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UK Hosts Kentucky Internet Access

Randy Muench  
Dir. of Marketing & Finance, campusMCI

Challenge: How to provide a low-cost, comprehensive Internet access solution for a 15-campus university and community college system that could eventually serve the needs of telecommunications users throughout the state.

Solution: UK Online, which today enables Internet access statewide to anyone in Kentucky.

Gene Williams and Doyle Friskney, responsible for telecommunications services at the University of Kentucky and 14 community colleges spread throughout the commonwealth, faced a classic planning dilemma during late 1994.

As the top information systems and telecommunications administrators for the University, they recognized the surging statewide demand within the educational community for Internet access—both on and off campus. Because of the surge in Internet interest and the University's role as an educational leader for the state, they knew their plan would have to address the needs of academia, plus hundreds of regionally scattered agricultural extension service advisors and the elementary and high school systems in Kentucky.

Their plan had to provide Rolls Royce results on a Buick budget.

"The University of Kentucky and the community colleges couldn't buy enough modems and phone lines to serve everybody's needs," said Friskney, director of telecommunications and network systems. "We needed to develop an approach that provided high-quality statewide Internet access with little or no impact on our budget. We did some exploring, and found a partnering proposal that works."

The Kentucky idea asked service providers to consider the housing and maintenance of modems at educational institutions, thereby saving the bidding firms significant overhead costs. After sending requests for proposals to ten different companies, three came back with concepts that deserved a second look.

In discussions with MCI, Williams and Friskney discovered a solution that could be applied across the 15 campuses serving about 70,000 full-time students. The proposal included an avenue to expand Internet access to the commonwealth's K-12 systems, and anyone who operated a phone line in the state.

"It gives us virtually universal service; more than 85 percent of the state now has a local access number to the Internet," said Williams, vice president of information systems. "By the time this year is out, we will have 100 percent of the state.

"For some time we have provided Internet access to users on campus here in Lexington," added Williams, noting the escalating use of computers at home. "But what is unique about UK Online is that you can take that access with you."

The UK Online program is a vital ingredient in creation of a statewide information network. "For the first time, a community college student in Paducah can have access to UK resources without

Continued on page 8
Welcome
New Members

February, 1996

Corporate Affiliates
Copper Level

Top Ten Reasons
for Attending the
ACUTA Spring
Seminar in
Seattle:

1. The Pacific Northwest is lovely in the Spring.
2. Hotel accommodations are especially nice. (Did you book a room, didn't you?)
3. Entertainment on Monday night will be lots of fun.
4. You need to get away from your office for a fresh perspective.
5. You'll meet new people from across the continent.
6. You'll enjoy seeing old friends and colleagues.
7. Great info available from some 20 companies in the Exhibit Hall.
8. Presentations by your peers will motivate and challenge you.
9. Our featured speaker will enlighten and inspire you. Remember: Just one great idea could result in savings that far exceed the cost of your trip!
10. Networking, networking, networking!

For more details, access our homepage: http://www.acuta.org or contact Kellie Bowman at ACUTA (606) 278-3338.
Confused, Concerned & Inquiring

Has the adoption of recent telecommunications legislation got you confused, concerned and inquiring? You're not alone. The Telecommunication Act of 1996 is arguably one of the most comprehensive bits of legislation to come down the road in this industry. It has direct implications for consumers, providers, and regulators of telecommunications services as well as the courts.

The axis upon which this legislation turns is that of competition. The number of local exchange service providers should grow as a result of the greater standardization for competitive entry to these market places; e.g., AT&T has recently announced its intentions to integrate local services into its existing long distance offerings within all fifty states.

The number of video service providers should expand as a result of the deregulated rates and the ability for telephone companies to enter this market place. A number of the over-priced video monopolies may now want to rethink carefully their market strategies. And within a series of parameters the number of firms capable of providing regional long distance services should increase; e.g., an east coast MCI subsidiary recently claimed to be the first long distance company to have offered local service.

In addition to encouraging increased competition to the ultimate benefit of the consumer, the new law provides a number of consumer safeguards. These safeguards are generally prohibitions requiring affiliate separations for fixed periods of time that may be extended by the FCC. In short, these are to limit monopolies until market competition can be established.

Collocated, however, within the encouragement for competition and consumer safeguards are a number of ominous shadows not only for the consumer but for providers, regulators, and the courts. Within the act lies the definition of a telecommunications carrier and its implications for FCC and state regulatory action. This should be of interest to all of us who, within the confines of our institutions, must provide telecommunications related services. The issue of universal service, its definition and the resulting contributions requirements are truly unclear for those of us managing private networks and leasing excess capacity to alternate university consumers in the normally quiet off hours. Watch for further state and federal regulatory clarification in these areas.

