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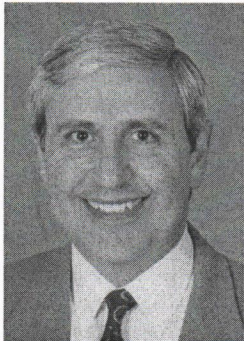
From the President

Carmine Piscopo, RCDD
Providence College

VoIP Is Coming; Want to Know More?

I'm writing this from the ACUTA Summit on IP Communications in Higher Education in Baltimore. This event has been a departure from traditional ACUTA seminars as it focused on a single topic—IP communications—and presentations have been almost entirely in a panel format that covered issues related to the technology, people, legislation/regulation, and applications that are driving the move to IP technology. It even included live demonstrations by several vendors where we could see in person what we have been reading about.

Attendance has been even higher than anticipated, and there has been a lot of energy as attendees are eager to learn some of the latest in IP technologies and are hungry for tips on how to deploy the technology with the least amount of pain and suffering.

What has surprised me the most is that many attendees have either not deployed this technology at all or have done so only on a trial basis within their IT departments. For me personally, I have spent most of my career in the tried and true TDM technology world on traditional PBXs and Centrexes that worked well, networks that were cost efficient and extremely reliable, and campuses that were well-cabled. At this stage of my career, the thought of trusting my system, equipment, and reputation to a technology that was unfamiliar to me has been daunting, to say the least.

Yet like many attendees, I have come to realize that the time is coming—and soon—that I will have to take the IP plunge. So this event has been a great opportunity to get familiar with the technology and to take comfort in the fact that not only am I not alone in my apprehension, but when VoIP comes to my campus, I can definitely count on the great contacts I have made with fellow institutional members and vendors through ACUTA.

If you did attend, I think you'll agree that you did a great service to your institution and career. If you didn't attend, I strongly urge you to watch for future events from ACUTA that will focus on the growth of IP as well as other technologies of interest to you. Check the ACUTA website (www.acuta.org) today for VoIP and other important topics that will be featured at the Annual Conference, July 29-August 2.

In This Issue

Nominate for ACUTA Ruth A. Michalecki Award Now

The ACUTA Awards Committee is pleased to invite nominations for the 2007 Ruth A. Michalecki Leadership Award. This annual award recognizes outstanding leadership among the membership.

The person selected for this award:

- Engages in activities that have produced results directly benefiting the ACUTA organization and/or the broader higher education community
- Motivates and fosters collaboration to accomplish goals, objectives, and the mission of their institution while demonstrating exceptional leadership qualities
- Actively participates in and promotes the education, professional development, and mentoring of other professionals
- Demonstrates initiative—the ability to take charge by creating or developing a program, project, or activity that impacts the community
- Demonstrates leadership in the communications technology industry

We encourage you to nominate someone by completing the nomination form online at http://www.acuta.org/relation/downloadfile.cfm?DocNum=436. There you will also find a listing of previous recipients and their accomplishments.

Deadline for nominations is May 11. Nominees must be representatives of ACUTA institutional member schools or corporate affiliates, or associate members.

ACUTA extends appreciation to PAETEC Communications for sponsoring this award again this year.

Board Report
March

Riny Ledgerwood
San Diego State Univ.
ACUTA Secretary/Treasurer
rledgerw@mail.sdsu.edu

The Board of Directors met by conference call on March 1 and approved the following:

- The appointment of Barry Umansky from Ball State University for a two-year term on the Legislative/Regulatory Affairs Committee.
- The distribution of two drink tickets at the banquet reception at the Annual Conference. Wine service will continue to be served during dinner and cash bar will be available throughout the function. The reason for changing from unlimited drinks to two drink tickets is for the liability reason and not for the cost savings.

ACUTA is exploring the possibility of reaching out to the tribal colleges. We are in the initial discovery process to identify their needs and find out if there are any opportunities for ACUTA to get involved with them.

ACUTA is doing well financially when compared to this time last year.

ACUTA is now providing an RFI/RFP page on its website to allow members who have an active account password to post or view new and active RFIs and RFPs. This is a value-added service provided for the benefit of our institutional and corporate members. All members are encourage to submit RFIs or RFPs.

ACUTA has been accepted as a member of the Ethernet Alliance with Willis Marti from Texas A&M as our representative.

