Increase in PICC Charges Delayed

The following information was distributed by the ACUTA Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee via e-mail to ACUTA members on November 17: The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has announced a delay in the scheduled increase in Presubscribed Interexchange Carrier charges.

The PICC fee is assessed by Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers (ILECs) on long distance carriers on a per-line basis, and is currently $2.75/line for multi-line business users.

Starting on January 1, 1999, the PICC fee was scheduled to be adjusted annually for inflation and, if necessary, increased by $1.50/line for certain carriers. However, the increase has been delayed to July 1, 1999, as the FCC seeks comment on changes in the way that access charges are assessed. FCC rules permit, but do not require, long distance carriers to pass these charges along to their customers. (The delay to July 1 also applies to Centrex-based systems and residential systems.)

The other component of access charges is the Subscriber Line Charge (SLC), which is still scheduled to increase on January 1 (at this time). The SLC is a per-line charge assessed by ILECs on end users. Again, FCC rules permit, but do not require, the carriers to pass these charges along to their customers.

The SLC varies by geographic area, and is currently capped at $9/line for multi-line business users (although in many areas the charge is currently less than the cap). According to FCC rules, the $9 cap is subject to an annual increase based on "inflation." Actual increases will vary based on your local carrier.

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Looking for Answers in '99

Donna Hall
ACUTA Professional Development Mgr.

Last summer, a spirited discussion on the listserv was kicked off with the question, "Am I Chicken Little or do others see the sky falling as well?" Questions plaguing many include:

- What will flat-rate pricing for long distance mean for my budget?
- How can I raise the money I need to wire residence halls?
- How can I recoup the cost of network services without an explicit technology fee?
- I must re-engineer, but where can I find the creative strategies that will minimize the cost of service delivery?
- 60% of our students go outside the university for their telecommunications needs. How can I get more of their business?
- What does voice over IP mean for my job and my department?

The gurus of leadership and innovation provoke us to "soar like eagles," to be daring, creative, and entrepreneurial. This is said to be the Information Revolution, and the folks who can manage technology and knowledge are the leaders of tomorrow.

How can we evolve from Chicken Littles to soaring eagles who are the leaders of the information revolution on our campuses? The ACUTA Winter Seminars will provide some of the tools and inspiration we'll need. Please join us!
President's Message
Continued from page 1

take the position of attending just one meeting a year—the annual conference. I realize that for many this is a necessity determined by budgets. But if you can afford it and have the time, the seminars are wonderful places to help fill in the gaps. In addition to a smaller, more focused group, in January you will find that the program committee has responded to the timeliness of the market and added a bonus session on VoIP (voice over the Internet). And you should note that this session is at no additional cost to fully registered attendees. It also gives you the opportunity to visit colleagues first hand and discuss the legislative/regulatory issues that continue to plague us all.

The recent audio conference was also planned in response to the needs of our members. We hope you will consider participation in such events each time the opportunity arises and that you come away feeling good that ACUTA has provided another timely service to meet its members’ needs.

So as you sit in your office about to close things out for Christmas, consider making a New Year’s resolution to attend the workshop in New Orleans. Should be a great time in January. Hope to see you there.

Until next time!

411 Newsletter Salary Survey

Those who don't subscribe to 411 Newsletter may be interested in the results of a survey published in a special report which accompanied their October 12 issue. (FYI: The average respondent was a 44-year-old male who works primarily with voice equipment and services.)

- Among the respondents, those who call themselves consultants have the highest average salaries at $140,000/year. Those in the software business are next at $91,000. Education ranks 9th out of 18 categories at $59,912.

- Women in the survey earn considerably less than men at every age and title. For instance, women are more likely to hold lower-paying titles such as administrator (average salary: $38,712) and men are more likely to be promoted to IS director or VP (average salary: $80,830).

- Handling data is by far the greatest single factor in snaring a higher salary—a $15,000 perk.

The report also includes tips to land a dream job in telecom, proven ways to negotiate a pay raise, and average salaries based on a variety of categories. More info next month, or you may contact editor Jonathan Stern at 411 Newsletter (changing their name soon to The Telecom Manager’s Voice Report) at 301/287-2604.
Beefing Up User Support on Campus

Jim Marshall, ITS Associate Director
Univ. of Colorado, Boulder

Campus IT professionals face an enormous challenge in providing support services to our many and varied clients. Perhaps our biggest challenge at the University of Colorado at Boulder is ensuring that needed support is easily accessible to our 30,000+ users. To that end, Information Technology Services (ITS) and Telecommunications Services (TCS) have been examining how we provide user assistance and have developed and begun implementing a new, more effective, four-tiered user-support model.