The issue that will undoubtedly log the greatest time for discussion, debate, and litigation however, is that of "indecent" and "patently offensive" materials. The Communications Decency Act signed into law in February imposes stiff fines and strict prison terms for transmitting such materials in ways that children can find it on the Internet. This bit of legislation has found itself challenged by strong, experienced, and well organized opposition. Federal courts will not quickly purge themselves of this one.

In summary, although recent telecommunications legislation has provided incentive and opportunity for greater competition across the industry, it has also put forth a greater demand for additional regulatory clarity and purview as well as for the need for us all to keep our eyes and ears open.

'til next month . . . . .

President's Message

Dave O’Neill
Washington State University
ACUTA President

Major Provisions of Recent Telecom Legislation

- Provides for an interconnection duty between all telecommunications carriers.
- Removes any state or local “barriers to entry” to the inter- or intraLATA markets which “may prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting the ability of any entity to provide any… telecommunications service.”
- Defines universal service principles on which the FCC will base a new definition of universal service, and provides for the periodic review of those definitions to maintain their relevance.
- Opens the local exchange to competition between incumbent carriers and new market entrants.
- Defines a set of conditions for local exchange carrier entry into the long distance market place.
- Mandates separate subsidiaries for RBOC manufacturing activities, RBOC interLATA information services, and the origination of RBOC interLATA telecommunications services.
- Deregulates cable rates and provides guidelines for local exchange provision of cable and video services.

A complete copy of the legislation is available on the Internet at http://www.bell.com.

Source: NASTD Gateway February 1996
Seeking a Wireless Solution for the State of Missouri

The following is a condensed version of the presentation given at ACUTA’s Winter Seminar in Phoenix by Gail Wekenborg and Gwen Fletcher, State of Missouri—Office of Administration, and Jim Lundsted, Missouri State Highway Patrol.

Imagine a campus which spans more than 69,600 square miles. On this campus, you are tasked with implementing wireless communications coverage. In your preliminary planning, you discover you need both mobile and portable communications, and you will need portable wireless data connectivity.

Upon closer examination, you find you will have to provide coverage for a large area of relatively flat terrain, but you also have extensive areas of hills and hundreds of miles of coverage in areas more “geographically challenged”—river bottoms, lakes, streams, and even major metropolitan areas. In-building coverage is said to be essential by some, and of less importance to others.

We faced these access issues and more as we implemented fiber/copper in campus buildings; now we will revisit them as we implement wireless coverage.

Access is not the only issue

A significant consideration as you plan your campus-wide wireless network is the need to interact with other units of local, county, state, or federal government. You may not immediately think you will need to, but consider how your public safety staff (fire, police, security, emergency medical)—or your state/federal civil preparedness agency—might respond to this need.

One of the great failures in planning communications—radio system interoperability—has been at the federal level. But at the state level, we see a need for improvement as well. A few years ago, Missouri State Highway Patrol was criticized for deploying one of our helicopters to assist local law enforcement in Fulton, where we were searching for an escapee from a state hospital for the criminally insane. Asked to assist by the local police, we dispatched Patrol road officers as well as two of our aircraft. Fulton, home of Westminster and William Woods Colleges, is home also to the State Hospital. Even though the Patrol’s own radio network was in fine shape, Fulton’s personnel could not communicate directly with our aircraft or personnel. Working together effectively would have made this operation much less frustrating and dangerous.

Without dwelling on history, I will say we haven’t progressed as far as we’d like. Drive by five of our ten troop headquarters and you’ll still find one of those four-sided AM broadcast towers. We’ve moved to FM and up in frequency to 42 MHz, but the basic radio infrastructure still is the backbone of our network today.

Our current facility-sharing arrangement permits agencies reciprocal priority to share tower space, including buildings, power, etc., on a coequal basis. We are unable to share space in many cases with other governmental entities, and occasionally with a “for profit” business opportunity, as we are holding available space for our own needs: additional transmitters, antennas, etc., and possible use by our sister agencies.

We called in a consultant

We asked our radio system consultant to perform a few basic tasks, including a review of the state’s existing radio communications systems and facilities. We allowed them to conduct a general assessment to consider how our existing infrastructure and operating systems would be impacted by the development of a new wireless network. They reported three basic findings:

1. Existing systems have few useful facilities, other than some sites which would be ideal for erection of a new tower. Most are old, have only a fair grounding system, and lack structural capacity for any significant number of antennas and microwave antennas.

Many agencies created in the last decade need mobile radio—voice dispatch coverage. No statewide channels exist to serve these agencies, who often come to the Patrol and Highway Dept. begging to “share the network.” Given our current channel loading, we can’t accommodate such needs. These same agencies often turn to cellular telephones, at a considerable cost disadvantage over using a simple radio network.

2. There is general need among state agencies for wireless communications coverage. Those who do not have this service want/need it, and many have already chosen to acquire cellular telephone services, since a statewide system is not available.