ACUTA is working to address issues that will affect the transition of the Annual Conference from summer to spring beginning in 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Riny Ledgerwood, Director
Communications and Computing Services
San Diego State University
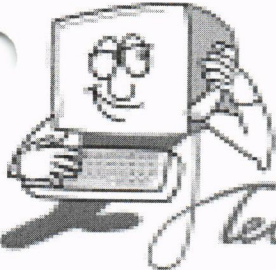
CMDB Is a Step Toward Seeing All, Knowing All

Kevin Tanzillo
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One thing you can say about IT infrastructures: they aren't going to be getting any *less* complex, at least not anytime soon. With that thought in mind, we approach our topic for April, the four-letter acronym CMDB (Configuration Management Database). CMDB is an attempt to gain management control over the networks and all their interconnected parts before the complexity overwhelms us and we just sit at our desks, sobbing.

The CMDB contains all appropriate information about the hardware and software components of an organization's IT infrastructure, as well as the relationships between and among those components. Its purpose is to offer an organized, systematic view of the infrastructure data as well as ways to examine it from all angles.

A CMDB is not just a list of assets. Any organization that hasn't yet descended into chaos has one of those. The CMDB encompasses assets, but more importantly focuses on the ways in which those assets are tied together.

For instance, if your organization needed to implement a server software patch, you could turn to the CMDB to learn everything that this patch would affect. The comprehensiveness of the information would help you understand exactly how the server and its software fit into your overall network ecosystem. This could prevent a worst-case scenario in which implementation of a seemingly beneficial change might suddenly and unexpectedly deny access to key users.

The components in a CMDB are known as CIs, or configuration items. A CI can be anything that is part of the system, from the obvious (hardware and software) to documentation and personnel. As a process, configuration management aims to comprehensively specify, control, and track the CIs and any changes made to them. Ideally, the information about the system itself and all changes made will be automatically discovered and tracked.

A CMDB must "reach out" to a variety of data repositories in order to deliver the information that the network administrators need. It's like a good hotel concierge - he or she may not have the show tickets or information in hand right this second, but they'll have it for you in no time. The CMDB also functions to reconcile data that it may be collecting from different repositories, to present the clearest picture to the administrator.

CMDBs are not yet the magical tools that we would like them to be. There are no open standards at this point, and generally, you won't fully realize the CMDB benefits (streamlined management, increased productivity, less downtime, and automation of routine tasks) without also using a vendor's other related products. That may work well for you, or it may not, depending on your situation.

So our advice is going to sound repetitive from past columns, but if you do intend to move in the CMDB direction, make sure you put the vendor(s) you are considering through the informational wringer and squeeze out all the good, bad, and indifferent data you need before committing.
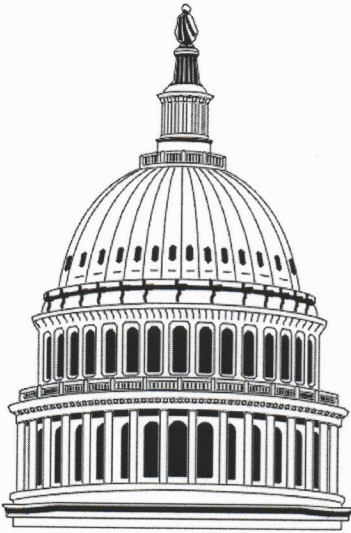
*As always, if there are specific topics you would like to see covered in this space, please let me know via e-mail at **kevin@duxpr.com**.*

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D C Update

Jeanne Jansenius
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Universal Service Fund Debate Continues

Discussions are heating up again over the overhaul of USF, what its continued future will look like, and if broadband will be a part of the mix. When Sen. Rockefeller (D., W.Va.) asked if FCC Commissioners Tate and Copps believed that the Commission had authority to tap broadband services to contribute to the USF, Commissioner Copps stated, "I recognize that the process of incorporating broadband into Universal Service will involve many complex and difficult choices about what mix of technologies—like wireless, copper-based, and fiber—to support, how to support them, and on what time frame. I certainly don't have a silver bullet answer here today, and I am not sure that anyone else does either. But I do know that we need to confront these questions in a forthright and honest fashion, and we need to resolve them through a process that involves *all* the stakeholders in this important issue. That surely includes the state authorities, like those sitting beside me here today, who are a fountain of creative and insightful ideas on this subject.

"I hope the FCC will play a more proactive role in this effort—not least by gathering the hard data that is absolutely essential to sound policymaking, doing the analysis and teeing up options for Congress to consider. We also need to make sure that decisions about Universal Service are part of a complete national broadband strategy, which might involve additional components such as matching grants and tax incentives. More than anything else, I know that we simply can't throw up our hands and say that there shouldn't be *any* federal Universal Service support for broadband. Yet in too many ways that is exactly what our approach to Universal Service does today."

Commissioner Tate, after being pressed by Sen. Rockefeller, stated, "Yes, I believe we have the authority."

