ACUTA eNews September 1997, Vol. 26, No. 9
Telecom Goes Marketing

Mike Tkacz
Curtin University of Technology

Over the years I have discovered that we in Telecom can't make occasional forays into the public arena about some of the things we have done and expect to be recognised on a continuing basis. We have to be out there continuously identifying problems and designing solutions (and then blowing our trumpets about it), constantly discovering ways to reduce expenditures and increase revenues (and then blowing our trumpets about it), and always pushing our systems to get every killer app out of them (and then blowing our trumpets about it). In other words, our colleagues must come to see us as indispensable.

Of course, all we do must be aligned to the university's goals. As Terry Robb said in the ACUTA Monograph, College and University Telecommunications Marketing, "For you and each member of your staff to know exactly how you contribute to your college or university's mission is absolutely vital."

The starting point is to ensure that you market well internally all that you do. Once staff know what you are doing (and it is often the case that they don't know) and that you are doing it well, they will ensure that you are involved in being a part of the the process rather than an appendage to it.

For instance, when we were establishing our university vision and goals, I ensured that we had included under Values "innovative and socially responsible use of technology. " One of the Supporting Goals which flowed from this was "To advocate and apply the socially responsible use of technology in University programmes and administration and to ensure the confidence of staff and students in using technology. " Once we had this up front we had to be a part of the process.

We then formulated a Technology Plan which includes such strategies/enablers as "increase the efficiency of Curtin staff by providing an efficient voice communication system" and "provide training in the use of the telecommunications system." Some of the objectives which flow from these are promoting the use of the University's videoconferencing facilities, encouraging communication by electronic mail, and connecting all staff to voice mail.

The point is that only you can make your area visible and in doing so appear crucial to the well-being and future of your university. For instance, when our Deputy Vice-Chancellor established a Communications Audit Committee to examine how we communicate and...
President’s Message
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The Board of Directors held its monthly conference call on 8/7/97. Items discussed included plans for the new Board members’ and Committee Chairs’ orientation which will take place in ACUTA’s Lexington office on Friday, September 26. This orientation will be followed by a Board meeting that afternoon and all day Saturday. The agenda will include a review of the Strategic Plan, (mission, goals, and objectives) and brainstorming sessions on action items to accomplish.

Other Items Covered:
• The board approved new members for the following committees:
  Publications: Mark Kuchefski, Indiana Univ., Bloomington.
  • Atlanta Attendance: 509 full registrations, up from 505 last year. This was very positive given that last year had the advantage of the 25th year theme.
  • Fall Journal: The Fall issue of the journal is in production, and will be at the printer by the end of August.

Respectfully submitted,

Tony Mordosky
Bradley University
ACUTA Secretary/Treasurer

ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TELECOMMUNICATIONS ADMINISTRATORS

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Marketing Telecom
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how and where we could improve communication channels, I was pleased to be one of the first persons named to the committee.

Another strategy I have used to enhance our profile within the university is a yearly “Heads Minute” to key administrators which, in one sentence, describes some of the new services and products that are available as a result of new software installations, new applications, etc.

Also, I charge an annual service and equipment charge which has decreased each year. When this is levied, I make a real fanfare about what they get for their money, how and why I was able yet again to reduce the charge, etc.

The most important piece of marketing I do is to meet with school boards and committees to discuss their perceived problems and provide solutions (which are not always telecom-based).

As a result, my role has changed from administration to consulting, and I now market Telecom as a free internal consulting group. This has been overwhelmingly successful, increasing our exposure and generating positive attitudes toward us considerably.

Whether you intend to or not, you are always marketing your image. These are just a few ideas for making it work for you.

Contact Mike at tkaczm@icarus.curtin.edu.au
Thanks to Sprint for Sponsoring Directory

ACUTA would like to thank Sprint for sponsoring the 1996-97 Membership Directory. Support from our Corporate Affiliates enables us to provide many services which benefit our members.

Sprint has been listening to its customers! Because we value our customers' needs, we were excited to offer a new long distance calling service for college students this year. Sprint Sense® for College combines basic residence-hall dialing capability and enhanced "call from anywhere" service. Students will receive a special rate of 10¢ per minute during evenings and weekends, as well as convenience and high quality service. The school benefits, too, not just from happy students, but from revenues based on increased monthly usage.