3. There seems to be a consensus that all agencies can benefit from using a common wireless network. However, many want to reserve judgment before “buying into” the concept. They want to be able to use the network services when they need them, and they want the services priced correctly. They also do not want to be forced to use such a network, nor do they desire to have to fund capital expenditures from their current, typically dedicated funding.

The consultants’ network concept

- VHF band. Operating on frequencies between 136–174 MHz
- Coverage designed around use of portable radios
- Channels available (TBD) per “exclusive use overlay”
- Digital architecture using Time Domain Multiple Access (TDMA)
- Trunking
- Redundant controllers (dual)
- Telephone interconnect and paging overlay
- Additional “bandwidth on demand” for data applications
- Backbone to interconnect sites: microwave system, loop diversity (multiple routes), space diversity (simultaneous path design), high reliability, high bandwidth with heavy use of spread spectrum microwave service to spur location towers and dispatch centers, off the central loops.

Our consultant’s recommendation was for a system estimated—rather conservatively—at about $250M. This total included 230 tower sites, 7,800 mobile radios, 6,300 portable radios, 2,200 mobile data terminals, 1,500 automatic vehicle location (AVL) sets, and more.

See Wireless Solution... on page 8
Telecommunications Legislation

By now everyone must have heard that the both the House and the Senate passed the Telecommunications Act of 1996. This legislation has been in the works for the last two or three years or more. Only five Senators and sixteen Representatives voted against the final bill according to Telecommunications Reports (2/5/96). The President has signed the Act so we are all now living under the new law. It will take some time before we find out what impact the law will have on College and University Telecom Services.

ACUTA Regulatory and Legislative Affairs Committee members expressed concern about the law during their February conference call. Some members had already been approached by vendors with great new options for everything and nice long contracts that would solve all of their problems for years to come. It did not sound like anyone on the call was very impressed with what they had seen and heard. Most likely all ACUTA members have, by now, been approached and are wondering what will be best to do in the long run.

The February 10, 1996 issue of 411 has a list of interesting questions that were posed to a small group of telecom lawyers and consultants. These include things like “Will prices drop for long distance and local service?” Most responses seem to indicate that they will drop in some areas of the business but not in others. However, some LECs have announced price increases for local service since the bill became a law.

Another question was “How can managers take full advantage of upcoming price breaks?” The response would indicate that ACUTA members will have to be very careful in their evaluation of the many offers they will have for consideration. One consultant advised against signing any deal with a term of more than one year. Other advice given in response to questions includes comments like:

- Don’t sign an exclusive agreement right now...
- Don’t use the contract they hand you. Add language that protects your institution in the long run. Make sure you can get out of the agreement if service gets bad. Get vendors to agree, in writing, to continue to be as price competitive as they were when you signed the agreement; in other words, if competition gets tough and prices generally go down in a given service area, your vendor must respond accordingly.

The Regulatory and Legislative Affairs Committee has developed some questions that will be sent to telecom legal expert Jeffrey S. Linder concerning the way the Act will affect ACUTA members and their institutions. We hope to get this information out to the members in the not too distant future.

The questions we raise today are going to be different from what we will need answers to tomorrow. Our jobs could get rather interesting, very frustrating and may possibly change considerably during the next two or three years while we find out what the Telecommunications Act of 1996 is actually about.

Slamming

The FCC has found five IXCs “apparently liable” for incidents of slamming. Penalties range from $40,000 to $80,000. The FCC is trying to stop this practice, and that will help everyone.

ACUTA Has Resources to Help You Succeed!

Kellie Bowman
ACUTA Membership Development Mgr.

In an age of rapid technological change and a job market characterized by fierce competition, quality management has become more than just another catch phrase. Gone are the days when a high school diploma or college degree marked the end of the formal learning process for successful people. We must continually seek to enhance those skills necessary to improve our personal performance and efficiency, increasing our ability to set and achieve realistic goals for ourselves and our departments.

For 25 years, telecom professionals have turned to ACUTA for a solid support system that includes meaningful continuing education and an established network of contacts. Always striving to respond to member needs, ACUTA allocates nearly 45% of the total yearly budget to education, and that figure doesn’t include publications or communications costs.

At our three seminars each year we offer in-depth coverage of issues important to campus telecommunications such as PBX Technologies, Student Services, and Campus Infrastructure. At our annual conference, a host of professional speakers, industry leaders, and campus telecom professionals describe issues critical to the day-to-day as well as long-term success of your department.

In addition to these four events, ACUTA now offers an on-line resource that makes our network even more valuable. With the establishment of the telecom list serve and the legislative/regulatory list serve, you can have instant access to other high-level telecom administrators. When you need information about an application, new technology, security issue, or more, go on-line and you’ll find solutions from people who truly understand the challenges you face.