ACUTA's Legislative and Regulatory Affairs Committee will be keeping a close eye on this issue. I hope they will stay committed to gathering the hard data and focus on everyone's needs, especially in higher education. (http://commerce.senate.gov/public/ index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Testimony&Hearing_ID=1819&Witness_ID=1944)

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Declares Wireless Broadband Internet Access Service as an Information Service

According to an FCC news release, "This action places wireless broadband Internet access service on the same regulatory footing as other broadband services, such as cable modem service, wireline broadband (DSL) Internet access service, and Broadband over Power Line (BPL)-enabled Internet access service. It thus ensures that wireless broadband Internet access services are similarly free from unnecessary regulatory burdens. Competition among all of these broadband services will provide consumers with more and better services at lower prices." (http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/ attachmatch/DOC-271695A1.pdf)

Coalition on Digital TV Transition Formed

TV ads will most likely start running in late spring 2008 to notify consumers about the transition from analog to digital TV. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration has been allocated $5 million for consumer outreach while Congress has allocated up to $1.50 billion for converter boxes. The NTIA plans to spend $990 million on coupons to be issued out to households that rely exclusively on over-the-air TV signals

For More In-Depth Coverage of Legislative & Regulatory Issues:

ACUTA members may read about the latest developments in telecommunications- and Internet-related issues in the most recent **Legislative and Regulatory Update,** an electronic newsletter prepared monthly by Wiley Rein. Access this newsletter at http://www.acuta.org/relation/DownloadFile.cfm?docNum=309

(nearly 20 million households). Eligible U. S. households may request two $40 coupons to be used toward the purchase of converter boxes. A website has been set up to explain the analog to digital transition: www.DTVtransition.org. Yes, you can watch the minutes count down to the time of doom...the end of the great analog TV era. (TR, March 15, 2007)

ILEC Customer Service Report Card

The FCC recently released results relating to incumbent local exchange carriers (ILECs) quality of service. The survey results show that complaints per million lines have decreased by 5.1% over the past six years for the average industry as a whole. Not all the news was good as the length of repair intervals increased an average of 5.1% per year for the industry as a whole. (TR, March 15, 2007)

According to the *Voice Report* (February 19, 2007), Nortel has agreed to pay $2.5 billion to settle charges on misleading its stockholders. $630 million will be distributed as common shares of stock. It was also noted that Peter Currie will step down as CFO on April 30, 2007.

Things To Watch

• The Interoperable Emergency Communications Act (S385) and the 911 Modernization Act (S93) sailed through the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee with very little debate.

• FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau is planning a summit on first-responder communications on April 20, 2007. (TR, March 1, 2007)

• Comments are due to the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau on April 23, 2007 regarding the migratory bird proceeding, with replies due by May 23, 2007.

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National LambdaRail and Internet2 Renew Merger Discussions

As of 3/10/07, the Boards of Internet2 and National LambdaRail have reached agreement on a process and a plan to bring the two organizations together.

As equals, NLR and Internet2 would merge into one corporation to be known as Internet2-National LambdaRail (Internet2-NLR). The goal is to have the final plan presented for approval to both the Internet2 and NLR boards by April 20, 2007. The intention is to complete the merger by June 29, 2007.

The plan embodies several core decisions:

• Internet2 membership categories will be carried forward into Internet2-NLR. In addition, a new membership category, called "Investors," will be created for the current NLR members.

• During the next two years, while a transition plan is developed, Internet2-NLR will be governed by a 21-member Board. This group includes members from each current board, together with other members of our community. Advisory councils of the new organization will include the broad-based constituencies recommended by the GNC, with the addition of Investor representation.

• A new CEO will be recruited to lead Internet2-NLR.

According to Tracy Futhey, Chair, NLR, and Jeffrey Lehman, Chair, Internet2, "We are both convinced that this plan provides our shared community a positive path forward. Both Internet2 and NLR provide advanced networking capabilities critical to the U.S. research and education community. We believe bringing these two organizations together will enhance those capabilities needed today, and provide a solid foundation for providing capabilities required in the future."
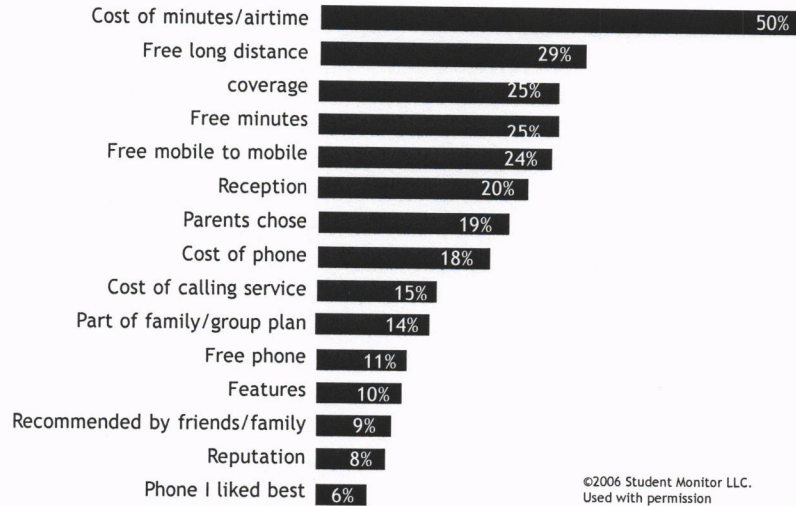
FYI

