From the President
Margie Milone, Kent State University

Change Reflects Our Growth

The Association for Telecommunications Professionals in Higher Education

As many of you are aware, we recently undertook a strategic planning process designed to prepare ACUTA for the challenges of rapid change in the higher education and telecommunications fields. The new strategic plan was presented in draft form to the membership in a special session at the Annual Conference last summer in Atlanta.

One of the key action items that developed from this process was the need to review and update the association's image, to make it consistent with today's environment. Many members felt that the current name of the association, The Association of College and University Telecommunications Administrators, no longer accurately reflected our members' responsibilities. We wanted to preserve the well-known "ACUTA" acronym, but add a new description of the organization.

After considerable deliberation, a new description has been approved by the Board of Directors: ACUTA – The Association for Telecommunications Professionals in Higher Education.

This new description is designed to:

- Communicate to campus and industry constituencies that ACUTA members are professionals
- Be inclusive of campus telecommunications staff, our vendor members, consultants, and others in our industry, by communicating that we are all telecommunications professionals in service of higher education
- Define our "market niche" as telecommunications, which differentiates ACUTA from other information technology associations

We will retain the current ACUTA logo for the present time. In the near future, ACUTA's letterhead and other documents will be modified to include the words voice, video, and data. This change will be designed to communicate the broad scope of our members' responsibilities.

I hope that you share the Board's excitement with this new development. Building upon the solid foundation of success that was established by ACUTA's past and present leaders, we look forward to successfully meeting the many challenges ahead.

Nominate Now for Board of Directors

ACUTA is looking for a few good men and women! As announced last month, it is time to nominate for Board positions: President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and two Directors-at-Large.

Nominations must be received by 5:00 p.m. CDT, April 11, 1998. Send all nominations to: James Cross, Vice Provost of Info. Tech., Michigan Tech. Univ., 1400 Townsend Dr., Houghton, MI 49931-1295. E-mail jcross@mtu.edu. Sorry, nominations cannot be accepted by phone.

Student Paper Competition Deadline

The deadline for the 2nd Annual Student Paper Competition is April 3—just a few weeks away. The competition, co-sponsored by Telesoft Corporation, was initiated to encourage students of telecommunications and to enhance the visibility of the association and the profession on college and university campuses.

Early in January, details were mailed to more than 2,000 campuses inviting students to submit original papers dealing with issues of importance to telecommunications in higher education.

The top three winners each receive a trophy or plaque as well as a cash prize of $1,000, $500, or $250 plus complimentary registration, hotel, and airfare to ACUTA's Annual Conference in San Diego this July 12–16.

For details contact Pat Scott, ACUTA Communications Manager, at 606/278-3338. Information is also available on ACUTA's Web site at www.acuta.org.
Q: Do you have a question? Would you like to provide an answer? Everyone is encouraged to contribute to this new feature in our monthly newsletter. Questions related to any issue facing campus telecommunications today are invited. Answers will be provided by volunteers with expertise in a variety of technologies. (Please note that advice given in this column is the opinion of the author. ACUTA neither recommends nor endorses any company’s products or services.) Send questions to Pat Scott, ACUTA Communications Manager, 152 W. Zandale Dr., Ste. 200, Lexington, KY 40503 or e-mail pscott@acuta.org. Fax 606/278-3268.

Q: Student long-distance traffic is moving to the Web via e-mail and Internet telephony. How can I recoup lost student resale revenues? And how can I recover the costs for the network services I provide to students and faculty?

A: It’s time to develop a cost-recovery program for the network services your school offers. There are three ways to charge back for online services:

1. Usage-sensitive chargeback, based on connect time
2. Chargeback based on bandwidth utilization
3. Flat-rate, fixed fee for unlimited access

Billing should be a combination of a flat rate plus premium charges for exceeding time and bandwidth thresholds or for using other services such as desktop videoconferencing.