ACUTA is committed to your success—to enabling you not only to survive, but to excel at quality management. Any time we can be of service to you, we hope you’ll contact us at (606) 278-3338.

DC at a glance

Whitney Johnson
(Retired)
Northern Michigan University

Whitney Johnson
Disaster Recovery: Do You Have a Plan?

Jack Wiles
Director of Information Security,
Oltronics Telecommunications Services, Inc.

If you’ve ever been in the middle of a disaster, you know it isn’t an experience you want to repeat. Just a little planning will help you be prepared before you find yourself trying to recover.

Be Aware, or Beware

The trick is not letting any type of disaster catch you by surprise. You need to be aware of the things that cause disasters: fire, water, security, and more. If you can pre-think the outcome of the most likely disaster, your chances for survival increase. Even if your building or computer room goes away, you should be able to recover if you are prepared.

Disasters are not very predictable. The bombing of the World Trade Center in New York a few years ago was a good example. Hundreds of businesses were impacted by that disaster. Some were literally blown away by the blast. Others were closed for weeks, unable to get in or even near the World Trade Center.

Witnessing today’s disasters, we see the smoke and flames still flying as the stories come into our homes within minutes, or at most hours, via television and other media. We need to learn from these experiences and ask ourselves if our business or office could have recovered. Follow-up stories about the World Trade Center indicated that most businesses that were not prepared for a disaster of that magnitude were out of business in less than a year. Others who did not have an off-site copy of their critical databases and applications were never able to re-open their doors. A few dollars’ worth of mylar tape could have held all of their information safely, ready to be reloaded into a hot site miles from the disaster.

Companies that had preplanned and had copies of their software waiting at a pre-arranged hot-site barely skipped a beat. The entire ordeal wasn’t any more difficult than the recovery drills they had performed to test their plan. Their brick houses stood the test. Would yours?

Don’t be embarrassed if you are reading this and you don’t have a Disaster Recovery Plan. You are still a member of the majority. Thinking about disasters and developing a recovery plan is something most of us haven’t yet considered, or something we plan to start tomorrow.

Over the past few years, the number of companies offering either data center hot-sites, or off-site data storage has increased. Many companies throughout the country now offer these services. Maybe now is a good time to contact several of them in your area and tour their facility.

Start Now!

Whatever you decide to do about disaster recovery planning, start today. Some of the saddest “war stories” that I hear today are ones describing the total despair and frustration that come in the wake of devastation. You owe it to yourself and your employees to make sure this never happens to you.

Jack Wiles is ACUTA Corporate Affiliate rep at Oltronics Telecommunications Services, Inc. Phone (803) 328-2753; e-mail: jwiles@interpath.com

ACUTA Events Calendar

Spring Seminar
March 31–April 3
Seattle, WA
Topic: PBX Technology

25th Annual Conference
July 14–18
Chicago, IL

Fall Seminars
October 27–30
Alexandria, VA
Topic: Desktop Video

Winter Seminars
January 19–22, 1997
Ponte Vedra Beach, FL
Topic: TBA

Book Review

Perspectives on Leadership in Facilities Management
Charles W. Jenkins, Editor
Assoc. of Higher Education Facilities Officers, Publisher, 1446 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314-3492
Published 1995. 127 pages.

Perspectives on Leadership in Facilities Management is a compilation of articles and addresses concerning leadership in higher education. The book focuses on how facility managers should and must view themselves as leaders and not just managers of departments who react to problems. Colleges and universities are on the cutting edge of change and this brings many new challenges and a different focus to facility managers and the jobs they perform.

As telecommunications managers, we are also faced with high speed changes that are taking place on our campuses which impact our profession and how we must view our positions. This book gives insight into how we can become more effective leaders by associating with others in our field, becoming visionaries rather than reactionaries and how we can help our institutions along the path of inevitable change.

Chapters include: Visionary Leadership—Creating a New Tomorrow; Some Thoughts on Leadership; Power, Influence, and Survival in Difficult Times; Productivity Improvement Means Being Mission Driven; and A Call to Servant Leadership.

Our campuses are changing too quickly for us to just go with the flow. We owe it to our institutions to learn how we can become better leaders and help make our best contributions to our college or university. I believe that the membership of ACUTA would benefit from reading this book.

Reviewed by: Christopher V. Freitag
Coord., Facilities Mgmt. Technical Svcs., Western New England College
ACUTA Electronic Access Update

Telecom and Legreg Listserves

Aaron Fuehrer
ACUTA Computer Services Manager

Do you ever wonder how another ACUTA member school might handle a particular problem, or wish you had instant access to other members to give you feedback on a difficult issue? By subscribing to ACUTA's listserves you can have this and more. Since our January announcement of ACUTA's two listserves, 151 members have participated in the Telecom listserve, and 101 in the Legreg listserve. In the first two months of operation, more than 15 different topics have been discussed in the Telecom listserve including:

- Call Accounting
- Emergency Phones
- Modern Use
- Voice Mail Lists
- Charge-Back
- 500 Numbers
- Internet Phone

The Legreg listserve has included discussions on 888 numbers and the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

To subscribe to either of the listserves, send an e-mail message to MAJORDOMO@ACUTA.ORG. In the body of the message, type either of the following: subscribe telecom or subscribe legreg. Do not put anything in the subject line, and if possible, turn off the signature line if you use one in your e-mail messages.

