

VBrick – OTS Takes Video One Step Higher

Imagine being able to store your videos in a library and then having the capability to pull them up on your computer at any time, from any classroom or meeting room on the main campus – without the use of a VCR.

Thanks to VBrick, a new video-on-demand system that OTS recently implemented, faculty and staff have a variety of new options to store, view

or show videos from anywhere on campus. The system also offers the capability of viewing live events as they are occurring on campus right from a desktop computer screen – similar to having your own personal campus television.

“Through the Video Library option, which can be used on the main campus, videos can be recorded ahead of time by media



Mike McDonald, Shelley Mulligan and Joe Michini teamed up to provide the new VBrick, video-on-demand system.

services staff, eliminating the need for a VCR or videotape,” explains Mike McDonald, Media Services coordinator.

Faculty can simply call up the video from Internet Explorer by typing in the word “video” in the browser and then display it on the overhead projector. Up to 20 PCs can view the same high quality video at any one time.

Students also have an option to go back and view the video at a later time.

The new VBrick system also offers a “Live” option where any number of people can watch a live event, in real time, as it occurs on campus. In order to have an event filmed live, it must first be scheduled in advance through Media Services. San Juan College’s fall convocation was the first event televised on the new VBrick program.

“This is especially a great option for those who would like to be a part of the event, but are unable to leave their offices,” adds Shelley Mulligan, network services coordinator.

The Live option also has the capability of running one television channel at a time. Currently CNN is accessible on the VBrick.

And finally, the “Scheduled” option allows viewers to watch an event that was previously recorded. For instance, if Dr. Carol Spencer’s convocation message was recorded live, it may be replayed two or three weeks following the actual event. This “Scheduled” option works similar to television programs in that the “shows” run at a specified, listed time. Like the Live option, recorded events must be scheduled in advance through Media Services.

“I believe the VBrick is another great technology tool for our faculty and staff to use,” says Joe Michini, assistant CIO. “In combination with other available tools, the VBrick really opens a door of infinite possibilities for new teaching methods. If a picture is worth a thousand words, video must be worth at least a million, and now it is easy to store and retrieve.”

For further information and to learn more, contact Michini at extension 3297.

The Art of Customer Service – Attitude, Respect and Time

“How may I help you?” – These words can speak volumes when it comes to providing quality customer service.

The Office of Technology Services staff is continually looking for new ways to not only help their customers but to raise their customer service bar. As part of this initiative, Ben Pogge, OTS instructional aide, has recently completed a customer service DVD that is used as part of lab assistants’ orientation and training. Mike McDonald, media services coordinator, filmed the DVD.

Under the direction of Shah Ardalan, vice president for Technology Services, and Beth Dalton, PC Services coordinator, Pogge wrote skits that cover the three aspects of the ART of customer service, an acronym that stands for Attitude, Respect and Time. With assistance from theatre students, a humorous and light-hearted depiction is provided in two skits.

“The first skit gives both positive and negative examples of attitude,” Pogge explains. One actor answers the phone with an upbeat and cheerful demeanor and quickly offers to help her customers – while two other actors portray employees who are bothered and disinterested, complaining, talking on a cell phone, and grudgingly respond with a roll of the eyes and a comment of “be right over” when a student asks for help.

The second skit provides a comical look at respect, while emphasizing the importance of responding to customers in a timely manner. It also stresses the importance of maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning by keeping study areas quiet and clean.

In addition to customer service, demonstrations are provided on the DVD to brief lab assistants on the technical facets of the job, including an overview of the student portal, lab availability and Campus Connect, the online campus registration program.

“The lab assistant training DVD is a work in progress,” Pogge adds.

“This is the second version of the DVD, but we’ve designed it so that we can update or add content as needed – both from a customer service and technical aspect.”

Pogge says the comments he’s received thus far have been positive. DVD viewers have said the message was both entertaining and clear and that it pointed out the importance of being available and offering assistance to customers. The video can also be viewed on the VBrick, the new video-on-demand system.

With customer service being a primary initiative in OTS, Shah Ardalan, along with OTS management staff, is rewarding the team with a celebration during National Customer Service Week, October 1-7. The staff will enjoy a variety of special treats and an award ceremony in appreciation for providing excellent customer service.

Also in appreciation, the School of Trades and Technology will host a barbeque to offer thanks to the OTS staff. “We can’t thank them enough for all of their hard work and for providing our department with tremendous support and outstanding customer service,” commented Jeff Barratt, dean.