Sprint continues to support customers who are currently enrolled in our other college programs and services, including Collegiate Connection®, Collegiate Extension™, and Sprint One-Card. As their contracts expire, we anticipate many more to enroll in the Sprint Sense for College program.

Sprint's primary ACUTA contact is Randy Collett (913/323-4452).

Last Call for Directory Updates!

ACUTA's Membership Directory is published each year after we have entered all the changes to our membership database. The directory is an important member benefit, supplying contact information for approximately 2200 individuals, a guide to products and services offered by ACUTA Corporate Affiliates, and information about the Association, its officers, and bylaws.

Members are encouraged to look at the '96-'97 Directory to be sure the information from your school and its representatives is correct. We must receive corrections by October 1 in order to include them in this year's Directory.

If you need to make any changes, contact Kellie Bowman via e-mail at kbowman@acuta.org or fax new information to 606/278-3268.

User Groups Meet in Atlanta ...and Online

Networking is widely recognized as one of the most effective tools for the professional. User Groups provide a highly effective mini-network, as most ACUTA members have learned firsthand.

At the Annual Conference in July, ten User Groups met to discuss issues and concerns of mutual interest. These groups included ACUS, Centigram, Ericsson, Lucent Technologies, NEC, NORTEL, Octel, Pinnacle, Siemens, and Telesoft. Each group was facilitated by an ACUTA member who had previously agreed to coordinate the meeting. Representatives of each vendor were also present to answer questions and bring information to the group about updates and new products.

For the first time this year, individual list-serves for each group were established prior to the conference, and members were invited to participate in online discussions before meeting face-to-face. Attendees report this process generally made the meetings more productive, and most have been enthusiastic about continuing the list-serves.

You are invited to subscribe to the list-serve appropriate to your telecommunications product or service. Contact Pat Searles at Cornell (pas2@cornell.edu) for more details.

On the Move...

Congratulations to Tony Mordosky who has accepted the position of Associate Provost for Information Resources and Technology with Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, effective Sept. 15. You may reach Tony at 309/677-3100 or mordosky@bradley.edu.

Resource Library Update

Kellie Bowman
ACUTA Membership Development Mgr.

The ACUTA Resource Library is a good source for seeing how other members handle the challenges of managing telecommunications in higher education. Currently, the library includes various RFPs, campus directory samples, position descriptions, and more.

Recently, ACUTA has made it possible for members to download documents themselves without having to request and wait for a paper copy to be mailed. Since it is a member benefit, a password is required to access the documents on ACUTA's Web site (http://www.acuta.org). Reminder: The password will change October 1. The new password will be sent to members whose dues are current.

A large portion of the PDF documents listed were scanned from paper original documents that were photocopied. Because the quality of scanned documents is lower than submissions received in electronic format, we are asking for future submissions in electronic form. When PDF documents are created from electronic originals the output is 100% accurate and complete. However, if an electronic copy is not available, we will be happy to scan the paper document.

We are especially in need of more current RFPs and job descriptions because many of the documents have become dated. But any information you feel would benefit others is welcomed. Please send diskette to ACUTA, Kellie Bowman, 152 W. Zandale Dr., Ste 200, Lexington, KY 40503-2486 or e-mail to kbowman@acuta.org. Include a brief description of the contents and permission for ACUTA to add to the library. Every submission increases the pool of experience that the ACUTA network has come to value as one of the top member services.
Guide to Distance Learning Available

The latest edition of the Oryx Guide to Distance Learning has been added to ACUTA's resource library. This year's edition describes some 4,200 distance learning courses offered by 430 accredited institutions in the U.S., including contact information, tuition, admission requirements, credits, and more. If you are interested in who's doing what via distance education, contact Kellie Bowman for details about this directory.