Once a subscribe request is received, Majordomo will send you an e-mail message to let you know that your request has been received and is waiting to be approved by the listserv manager (Aaron Fuehrer). Because the listserves are for ACUTA members only, each subscribe request must be verified before a user is subscribed. After approval, Majordomo will send you a welcome message via e-mail along with information about the listserv and guidelines for proper use.

To send mail to the listserv once you have subscribed to it, use one of the following addresses:

LEGREG@ACUTA.ORG or TELECOM@ACUTA.ORG. You may unsubscribe at anytime from either listserv by sending a message to MAJORDOMO@ACUTA.ORG. In the body of the message type unsubscribe telecom or unsubscribe legreg depending on the listserv you want to unsubscribe from. Again, leave the subject line blank and, if possible, eliminate any signature line that may appear at the bottom of your e-mail message.

Questions or comments about ACUTA's listserves should be directed to AFUEHRER@ACUTA.ORG or call (606) 278-3338.

ACUTA Web Page

There is now an easy way to search for information contained in ACUTA's web page. A search engine has been installed to allow keyword or concept searches on any HTML document. You can access the search engine directly off the home page (http://www.acuta.org) by clicking on the "Search Engine" option from the menu. For example, searching by a keyword such as "ISDN" may locate references in the ACUTA News, an upcoming seminar, or a reference on the Legislation & Regulation section of the homepage. Results of your search are listed by the degree of confidence in matching your search criteria. References highlighted in red on the list produced by the search will be the best possible match for locating your information.

Something else new to the web page is a listing and order form for the Resource Library. From the home page at http://www.acuta.org click on the "Resource Library" option from the menu. This will bring up a listing with check boxes along the left hand side for you to make your selections. Once the form is complete, click on the submit button and your request is e-mailed to ACUTA staff for processing. Abstracts of the individual resource materials will be available soon to make your selections even easier.

Lastly, don't forget that up-to-date conference and seminar information can be found at http://www.acuta.org/html/meeting.html Full information, including a registration form for the Spring 1996 Seminar in Seattle, Washington, is located at that address. Information about the 25th Annual Conference will be added as it becomes available.

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Listening in on the Listserv

If you haven't tried ACUTA's new listserv yet, here's a sample of what you've missed:

Q Has anyone changed from one major carrier to another for operator services during the last year or so? I've opened bids for operator services and am trying to determine what the "dial-around" situation might be if I select a carrier based only on the commission percentage that each one stipulated in their bid.

A I suffered through the same quandry about two years ago. I tried to analyze the expected commission revenue and the impact of dial-around based on each carrier's market share. If some little-known carrier offered an astounding 65% commission on less than 1% market share, there wouldn't be much commission income. I reasoned that folks would use the same carrier for operator services calls as they did for 1+ calls at home. That rationale was challenged—in hindsight, correctly—by one of the major carriers.

We were essentially at the mercy of the carriers in trying to determine the expected revenue stream when I stumbled upon an idea. Instead of putting the burden on myself to figure out what the commission revenue stream would be, I required the carriers (in an RFP) to guarantee a minimum annual commission. If we met the minimum traffic level to justify the minimum commission during the year, commissions would continue to accrue at a stated percentage rate. As long as we got our minimum commission, dial-around was not an issue. In short, we asked them to take the risk.

After all, they do this stuff all the time, and probably have far better statistics on actual usage than we do. It resulted in an incredibly lucrative contract.

ACUTA has a copy of the RFP (ACUTA doc#ASD0017).—Terry Robb, Univ. of Missouri, Columbia.
UK Online...
Continued from page 1

having to drive to Lexington," Friskney said. "And for a Kentucky resident with a PC or Mac in the family room, this is the first step in creating the digital library to the home."

Coinciding with the September 1995 advent of UK Online is the construction in Lexington of a new $58 million university library designed to provide Kentuckians with digital access to vast stores of knowledge. The library is due for completion in the spring of 1997.

Even before the library opens, many features of the UK Online program have already created great value for the higher education system and the state's other Internet users:

- The University bears no cost. In fact, UK picks up 50 cents per month from subscriber fees for modem maintenance.
- Subscribers get $12 per month user pricing for 60 hours of e-mail and full Internet access. This is available statewide and replaces an initial two-tier pricing system.
- More than 1,000 modems are interspersed throughout the state. This largely removed the need for rural e-mail and Internet users to dial long distance. The MCI contract also guarantees a P.01 grade of service. "That eventually could call for a lot of modems," Williams noted.
- Capability for 28,800 bps connections is available statewide.