Tier 1: Self-Help

Our user support model is based on the philosophy that users should be able to help themselves whenever possible. Self-help includes finding needed information in electronic and printed publications, such as those found on the ITS Web site (http://www.colorado.edu/ITS), Digit magazine, and the Getting Started with Computing booklet, which is given to incoming students.

On the horizon in this self-help tier is an easily searchable public “knowledge base.” An enhancement of ITS’ current collection of information, it will include improved search capabilities and, eventually, answers to frequently asked questions (once the Service Center is operational and has sufficient history to build a database of those questions). User training is a key element in enabling users to help themselves. ITS and Continuing Education provide a wide array of training programs. (See our workshops Web page for a list of training programs.)

Tier 2: Distributed Support (i.e., local departmental support)

If an IT user is unable to solve problems through self-help, it is important that the next available alternative be as close to the user as possible. Many departments on campus have staff members who provide IT assistance. The LAN managers are a current example of IT departmental support. Some LAN managers also provide desktop hardware and software and other basic infrastructure support. As another example, ITS and the Faculty Teaching Excellence Program (FTEP) work together to implement distributed academic support teams that assist faculty in learning about and using instructional technology. ITS and TCS are also working with the department of housing to create a local support structure for residence hall students to help them take advantage of “ResNet” network connectivity, which is available in a limited number of housing units this fall.

Tier 3: IT Service Center

If a user is unable to solve a problem and either does not have access to distributed IT support or the local support provider is unable to help, then the IT Service Center, scheduled to open in January 1999, will be there to create a safety net. The Service Center has been designed to provide “one-stop shopping” for users who need help with virtually any IT-related problem. The center will retain trained staff and students who will attempt to resolve as many questions or problems as possible. When they are unable to resolve the problem, they will refer the request to the core experts in Tier 4.

Tier 4: Core Experts

We expect to meet 80 to 90 percent of all users’ support needs within the first three layers of the support model. With as many as 5,000 to 10,000 requests for service in a typical week, though, that still leaves a large number of unresolved support issues. That is where our core experts at ITS and TCS come in. If our IT Service Center can’t resolve the problem, they will route the request for service to the appropriate group or person within ITS and/or TCS. The group to which the problem is referred will then follow up with the user. ITS and TCS can provide the expertise needed to solve complex problems.

Why the Four Tiers?

The four-tiered model will:

• Let users know what the support landscape on the campus looks like and how they can access help.
• Help campus IT professionals in ITS and TCS and other departments understand how they fit into the campus support infrastructure.
• Help those responsible for managing IT to allocate scarce resources to their most productive uses.

We will continue to develop, refine, and flesh out our support model. Effective support for the use of information technology is essential if students, faculty, and staff are to get the best use and value out of their own and our shared IT resources. Good support is also a key element in the effort to minimize total cost of IT ownership. Additionally, a well-developed support infrastructure is an institutional asset, a competitive advantage to attract and retain top-quality students and faculty. Finally, UCB can create unique learning opportunities for students by involving them directly in the support infrastructure, equipping them to compete more successfully in the job market by providing meaningful opportunities to apply practical IT solutions.

Core Expert (4-Tier) Services

Core services currently include:

• User account administration
• E-mail
• Web servers
• Telephony
• Wide area networking
• Global network access
• Video and audio production and distribution
• Cable television services
• Classroom engineering, remodeling and renovation
• PC repair services
• Classroom/computing lab support
• Administrative application development and support
• System administration
• Core system security

ITS and TCS both serve the entire campus community. It is important that the two departments continue to provide these services, as the campus benefits from the economies of scale inherent in the consolidated provision of services.

Reach Jim at jim.marshall@colorado.edu.
Higher Education Groups Meet to Exchange Information

Twice per year, ACUTA representatives meet with officers and staff of the associations that represent other administrative departments in higher education to exchange information and ideas. Discussion topics include hot interdepartmental issues on campuses, legislative and regulatory matters, joint educational events, and many others. At the most recent meeting, November 21 and 22 in San Antonio, ACUTA was represented by Donna Hall, Professional Development Manager, and myself.

I’d like to share some highlights of this meeting that will likely become issues on your campus—particularly in the area of new Federal legislation that will be affecting higher education.

• **Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA):** One of the key provisions of this new law is a limitation on the potential money damages that online service providers (OSPs), including colleges and universities, could face when they function like a common carrier, allowing online users access to copyrighted material placed there by someone else. This legislation provides a way for OSPs to avoid financial liability for copyright infringement if they follow certain rules. The law contains a special exception for public and nonprofit higher education institutions, to protect the institutions from liability when a copyright infringement is committed by a faculty member or research student.