Internet Call Manager

The Internet Call Manager, developed by Canadian firm InfonterActive Inc., enables users to field incoming phone calls at the same time they're connected to the Internet, all on a single telephone line. If a user is online when a call comes in, a caller ID window appears on the screen. At that point, you can choose “answer,” which means disconnecting and picking up the phone. Or you can acknowledge the call with a message. You can also ignore it, or you can redirect it to another number. The cost? $5 per month. (From the Chronicle-Herald Mail-Star 7/30/97)

ACUTA Members Respond to Universal Service Requirements

By now, most ACUTA members are aware of the requirement for telecommunications carriers and "other providers of interstate telecommunications services for a fee" to contribute to the Universal Service Fund. The generally accepted interpretation of the FCC's Universal Service Order, issued May 8, is that colleges and universities that resell interstate telecommunications services to their students, sell prepaid calling cards, own pay phones, or receive other revenue from interstate telecom services are required to comply with this requirement.

The deadline for the initial filing of information with the FCC was September 1—in the midst of the opening of the new school year. We had only three-four weeks' notice of the deadline, which we learned about via members and staff checking the FCC's Web site.

The reason for creation of this new funding mechanism is unquestionably worthwhile: The provision of discounted telecom services to K-12 schools, public libraries, and rural health facilities is both commendable and necessary. Before this “requirement” took effect, many ACUTA members, both institutions and industry vendors, had been voluntarily assisting schools for years with the donation of equipment and services. Numerous universities have installed and operate networks that provide distance learning to K-12 schools; provide free Internet access to schools, libraries, and nonprofits; and generously contribute their time and expertise without reimbursement. Our corporate members have also donated millions of dollars of equipment and services.

However, the consensus of many attorneys knowledgeable in telecommunications law is that colleges and universities that resell telecom services for a fee are required to comply with the new rules.

ACUTA is currently working with the American Council on Education (ACE) and other higher education associations on a petition to request the FCC to reconsider these rules. However, any reconsideration will come after the September 1 deadline. In the meantime, we are recommending to member institutions that they become fully informed about the requirements, consult with their legal counsel, make a decision as to whether they are required under the current rules to file, and attempt to comply with the requirements.

We will keep members informed of any new developments, and will continue to provide information and assistance upon request.
Universal Service/Balanced Budget

According to *Telecommunications Report* (8/4, 8/11), one section of the budget bill requires the Treasury to "loan" $3 billion to the Universal Service Fund in fiscal year 2001. The fund managers then will repay the loan in fiscal year 2002. The loan, therefore, will appear as a deficit in FY 2001 and a surplus in FY 2002. This surplus will appear to offset expected budgetary shortfalls in FY 2002 and make the budget appear to be balanced. *Farnet's Washington Update* indicated that this is referred to by some as an interest-free loan to the telecommunications sector. The agreement would exempt the carriers from paying into the fund in 2001. The following year the carriers would have to repay the loan as well as make the usual contribution to the fund.

Several legislators are not happy with this part of the balanced budget act and have hopes that changes can and will be made later this year.

Bell Atlantic/NYNEX Merger

More than 15 months after this merger was first announced, final "conditional" approval was granted by the FCC. The merger of the two companies, a $25.6 billion transaction, was completed 8/14, just a few hours after FCC approval was granted. The new company, with about 40 million lines, is now the largest local telephone company in the U.S., second only to AT&T in the entire domestic telecom services industry. Quoting sources at the FCC, TR (8/18) says the conditions agreed upon "are intended to be a deterrent, discouraging future combinations between a large long distance carrier and a Bell company or even between two Bell companies."

Eighth Circuit and Interconnection

Under the headline "Eighth Circuit Strongly Rebukes FCC for Stepping into Intrastate Jurisdiction," TR (7/21) gave extensive coverage to court actions related to Common Carrier docket 96-98, often referred to as the interconnection order. Here are a few of the areas where the court did not agree with the FCC:

- Pricing provisions, including the proxy rates for interconnection and service resale
- The FCC's interpretation of the provision which allows new competitors to "pick and choose" individual provisions contained in interconnection agreements negotiated by others
- Provisions placing the burden of proof on small or rural LEC's to demonstrate that they should be exempt from interconnection mandates
- The requirement that interconnection agreements signed before the 1996 law's enactment be filed with state commissioners and that the terms of those agreements be made available to competitors
- The commentary portion of the order, which asserts that the FCC's regulations under section 251 are binding on states, even with respect to intrastate matters

FCC Chairman Hundt has indicated that the FCC will take the case to the Supreme Court.