Wireless Solution...
Continued from page 4

Presently, we are engaged in developing a Request for Information and will conduct a second concept conference. Since the findings and final recommendation were solely focused on a state-owned and maintained system, our agency principals have asked the Technical Committee to more closely examine the possibility of outsourcing the network.

Recognizing that Missouri has enjoyed success for years in outsourcing significant portions of our telecom network, we are now investigating whether there are other alternatives to our having a wholly state-owned wireless network.

Lastly, we want and need to include our state colleges and universities in our design considerations. The current system or planned purchases by Southwest Missouri State and Univ. of Missouri KC and Columbia will be significant network considerations in our future statewide system. We hope to "do it together," for as we approach the next century, we must work together to be cost effective and efficient to fulfill our duty to our customers—the taxpayers!

Spotlight

Welcome to ACUTA's most recent Corporate Affiliate Members:

Copper Level
Bellcore provides business solutions based on communications software & consulting services, making information technology work worldwide. By listening to ACUTA members, we help provide functionality by proposing enhancements to the telephone companies that support your systems. Dave Wirth, 908/699-2898.

Fujitsu Business Communication Systems, Inc. develops, manufactures, services, & supports a complete line of communication equipment such as the PX600 PBX, videoconferencing systems, & CTI applications supporting the needs of the higher education marketplace. Christin Keebler, 612/373-6567.

The Light Brigade, a fiber optic training company based in Kent, Washington, is establishing partnerships with training facilities nationally using distance learning, custom courses, and training materials. Larry Johnson, President, 206/251-1240.

Thanks to the following Corporate Affiliates for continued support.

Silver Level

Anixter International, Inc. is a value-added provider of integrated networking and structured cabling solutions for data, voice, video & multimedia conferencing applications, emphasizing the "total solution" approach.

Bell Atlantic provides voice, data, video, & multimedia networking solutions to meet the changing needs of colleges & universities. To connect classrooms or communities, Bell Atlantic can provide infrastructure design, LAN/WAN integration, distance learning, and more to position you for the future.

Consolidated Communications Inc. is a diversified, 100-year-old, family-owned company offering innovative telecommunications solutions to the higher education community. CCI has been an ACUTA supporter for four years.
Stanford Opens New Flexible Class-Lab

Stanford University Libraries and Academic Information Resources (SUL/AIR) has announced the opening of the Flexible Class-Lab, a new classroom/working space which enables use of computers with many types of instruction, and simplifies use of networking technologies, e-mail, and multimedia. The space was designed by curriculum and academic technology experts at Stanford, who set up different lighting zones and eliminated the machine-related noise that makes discussion difficult in traditional computer classrooms. A back-lit projection system switches quickly from computer screen projection to video sources to SUNet TV. Contact: Charles Kerns, head of Curriculum Development Lab, charles.kerns@leland.stanford.edu

Jan Thomson is Stanford's ACUTA rep.

Teaching and Technology

As described in The Chronicle of Higher Education (1/26/96), the use of technology for instruction has increased impressively within the past year. Results of an annual survey conducted by Kenneth C. Green, a visiting scholar at the Claremont Graduate School, indicate that “the use of technology for teaching is finally spreading beyond computer enthusiasts to professors in the mainstream who have become persuaded that high-tech tools enhance their teaching.” Based on 650 responses, the survey concludes that 24 per cent of classes were being held in computer-equipped classrooms, up from 15.8 per cent a year ago. It also found that 20 per cent of courses were using e-mail, up from 8 per cent one year ago. “Following several decades of great aspirations and more than a dozen years of significant institutional investments, information technology has emerged as a permanent, respected, and increasingly essential component of the college experience,” says Green.

Skidmore Plans to Increase Technology Awareness

Skidmore College in New York offered a week-long Administrative Users Institute earlier this month to increase awareness among non-academic users of available technologies and their application to the administrative work environment. Participants attended sessions on surfing the Net, using the Web in administrative offices, managing e-mail, basic HTML, and using the Web as a resource for administrative database information. Contact: Dave Maswick, training and documentation coordinator, dmaswick@skidmore.edu

ACUTA rep at Skidmore is Timothy Casey.

Univ. of Denver Students Help Others Move Online

Residential Computer Consultants (RCCs) help students living on the University of Denver campus connect to the Internet. Under the year-old program, students who have been trained by Computing and Information Resources staff show others how to take advantage of fiber optic cabling in the residence halls, install Ethernet cards and software, and answer questions. RCCs, who live in the residence halls they support, installed more Internet connections in the first three weeks of this school year than in all of last year. [DU Buffer, Nov/Dec 1995]

Larry Hammond is ACUTA rep at Univ. of Denver.