  The requirements include designating an agent to receive copyright infringement notices, advising the Copyright Office of the agent’s name and address, and posting the information on the OSP’s Web site. You must also develop and post a policy for termination of repeat offenders, supply users with information on copyright laws, and ensure that your system accommodates industry-standard technical measures used by owners to protect their works. The requirements are more complex than can be presented here. I encourage you to consult with the committee on your campus that is responsible for copyright protection measures to ensure that they are aware of the new rules. A legal opinion written by the attorney for one of the CHEMA organizations is available on the ACUTA Web site, at www.acuta.org, under Legislation/Regulations, Hot Topics, Digital Millennium Copyright Act Summary. This law takes effect immediately.

• **The College Costs Savings Act (S. 2490),** introduced in the last Congress by Senator Lauch Faircloth (R-NC), died at the end of the session. The sponsor was also defeated in his re-election bid. This legislation would have prohibited colleges and universities from requiring the purchase of goods and services from on-campus businesses, among other things. It had serious ramifications for one-card systems, as well as campus stores and possibly even long distance and other telecom services. It was reported at the CHEMA meeting that this concept is by no means dead, and the group that was behind the bill may attempt to have it re-introduced in the next session.

• **The Higher Education Act**, signed on October 7 created major changes in the way that campuses must report crimes and keep crime statistics, and it would benefit you as a campus leader to be aware of these changes. The Higher Education Act also delineates information that can be reported to parents. Check with your campus legal counsel about any ramifications of this for telecom or information technology (such as information on phone bills, student misconduct, disciplinary actions, etc.). More information is available on the Web site of the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators (IACLEA), at http://www.iaclea.org/legislative/index.htm, under Legislative Update.

• **Postal rates** are going up on January 10, 1999, even for nonprofit mailers! If you are responsible for campus mail, you already know this. If you have a significant postage expense in your departmental budget, such as using the U.S. Mail for student billing, you might want to look into this for future budget planning.

• **ACUTA** has been invited to make presentations on telecom and networking issues at the annual meetings of the National Association of College Stores and the National Association of Educational Buyers. These opportunities for positive exposure for Telecom with other higher education associations increase ACUTA members' visibility as professionals on campus.

Enjoy your holidays, and I look forward to seeing you in New Orleans at the Winter Seminar on January 17.
The 1999 Appropriations Bill
You may recall that a number of additional, non-budget-related items ended up as part of the appropriations bill—the one that Sen. Byrd referred to as a "Frankenstein Monster." Here are some of the inclusions and exclusions:
- The "Slamming and Cramming" bills that have been under consideration in Congress were not included. This item died in a last-minute flurry on the last day of the session.
- The Communications Decency Act II is part of the bill. The ACLU, along with some other groups, immediately filed a lawsuit challenging this provision. This move guarantees that the "monster" will be back.
- Good and bad news for the FCC. The good news is that they can use FY 1999 money to cover costs related to the move to the Portals complex. The bad news is that they did not get any extra funding to cover the moving costs or the big increase in rent they will be paying.
- Online merchants and consumers will have a three-year tax break from state and local Internet levies, such as access and "bit" taxes. In addition there is a provision that there should be no new federal Internet taxes.
- Schools and Libraries dodged Internet filtering requirements in order to get federal funds for Internet hookups.
- Copyright owners will have their works protected online, while Internet service providers (ISPs) get liability protection from copyright infringement of which they are unaware that occurs over their networks.
- Good news for everyone: The federal government has to eliminate paperwork by moving to electronic filing and acceptance of digital signatures.
- Another provision that did not make the grade would have allowed consumers to freeze their PICs for long distance carriers. (Telecommunications Reports 0/26/98)

Slamming
At least some states and the FCC are getting serious about punishing companies convicted of slamming: Twenty states, working together, reached a combined $1 million settlement with a slammer. The company is also required to change its business practices and provide restitution to customers. (TR 10/26) In separate cases, the FCC proposed forfeitures of $1.12 million and $1.36 million against two companies for unauthorized charges for which the company used forged authorization forms (TR 11/2).