Slamming

HR 2112, called the Telephone Slamming Prevention and Internet Connection Act, was introduced by a Representative when he discovered that his district office had been slammed. This bill would double the penalties for slamming, raising the maximum FCC penalty from $100,000 to $200,000. The bill would also close some of the enforcement loopholes that slammers have discovered. (TR, 7/14)
Update

Please submit “position available” information electronically to afuehrer@acuta.org or to ACUTA’s homepage: http://www.acuta.org. Descriptions are abbreviated in the newsletter.

Position Available: Telecommunications Administrator, Calvin College
Responsibilities: Manage & operate voice PBX plus provide leadership/direction for installation/maintenance of voice communications equipment and for installation/maintenance of voice, data, & cable TV infrastructure. Qualifications: 2-3 yrs exp. in telecom systems & installation; BS in Elec. Engineering or related; supervisory exp. preferred. To apply: Submit resume to Human Resources, Calvin College, 3201 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids MI 49546-4388; fax (616) 957-8550 or e-mail rmyers@calvin.edu

Position Available: Hospital Service Consultant, Indiana Univ. Purdue Univ. at Indianapolis
Responsibilities: Major interface between IU hospitals/Med School depts & Integrated Technologies service staff to facilitate system development & service. Analyze needs, participate in project planning, coordinate system implementation/ training, market svc., research & negotiate new svc. with vendors. Qualifications: Good verbal & communication skills; 3-5 years exp. in Telecom Customer Service. Recent cust. svc. exp. in electronic telecom system envmt to include system design/analysis, conversions & systems implementation, pref. hosp./med. environment. BA/BS; will consider combination of college work & direct, recent exp. To apply: Contact IPPUI Human Resource Admin., 620 N Union Dr.; Indianapolis, IN 46202-5167. Ph (317) 274-7617 fax (317) 274-5481. Position reference #212-97

2 Positions Available: Univ. of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey
(1) Telecommunications Help Desk: Responsibilities: Provide customer assistance related to telecommunications voice, data, and video teleconferencing. Handle multiple tasks and have good interpersonal skills. Qualifications: Min. 3 yrs exp. in telecommunications. Relevant experience may be substituted for a college degree on a year for year basis.
(2) Telecommunications Specialist: Provide coordination & support to University's customer community including moves/ adds/ changes of voice and data services within the University in conjunction with outside vendors & installation of devices. Qualifications: BA/BS + 2 yrs exp. in info systems or telecom. Strong customer-service orientation.
To apply for either position: Send resume & salary requirements to: Dawn Burton, Human Resources (ACUTA-JH) UMDNJ, 30 Bergen Street, Newark, NJ 07107-3000. E-mail burtonda@umdnj.edu; AA/EEO

2 Positions Available: Univ. of Missouri, Kansas City
(1) Telecommunications Network Engineer: Responsibilities: Plan, design, & implement telecommunications systems, upgrades, network expansions, & integration of new technology; administer & maintain telecom network facilities. Requires B.S. in Telecommunications, Computer Sci., Electrical Engineering or related area. Exp. in systems engineering & project mgmt. Min. RCDD, prefer LAN Specialist. To apply: Send cover letter & resume to Sheila Miller, UMKC, Human Resources, 226 Administrative Center, 5100 Rockhill Rd., Kansas City, MO 64110. EOI
(2) Sr. Telecommunication Technician: Responsibilities: Installation & maintenance of data & voice communications. Requires a H. S. diploma or equivalent. Four to five yrs exp. in installation, maintenance, & repair of telecom equipment. Will perform lead functions including ordering equipment, coordination of work & special projects. Apply in person: UMKC Human Resources, 5115 Oak, Suite 226, Kansas City, MO. EOI

Position Available: System Programmer, University of Vermont
Responsibilities: Applications programming in Unix/Ingres environment. Qualifications: Min. 2 years programming experience on Unix or WNT platform and coding proficiency in at least two of the following languages: C, C++, Foxpro, SQL. Relational database, LAN, and client-server experience are all plusses. To apply: Contact Bob Thigpen, Director, Telecommunications & Networking, Univ. of Vermont, 104 Southwick Hall, Burlington, VT 05405. E-mail: bob@telcom.uvm.edu. Phone 802/656-3337; fax 802/656-7895. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.