To charge back for network services you need to determine how your network is being used, when it is being used, and by whom. The first step is to collect the data. Sources for data collection include firewalls, VPN service routers, and network access servers (NAS). The call records reveal if a particular session was e-mail, voice-over-IP, videoconference call, or Web surfing session. This information lets you chargeback based on the service used. The call records (a.k.a., session detail records or SDR) are polled to network accounting software that resides on a PC. The data is mediated into a usable format, and usage reports are generated based on service used, time on the 'Net, and bandwidth used. Finally, bills are distributed to the appropriate student, department, or faculty member.

Another thing to consider is whether or not you want to provide network services via remote access to off-campus users. If so, call detail can be captured and collected off of a remote access server (RAS) and sent to the network accounting system.

In addition to recouping student resale revenues, network accounting lets you plan for future bandwidth allocation. It also provides exception reporting (e.g., fraud or faulty network devices), and it lets you monitor the delivery of service level agreements you have with your ISP.

For this answer, thanks to Dave Lidyard, Vice President, Product Management, Telco Research. Reach Dave at 615/872-9000. E-mail dave@telcores.com.

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**Board Report**

The Board held its monthly conference call on February 5, 1998. Margie Milone presented a report from the 1/10/98 Officers meeting which included discussion of proposals for a new tag line to use with the ACUTA acronym, marketing of the association, approval of the budget timeline, and procedures for '98 elections. Committee reports included:

- ACUTA joined other education parties in filing comments (1/26/98) on the FCC’s Report to Congress on Universal Service.
- A comprehensive marketing plan will be developed by the ACUTA professional staff with input from the marketing and other committees.
- The Board approved the proposed conference schedule for San Diego.
- The User Group subcommittee is planning non-vendor-specific user groups/forums at the annual conference to provide an additional opportunity for members with similar interests to meet.

After some discussion, the Board approved endorsing the Forum on Learning through Service in Higher Education. The endorsement carries no cost or obligation but indicates ACUTA’s support for the program.

Respectfully Submitted:

Anthony Mordosky
Bradley University
ACUTA Secretary/Treasurer

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**Plan to Attend**

One of the User Group Meetings at the ACUTA Annual Conference

To coordinate a User Group Meeting, contact Corinne Hoch, Columbia University
Phone: 212/854-2897
E-mail: hoch@columbia.edu
On ACUTA’s listserv recently, Terri VanNoy from Millsaps College reported a new source of fraud and frustration for campus telecommunications.

“We are having more problems lately with unauthorized charges, specifically the 1-800 services that are linked to pay-per-call (such as ‘psychic help’ and other services); also ‘free floating’ credit cards that can be opened on any telephone number without verification. Today we have a new and very frightening kind which has put me into crisis mode: charges authorized over the Internet. Click here to enter a sweepstakes.

“If you read the details,” Terri continued, clicking “authorizes monthly recurring charges for a personal 1-800 number plus $.25 per minute for calls. When I contacted the billing company, they told me that the company they are billing for has the right to come back to us with legal action for collection. What frightens me is that if one company can bill for services with the click of a mouse, others will soon follow. And the student who filled out the ‘sweepstakes form’ did so from home over the Christmas break by simply entering his dorm number on the form. We got billed. Nothing indicates where the order originated.”

Terri reported that the company has an automated disconnect process (via telephone) on their Web page, and they provide a physical address but no email or telephone other than the automated response. She then queried other listservers to determine if any action is being taken with the FCC to monitor or regulate this type of transaction, saying, “We have every possible block in place and are still getting stuck. Can anyone help me?”

In response to Terri’s plea, Dave Ostrom at Washington State University responded that he regularly received similar threats from billing companies.

“I offer to forward them to our Attorney General’s office and they give up. Usually they are just bluffing. Evidently they get away with it most of the time.”

Steve Flora, Telecommunications Director at Bridgewater College, responded that he had just had “one of those calls” on his GTE bill. “GTE lists an 800 number for the provider of the service next to the charge and so I called it,” Flora said. “The lady was very nice (actually nicer and more knowledgeable than most of the people at those reseller 800 numbers). She explained that it was set up from a sweepstakes on the Internet. She said she would credit the current charge and gave me an 800 number to dial and cancel the service. I dialed and it was an IVR system. It asked for the phone number on which the account was set up. When I entered the number, it paused a few seconds and said, ‘This service will be cancelled for you. Thank you.’