Central Michigan Univ. Provides Internet Training for Detroit Teachers

Teams of Detroit-area teachers are receiving training in the use of the Internet through a Central Michigan University project funded by a $246,000 grant from Ameritech. Training sessions are conducted by CMU staff at the University's newly expanded regional office in Troy, Michigan. The teams return to their home schools to train other teachers.

CMU's ACUTA rep is Kenneth Johnson.

West Chester Univ. Offers Electronic Administration

West Chester University of Pennsylvania, with an enrollment of over 11,000, has developed a network of 20 application servers connecting over 1,000 faculty and staff workstations, classrooms, many student work areas, and nine dorms. Taking advantage of the widespread technology and Windows for Workgroups software, faculty have developed prototype courses in which all papers and other assignments are handled entirely via e-mail, with all-electronic exams, attendance and grade spreadsheets based on electronic class lists. Contact: Adel Barimani, 215/436-3476, abarimani@wcupa.edu

West Chester's ACUTA rep is Terrence Stratton.

Thanks to CAUSE's electronically delivered Campus Watch for some of the information on this page.
Virtual University in 1997

As reported in The Chronicle of Higher Education (2/16/96), the Western Governors' Association, led by Colorado Gov. Roy Romer and Utah Gov. Mike Leavitt, are pulling together plans for a “virtual university” and now say they expect to begin admitting students by the summer of 1997. The Education Management Group, a subsidiary of Simon & Schuster, has donated $150,000 to the planning effort.

Visually impaired to get WWW access

Internet software vendor Productivity Works [http://www.prodworks.com/] in Trenton, New Jersey, has unveiled a browser that talks to the user to help the visually impaired get World Wide Web access. Called pwWebSpeak, the browser translates information content from Web pages into speech. The browser also creates large character interpretations of Web pages for partially sighted users. There are 27 million visually impaired individuals in the United States and Europe, according to Productivity Works. The company will begin beta testing pwWebSpeak in March, and plans to make the browser available in April for free. The company is asking for a $100 maintenance fee, but will waive the cost if needed, according to officials. Productivity Works was assisted in developing the browser by De Witt and Associates interface consultants and the Thomas Edison State College.

E-mail Switchboard

According to Information Week (2/12/96), Banyan Systems is offering a new service on the Web—a directory of e-mail addresses and other information for 93 million people and 11 million businesses worldwide. The switchboard includes a feature similar to Caller ID, that alerts a listed person whenever someone asks for that person's address, and permits them to decide whether to allow that information to be given out. The service also features public key certificates for secure communications between users. http://www.switchboard.com

Courses Online

From The Wall Street Journal (2/24/96): University Online, a small Internet publisher that licenses 200 ready-made high school and college courses, is working with George Washington and George Mason Universities to create tutorials and more online courses at the higher education level, and is seeking more universities for similar alliances. The company's president is working with textbook publishers to obtain the electronic rights to their materials, and will then pay the publishers' royalties and split the tuition with the universities that license its products.
In last month's column, I discussed the expansion of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award to include an Education pilot project. An important aspect of quality management is benchmarking to determine best practices in a particular field. Higher education is no exception.

ACUTA members frequently participate in informal benchmarking with their colleagues. At every Seminar and Conference, and now through our electronic list serves, telecommunications managers are comparing their operations and seeking new and better ways of serving their institutions' communications needs. However, until now there has not been a formal benchmarking process in place for ACUTA members.

This month, ACUTA received an invitation to join The National Benchmarking Council for Higher Education. This organization is being formed to coordinate the benchmarking efforts of professional associations representing different operational areas in higher education. It grew out of the benchmarking program started by NACUBO five years ago, and will expand on that program by incorporating the resources and expertise of ACUTA and other associations.

Recognizing that operational departments on college campuses are increasingly required to work together to achieve the institution's strategic goals, this cooperative benchmarking effort will promote communication among the various management disciplines. ACUTA is pleased to have been invited to participate with our higher education management colleagues in this important effort, and we will keep you informed as the project develops.

After an enthusiastic reception by ACUTA members, our new list serves are gaining rapidly in subscribership and usage. Nearly 300 members have now signed up for the two lists (telecommunications and legislative/regulatory affairs). Members are enjoying lively electronic conversation and getting advice on a broad range of topics, from student resale to pay phones, voice mail administration, cable TV, telecom reform legislation, and many more topics.

If you have e-mail access, I would encourage you to subscribe. It's simple, and Aaron Fuehrer, our Computer Resources Manager, will walk you through the process. Just call Aaron at the ACUTA office or e-mail him at afuehrer@acuta.org to ask for help in subscribing. (See also Aaron's article on page 7.)

I hope to see you in beautiful Seattle, the "Emerald City," for the Spring Seminar on PBX technologies!