Useful Information
from the Campus

In the spring of 2006, Student Monitor of Ridgewood, NJ, conducted extensive research into how students are using communications technology on campus today. *ACUTA eNews* is pleased once again to feature selected results of that survey. We appreciate Student Monitor's assistance as we strive to provide the most useful and up-to-date information.
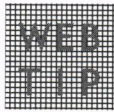
If you would like to know more about the survey, contact Eric Weil, managing partner at Student Monitor (weil@studentmonitor.com).

Criteria for Selecting Cell Provider

By a wide margin, students continue to believe that "Cost of Minutes/Airtime" is the most important factor when choosing a cell provider.

Criterion	Percentage
Cost of minutes/airtime	50%
Free long distance	29%
coverage	25%
Free minutes	25%
Free mobile to mobile	24%
Reception	20%
Parents chose	19%
Cost of phone	18%
Cost of calling service	15%
Part of family/group plan	14%
Free phone	11%
Features	10%
Recommended by friends/family	9%
Reputation	8%
Phone I liked best	6%

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WEB TIP

Aaron Fuehrer
ACUTA Information
Technology Manager
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RSS Feed
Technology

Last month we talked about the recent addition of the ACUTA RFI/RFP page that is located at http://www.acuta.org/?1683. This month we will explore the use of RSS news feed technology to help notify members of updated content. RSS is short for Really Simple Syndication. With this technology, once a user subscribes to a particular feed, he/she will be notified when new content monitored by that feed has been posted. With the ACUTA RFI/RFP page, it will offer an easy way to be alerted when new RFI and RFP documents have been posted to the website.

In the past, RSS news feeds required the use of a separate software reader application; but with the release of Internet Explorer 7.0, viewing and subscribing to RSS feeds is built in to the browser. There are two ways to subscribe and view the ACUTA RSS feed for RFI/RFP documents.

The first way is to go to http://www.acuta.org/?1683 with Internet Explorer 7. Once the web page has loaded, look in the upper right side of the browser screen between the "home" icon and the "printer" icon. You should see an orange square icon that represents the RSS feature for Internet Explorer 7. Click on the icon to display the feed. If you have trouble finding it, press ALT-J. At this point the RSS feed will be displaying any active RFI/RFP documents. Also on this page Internet Explorer should be displaying links to subscribe to the feed and to bookmark the feed in a folder that holds RSS feeds.

The second way is if you already have a RSS newsreader application that you use and are familiar with. If this is the case, you can subscribe at http://www.acuta.org/Feeds/RSS_RFI_RFP.cfm.

Viewing the actual RFI/RFP documents either directly through the Web page at http://www.acuta.org/?1683 or by subscribing to the RSS feed will require a MY ACUTA account password. If you are not sure you have an account or have an account but need your password, go to http://www.acuta.org/myacuta or email Aaron Fueher at afuehrer@acuta.org.

Info Links

Randy Hayes
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Frequently, vendors, associations, governmental bodies, and others provide white papers and other informational documents which are announced through a variety of media sources. While some admittedly have a certain slant or opinion, others are quite objective; however, they often contain valuable information. Below are links to selected documents.