While it seems disconcerting to think that students can just surf the Web and set up services on their phones,” Flora continued, “it seemed relatively painless for me to ask for a credit and cancel it, at least compared to some other charges I have tried to remove from our bill! I guess the real proof will be when I get next month’s bill!”

Marcia Lopez, from San Diego State University, had this advice: “I think most of us are fighting the same battles, but I may have found a way to win...just give up. I sent out hundreds of letters (and made thousands of calls), the threatening kind and the not-so-threatening kind, to find later that most of these companies don’t even bother responding, or reading them. Lately I have been working with my local billing company. I pull the fraudulent charges, send them a list, and we refuse payment. It’s that easy. I have yet to hear from these companies for these charges. They would rather not deal with us; so now, much to my surprise, I am finding credits on my bill. If we stick to our guns we can win!”

If you would like to respond to Terri’s dilemma, you may contact her at 601/974-1117 or e-mail vannot@okra.millsaps.edu. ACUTA members who are not participating in the listserv may sign up via the homepage at www.acuta.org.

**ACUTA Local Event**

**June 8 & 9**

**Ithaca, New York**

J. Willard Marriott Executive Conference Center and Statler Hotel
Hosted by Cornell University

**Hot Topics in Telecommunications**

- Regulatory and Legislative Update
- Current Technologies Update
- ACD Applications
- Interactive Open Forum

On-site Registration: Mon., June 8, 10:00 a.m.
Meeting ends: Tues., June 9, 1:00 p.m.
Registration: Schools $50; Companies $75
To pre-register, send payment to ACUTA
152 W. Zendaile Dr., Suite 200
Lexington, KY 40503
Register online at www.acuta.org
For details, call Kellie Bowman 606/278-3338 x22

Hotel Reservations
(800) 541-2501 or (607) 257-2500
Hotel Cut-off date: May 8
Rate: $103 single/$113 double (plus tax)
You must mention ACUTA to receive this rate

**Spotlight**

Welcome to two of ACUTA’s most recent Corporate Affiliate members:

**T-NETX** provides security for student calling-card plans, voice and data networks, LAN, PBX, WAN, and Internet access through the use of a person’s unique Voice Print. Verification is in less than one second. Skip Walls, 302/644-9105

**Xiox Corporation** is a leading manufacturer of telemangement systems, specializing in call accounting, traffic engineering, facilities management, and anti-toll-fraud products. Xiox systems work with all major PBXs and can provide for student billback. Kathy Messer, 650/375-8188

www.xiox.com
Maureen Trimm Is New Director-at-Large

Maureen Trimm, Assistant Director of Communication Services at Stanford University, has accepted an appointment by the Board to the position of Director-at-Large. Filling the position left vacant by the recent resignation of Donna Borden from the University of Delaware, Maureen will serve until the end of the annual conference this July.

Maureen has made significant contributions to ACUTA over the past several years, serving as chair of the marketing committee and on the student papers task force. She has also been a presenter at ACUTA events and is an active participant on the listserv.

Are You Listening?

Donna Hall
ACUTA Mgr., Prof. Development

When you give a talk on your campus or at a meeting such as an ACUTA seminar or conference, do you reach the entire audience—or only a few people? Most presenters effectively engage only a small portion of their audience.

Adults are notoriously demanding learners. They don't like to waste time hearing something they already know or something they cannot apply within a short period of time.

Researchers also identify different types of adult learners. Think about something you recently learned—a cooking technique, a golf stroke, a management skill.... Did you learn by talking with a friend, by reading a manual, by trial and error, or by going to a lecture? This may indicate your learning preference.

Few people learn well by listening to a lecture. However, most seminars and university classes rely on a speaker at the front of the room—a sage on the stage. Successful presentations address the needs of several types of learners.