Student Zandrilyn Williams (center) receives help from Ben Pogge, instructional aide (far left), and lab assistant Colby Faverino.

What's Ahead

While we value and appreciate our customers all the time, the first week of October is very important to the Office of Technology Services (OTS). This is when we celebrate National Customer Service Week by planning special activities for our customers and OTS staff. Please look for our flyers and join us at your convenience.

As promised in last month's issue, I would like to share a list of the top 10 projects and events we have planned for this year.

- Uptate our strategic and tactical plans
- Phase III of the Datatel implementation – Student System
- Network improvements – Redundancy and monitoring
- Celebration of National Customer Service Week – Faculty, staff, students
- Online voting and surveying system – Efficient student voting and survey activities
- Campus-wide one card system – Door access, ID system and print monitoring
- Plan the second annual Technology Leadership Conference
- Plan and operationalize a Faculty and Staff Training Center
- Standardize multimedia setups in 50 classrooms
- Increase web services – Faculty and student resources, distance education and more.

To better serve our customers, all OTS managers are participating in teambuilding, leadership and technical trainings and workshops.

We will reinitiate our team presentations to educational and administrative units campus-wide and as your time and schedule allows.

As always, I look forward to your input and participation in our Technology Open Forums.

Respectfully,



Shah S. Ardalan
Vice President for Technology Services



Major Projects Status

Datatel:

The Datatel ERP system will be completed in the spring of 2006. The project is progressing well with only the Student Module left to complete. Recent and upcoming milestones:

- Curriculum module setup: September '05
- Academic Records / Registration module setup: November '05
- Financial Aid module setup: November '05
- Admissions module setup: November '05

Network Redundancy:

The network redundancy project provides alternate paths for data across the network greatly reducing the risk of the network being down.

- First building (QCB) installation: November '05

Storage and Backup:

A major component of the network is storage and backup of files and email. Our capacity has grown over 300 percent in the last four years and projections show continued growth at a substantial rate. This project will increase capacity and improve our ability to maintain backups of that data.

- Backup network complete: December '05
- Backup system complete: March '05

Technically Speaking

Shopping Online

This is the second article in our three part series of "Protecting Your Identity." This month, we'll discuss shopping online.

Shopping online is convenient and provides a countless number of stores to choose from. The process is simple, just pick the item you want, drop it in a shopping cart, give them your credit card information and it will be delivered to your door in a few days.

Buyer beware! With this convenience comes a level of risk. The online store could be a front to steal your identity or at least a way to rip off your credit card.

Here are some tips to protect yourself and still enjoy the ease of shopping online:

- Shop at stores that are well known like L.L.Bean, Amazon, Nordstrom and WalMart.
- Don't deal with companies that only have a post office box number and no phone number.
- When you order, print and save a copy of the receipt.
- Note any confirmation number and the URL of the site.
- You are always better off using a credit card rather than mailing a check for online shopping.
- If you don't get your order, you can challenge the charge with your credit card issuer by using your proof of the order.
- Do not supply personal information such as your Social Security number or checking account information.
- Your name, address, credit card number, and expiration date are all the merchant needs.
- The URL of the page where you enter your credit card number should begin with https:// – this means that you are entering information on a secure server.

OTS Staff Profile



The OTS staff would like to introduce you to members of our team. Each month, TECH Update features an employee based on their seniority, with the most recently hired employees being introduced first.

Josh Johnson says he's found a home at San Juan College.

After high school, Josh spent a few years in the oilfield as an automation technician. While it paid the bills, he wanted more – a career not just a job. It was then that he enrolled at San Juan College. He got an early start in his new profession working as an intern in OTS. In 2003 he graduated with an associate's of network technology – proud to be the first in his family to earn a college degree.

Three weeks following graduation, he started out as a temporary employee in the department. A short eight months later, he joined the staff permanently as a PC specialist where he does everything from setting up new computers to trouble shooting – a job he finds rewarding.

"I like knowing that I can make a difference for someone when I'm able to help resolve a computer issue that was especially complicated," Josh says.

When he has a little downtime, he enjoys snowboarding, playing basketball and football, camping and fishing, as well as taking his four dogs to Chokecherry Canyon for a run.

TECH Update is the monthly newsletter of OTS. Our goal is to keep our customers informed and seek input. If you have questions or comments, please write to: TECHUPDATE@sanjuancollege.edu or call 566-3166.