- Pew Report on Wireless Internet Use:
  http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Wireless.Use.pdf
- Benton Report on Future of Universal Service e-Rate Program:
  http://www.benton.org/benton_files/hudson.doc
- 2006 Gold Mouse Report....Best Websites on Capital Hill:
  http://www.cmfweb.org/storage/cmfweb/documents/CMF_Pubs/2006GoldMouseReport.pdf
- Report on How 54 Telcos Treat Online Customers:
  http://www.customerrespect.com/default.asp?hdnFilename=BWtelQ107.htm
- Embarq Presentation on Universal Service Costs:
  http://www.neca.org/wawatch/wwpdf/030607_10.pdf
- Suit/Countersuit on USF/ICC Free Int'l Call Scheme from Iowa:
  (Good Example of Regulatory Arbitrage used to make millions of dollars)
  AT&T Suit: http://herot.typepad.com/cherot/files/iowa.pdf
  Countersuit: http://herot.typepad.com/cherot/files/new_york.pdf
- IDC Report on IP Communications/Polycom HD Voice:
  http://www.computerworld.com/pdfs/Polycom_IDC_White_Paper_HD_Voice.pdf
- Mobile VOIP-Enterprise Fixed/Mobile Convergence:
  http://www.aberdeen.com/c/report/benchmark/sponsored/RA_mVoIP_APW_BS_3900.pdf
- Funding Campus Communications Systems:
  http://www.campustechnology.com/membership/
  login2.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fmembership%2fshowarticle.aspx%3farticleid%3d20320%26ssid%3d0
- NASCIO Progress Report on State Gov't Internet Presence:
  http://www.nascio.org/publications/documents/NASCIO-HarmonyHelps.pdf
- Comscore Stats on Global Internet Audience:
  http://www.comscore.com/press/release.asp?press=1242
- Mayo - Use of Cellular Telephones in Hospital Environment:
  http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.com/ (must create account)
- Pew Hispanic Center Report on Latino Use of the Internet:
  http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/Latinos_Online_March_14_2007.pdf
- NGA Governor's Guide to Homeland Security:
  http://www.nga.org/Files/pdf/0703GOVGUIDEHS.PDF

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Grants to Higher Ed from Microsemi

The PowerDsine Grant Program from Microsemi will award up to $25,000 in Power over Ethernet (PoE) Midspan hardware and discounts to educational institutions deploying PoE wireless LANS, VoIP telephony, or IP surveillance systems.

All institutes of higher learning, including state, federal or private universities or colleges and private, local or state K-12 schools located in the United States or Canadian Provinces are invited to apply. Eligible institutions must possess an immediate need to incorporate Power over Ethernet into their infrastructure.

PowerDsine Educational Grant applications are available online at www.powerdsine.com.

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Important Information...
Useful Resources...
The Best in Professional Networking:
Invite a Colleague to join ACUTA today!

Welcome New Members

Corporate Affiliate Members

Gold Member

EMBARQ, Apopka, FL .... www.embarq.com
Alan Jacobs, Market Mgr., Education; 407/889-6710

Embarq provides a suite of communications services to its higher education customers in its local service territories. This includes local and long-distance voice, data, high-speed networks, wireless, and campus public-safety solutions.

Bronze Member

Mitel, Kavanata, Ontario .... www.mitel.com
Vani Naidoo, Education Marketing Mgr.; 613/592-5660

Higher education is under increasing pressure to reduce costs, keep tuition increases low, and serve more students outside traditional geographic boundaries. Mitel is working with colleges and universities to change the ways they think about unified communications and its role in education.

Copper Members

Identity Engines, Sunnyvale, CA .... www.idengines.com
Meyleen Beichler, Marcom Director; 408/548-2070

Identity Engines enhances network security by enabling fine-grained, user-authenticated networks—wired, wireless, or VPN. Leveraging existing identity and network infrastructure, Identity Engines allows educational institutions to simplify guest access, secure wireless, enable classroom control, ensure compliance, and make policy enforcement possible.

Mobile Campus Inc., Austin, TX .... www.mobilecampus.com
Chris Buck, Vice President, Business Development; 386/676-6776

Mobile Campus allows students to choose the organizations, clubs, faculty, restaurants, and stores they want to receive messages from through opt-in, permission-based text messaging. Members stay connected and in-the-know via instant text messages. Fast, fun, and free.

Out Post Sentinel, LLC, Alpharetta, GA .... www.outpostsentinel.com
Stan Sendrakowski, Sales Manager; 678/579-9000

OutPost Sentinel provides intelligent PBX & IT infrastructure management solutions that increase profits, reduce downtime, decrease costs, and increase business productivity. From any location you can trouble shoot, repair, configure, restore or reboot troubled systems.

ACUTA Events Calendar

36th Annual Conference	Fall Seminars	Winter Seminars	Spring Seminars
July 29-August 2, 2007	October 14-17, 2007	January 27-30, 2008	April 6-9, 2008
Hollywood, FL	Minneapolis, MN	Anaheim, CA	St. Louis, MO
Westin Diplomat	Hilton	Disneyland Hotel	Sheraton St. Louis
	Track 1. Supporting Converged Mobile Communications		
	Track 2. Business Continuity Planning & Disaster Recovery		