Directory Corrections

Please note these corrections to your 1995–96 Membership Directory:


- Rob Robinson, UT Austin, is now Telecom Services Mgr., ph 512/471-5714; e-mail robinr@mail.utexas.edu

- Larry Hammond, Telecom Specialist, replaces Holly Hrdlicka at Univ. of Denver. Ph 303/871-4688; fax 303/871-3839

- Sherry Abou, Mgr., Telecom Services Div., replaces Dolores Hendricks at Charles Drew Univ. of Med. & Sci., ph. 213/563-5800


- Sunbelt Business Computers has a new name: Telesoft Corp.

- Michael Bales replaces Chris Leja at Illinois Benedictine College, ph 708/829-6681, fax 708/960-1126. E-mail mbales@eagle.ibc.edu

- New info for Ivalee Clark, Telephone Services Mgr. at Calif State/San Marcos: ph 619/750-4530, fax 619/750-3010

- New info for Darci O'Connell, Hamline Univ.: fax 612/641-2027; e-mail docornell@seq.hamline.edu

- Brent Sutton, BellSouth, has a new phone: 919/968-7501. E-mail brent.sutton1@bridge.bst.bls.com

- Jim VanNoy, Mgr. Networking & Telecom, replaces Richard Gell at Millsaps College. Ph 601/974-1113, fax 601/974-1168. E-mail vannoje@okra.millsaps.edu
Editor's Notes...

For those of you who like to philosophize and have an inclination to put your thoughts on paper, here's an opportunity to win $$$! O'Reilly & Associates will publish winners of a $5,000 writing contest called "Spider or Fly?" dealing with the general question: "Are we masters of the Web or trapped in it?" and the relationships between technology and human consequences. For more info: http://www.ora.com/staff/stevet/netfuture/ ...I also recently discovered this interesting Web site: The Why Files, a project of the National Institute for Science Education funded by the National Science Foundation, is an electronic exploration of the science, math, and technology behind the headline news. Recent topics included organ transplants from animals to humans, monarch butterfly migrations, a neutrino detector at the South Pole, and the relationship between a low-fat diet and macular degeneration. Access the Why Files at URL: http://whyfiles.news.wisc.edu ...According to the New York Times (2/25/96), the Internal Revenue Service is getting good reviews for its new Web site, http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/prod/cover.html. An IRS executive says: "The IRS is actually getting fan mail. We're not used to that." ...PLEASE send me your campus news! Pat Scott, (606)278-3338; e-mail pscott@acuta.org.

Position Available?
Don't forget—As an ACUTA member, you may advertise telecom positions in the newsletter and on the ACUTA Homepage at no charge.
Fax job postings to ACUTA at 606/278-3268, or e-mail pscott@acuta.org.

Congrats...
...to Dave O'Neill, presently with Washington State Univ., who will assume the position of Director of University Computing and Telecommunications at Eastern Washington Univ. March 16.
...to Randy Collett, formerly with Central Missouri State Univ., who recently accepted the position of Market Manager, New Product Business Development, at Sprint.
...to Dave Wirth, formerly with Adelphi University, who has joined Bellcore as System Engineer.

Silver Anniversary Celebration

Plan now to attend ACUTA's 25th Annual Conference & Exposition July 14-18 in Chicago. In addition to educational sessions, outstanding exhibits, networking opportunities, and featured speakers, the event will include a spectacular banquet in celebration of our Silver Anniversary.
We’re Looking for User Group Coordinators

User Groups
ACUTA Annual Conference
Wednesday, July 17
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Is there a vendor, product, or service for which you’d like a User Group session established?

Last year, the User Groups were expanded beyond the traditional PBX suppliers to include any vendor/product/service that ACUTA members were interested in sponsoring. We had voice mail providers and software management vendors as well as several PBX manufacturers.

The ACUTA User Groups are meant to enhance—not supplant—the efforts of any official vendor-affiliated user group. ACUTA merely provides a forum to allow college/university clients to discuss interests unique to the educational market with their key vendors/suppliers.

This year we have rooms available for ten different User Groups. Any ACUTA member interested in coordinating one of the User Groups can request one of the rooms. All that is required is that you have a vendor representative committed to participate with you and colleagues who have a common interest in the product or service to be addressed in the User Group. As in the past, these sessions are intended only for those who have these suppliers’ equipment/services installed on their campuses or have signed a contract for their procurement. Likewise, these sessions are closed to participation by other vendors.

We expect heavy demand for these ten rooms. They will be assigned on a first-come/first-served basis.

If you’re interested in coordinating a User Group session or have questions, Contact Corinne Hoch at Columbia University
Phone 212/854-2897 • E-mail hoch@columbia.edu

25th Annual Conference
July 14–18, 1996
Chicago Hilton & Towers
Chicago, Illinois