but both green-screen and web).

3) Infrastructure Consolidation
We went over the two pictures below, to refresh everyone's memory on the consolidation of servers and server rooms. We also handed out the 11/27/07 version of a server consolidation/virtualization worksheet, which is sorted by department. This is still a working draft.

For this worksheet, the two terms you should distinguish are "consolidated" and "virtualized". Consolidated means multiple applications on the same operating system, and so also physical server. An example would be Kronos and JD Edwards. They both run on the same AS/400 operating system within the same AS/400 box. Virtualized means
that an application retains its own operating system instance, but shares a physical server. An example of a virtualized environment would be our High Availability AS/400 over at WBOB. This is meant to mirror the two AS/400 boxes at PSB, and so has two copies of the operating system running on it.

Even on the first page of this worksheet, you should see three servers that have already undergone consolidation or virtualization. This technology is quite doable, and already running live on several machines within both Univ Svcs and OIT. The reduction in hardware should save your department money. But the technology may not yet be appropriate for every server. For example, perhaps your application vendor wouldn't support your system if it didn't run on its own box.

So what we need now is for each IT manager to review the rows for their department's servers, to make sure we're getting this spreadsheet correct. In particular, we need you to review anything with a MAYBE in its row. We still have 28 servers that we're uncertain on, with a MAYBE in either the "Operating System Consolidation Candidate" column or the "Operating System Virtualization" column. In order to not waste staff/consulting dollars, we want to get those MAYBE values moved to either a YES or NO before starting the conversion. We would of course also want your input if we've marked something YES that should be NO or vice versa.

To give you some guidance, we've provisionally rated servers as 1 - 5 for ease of transition. Within our current timeline those servers with a rating of 1 or 2 are candidates for conversion within the next six months. Those with a 3 - 4 rating are candidates within the six months after that.

You will almost certainly have questions when making this determination, and the technical ones are best directed to Bill Meyer at 4-9020. He is also looking at drafting a list of questions you could work through for each box. For applications purchased from a vendor, you should also be talking to your vendor to make sure that this process has been done at other customer sites.

We would like your review completed over this next week, as a January start date makes the timeline for this project fairly tight.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, 1/08/07, 1:30 - 2:30, at the Printing Services Building.