Access Charge
What has really happened to the "access charge cuts" that were made by the local exchange carriers (LECs) for terminating long distance calls for the interexchange carriers (IXCs) and were to be passed on to the customer by the IXC? According to a recently released study commissioned by the U. S. Telephone Association, there is "incontrovertible evidence" supporting the local exchange industry's oft-repeated charge that the major IXCs are not passing these reductions on to residential customers. The IXCs stand firm in their claims that they have. Some claim that these charge reductions have played a vital role in support of universal services. (TR 10/26)

On the other side of the issue are claims by the IXCs that the high rate of return generally enjoyed by the incumbent local exchange carriers demonstrates that interstate access charges are excessive and need to be reduced. Interestingly, the General Services Administration (GSA) seems to agree with the IXCs. (TR 11/2)

The Supreme Court
SBC and US West have asked the Supreme Court to consider whether the line-of-business restrictions on LECs in the Telecom Act of 1996 is in violation of the U. S. Constitution. The Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in New Orleans voted 2 to 1 to uphold the statutes provisions in September 1998. The Fifth Circuit overturned an earlier decision by a U. S. District Judge in Texas indicating "that sections 271-275 of the Act improperly and unconstitutionally singled out the Bells, by name, for punishment." (TR 10/26)

Mergers
Industry publications regularly refer to several proposed mergers among companies within the telecom industry:
- BC Tel and Telus from British Columbia and Alberta respectively. (The new company could be a real challenge to Bell Canada.
- AT&T and TCI, which is considered by AT&T management as "a source of facilities-based local exchange service competition, once TCI's systems have been upgraded."
- SBC and Ameritech is being proposed by management as "good for consumers, shareholders, customers, and America..."
- An agreement between Bell Atlantic and GTE is expected to allow Bell Atlantic to enter many new markets.
- Lockheed Martin and Comsat have asked the FCC to OK the first steps of a merger which seems to involve satellite communications.
Update

Positions Available
For complete details of positions available, access the ACUTA Web site. If you do not have Internet access, call Pat Scott at the ACUTA office (606/278-3338) to receive a printout of current listings. Please submit position-available information electronically to Aaron Fuehrer at afuehrer@acuta.org or to ACUTA's homepage: http://www.acuta.org. If you post a position, please notify Aaron when the position is filled.

- Administrative Module Manager, Oregon State University Computer Services
  Contact: Melissa Maloney, 121 The Valley Library, OSU, Corvallis, OR 97331-4501. FAX: 541/737-3453; E-mail: Melissa.Maloney@orst.edu. For full consideration, apply by 12/18/98. Full position announcement can be found at http://www.orst.edu/dept/is/jobs/amm.htm. OSU is an AA/EEO employer and has a policy of being responsive to the needs of dual-career couples.

- Communication Specialist, Drexel University
  Contact: Drexel University personnel office, Philadelphia, PA (215) 895-2850

- Telecommunications Consultant, University of Pennsylvania
  Contact: Apply directly to Nydia LaPlante, Manager, Consulting Services at laplante@pobox.upenn.edu, Philadelphia, PA 215-898-2298, fax 215-573-2200

- 2 Positions: Telecom Analyst (Pos. #51310); Operations Mgr. (Pos. #51592), Telecommunications Services, Virginia Commonwealth Univ.
  Contact: Submit state application to Human Resource Division, 1000 E. Marshall St., PO Box 980067, Richmond, VA 23298-0067; application available on WEB site http://www.vcu.edu/hr. Position information to Robin Roane, Telecommunications Manager at rhroane@vcu.edu or 804-828-6300.

Welcome New Members
Institutional Member
- Univ. of Texas Health Sci. Center, San Antonio, TX. Robert Ports, 210/567-6787, T2

Associate Member
- Assoc. of Independent Colleges & Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP), Harrisburg, PA. Timothy Alexander, 717/232-8649

Corporate Affiliates
Copper Level
- Carlon, Cleveland, OH. Kim Fleddermann, 216/766-6466
- Essex Group, Fort Wayne, IN. Michael Wells, 219/461-5631
- Tut Systems, Pleasant Hill, CA. James Hvidt, 925/692-2357

A Short List of Big Problems: Are You Ready for These?
1. Y2K, Y2K, Y2K...
2. For many in Europe, and with worldwide implications, conversion to euro currency
3. Resetting the date system of the Global Positioning System which must be done every 1,024 weeks to account for variations in the earth's orbit and rotation. That occurs at midnight, 8/21/99, and could cause problems in navigation and power plants, and even in the calculation of interest for international financial transactions.
4. In about ten years, the number of phone lines needed will exceed the capacity of a three-digit area code with a seven-digit phone number. Experts think we will need to have a five-digit area code and a nine-digit phone number to allow for up to a trillion individual phone lines. Some 25 million software applications will need to be changed.

Can You Believe: Fax Technology 100+ Years Old
Mid 1800s: Englishman Alexander Bain reproduced writing on an electrically conductive surface by connecting two pens to two pendulums joined to a wire. 1862: Italian physicist Giovanni Caselli added a synchronizing apparatus to Bain's invention and called it a "pantelegraph." 1902: German inventor Arthur Korn devised a method for manually breaking down and transmitting still photographs by means of electrical wires and called it telephotography. 1907: Korn sent the first intercity fax from Munich to Berlin.