Consider the following ideas to reach the majority of your audience:

1. Early in the session, ask participants what they want to learn.
2. Divide your audience into small groups and assign a task utilizing information from your presentation.
3. Ask participants to draw a diagram or picture to illustrate a particular concept.
4. Invite the audience to move around the room or stand periodically.
5. Ask for feedback from individuals about how they can apply your information.
6. Use audio visuals to clarify or emphasize information in another way.
7. What's the main point of your message? Make that point at least two different ways—visually, orally, graphically, or through an activity.
8. Smile and share your enthusiasm with your audience.

ACUTA Gears up for Member Needs Assessment

Toward the end of March, the primary institutional representatives at ACUTA member schools will be receiving a very important item in the mail: the 1998 ACUTA Member Needs Assessment survey.

This is NOT just another survey among the several you probably receive each month. Please don't relegated it to the pile of paperwork that you have every good intention of getting to when there is extra time, because we all know how that goes...

ACUTA strives to be a member-driven organization. Many of the new programs that have been introduced in recent years were based on member needs expressed in the last Member Needs survey, conducted in 1993. However, the world of higher education and telecommunications has changed significantly in the last five years, and so have your needs.

In 1993, you told us through the Member Needs survey that you wanted ACUTA to develop electronic information services, such as a site on the World Wide Web, electronic discussion groups, and the resource library available on-line. All of these were developed, and have proven to be useful tools. You also gave us topic ideas for our educational programs, asked us to plan more local events, and to increase coverage of regulatory issues in the ACUTA News.

All of these have been accomplished, and many members have benefited from the results.

Now, we need to learn about your needs for the end of the '90s and beyond. What subjects do you need to know more about, how are we doing on current services, and how can we deliver services to you more effectively? How can ACUTA be a resource to help your institution accomplish its mission and to help you be successful in your career?

When you receive the Member Needs Survey, please take a few moments to complete and mail it directly back to the research firm. Your response will be completely confidential, and the results of this study will help ACUTA shape programs and services customized to meet your needs.

From ACUTA Headquarters
Jeri A. Semer, CAE
Executive Director
FCC Report to Congress

The FCC has created the Universal Services Report Working Group to operate under the direction of the Common Carrier Bureau to review the FCC implementation of the universal services (US) provisions of the Telecom Act of 1996. This group will make recommendations to the FCC and help prepare a report to Congress by April 10. ACUTA encourages members to send comments to the FCC for use in the creation of this report to Congress. Melissa Waksman, a senior attorney in the bureau, will lead the group.

According to Telecommunications Reports (TR 1/12) the bureau said the report would look at the degree to which FCC interpretations are consistent with the Telecommunications Act of 1996 with regard to such things as: (1) definitions of terms and expressions commonly used in the industry, and how those definitions may impact the provision of USF; (2) application and impact of the definitions to mixed or hybrid services in USF; (3) who must contribute to USF; (4) who is eligible for federal USF support; (5) decisions regarding the percent of federal USF support and the needed revenue.

Disaster Recovery

As noted in 411 Newsletter (2/2/98), El Nino continues to wreak havoc with weather-related disasters. Flooding in the west and ice storms in New England left some areas without electricity for days. Here are some suggestions from 411:

1. Install a backup generator for emergency power after the UPS backup runs out.
2. Perform preventive maintenance for all systems.
3. Have a work cancellation policy. Remember, no electricity in the area and possibly no phones into the local community.
4. Know the right maintenance contacts, and all possible methods of contact: cellular, ham radio, home address, etc.

411 also interviewed Dave Barta at the University of Oregon about flooding in his area, and listed some of Dave's suggestions.

1. Back up consistently, and keep a backup off site.
2. Bury as much cable as you can—encased in concrete is best.
3. Keep your cable dry; sump pumps may be the answer.
4. Weigh redundant routing from the Central Office.

A campuswide disaster recovery plan should be high on your list of priorities if one does not already exist. If one does exist, is it adequate for the entire telephone system?

Mergers

While the WorldCom merger with MCI is still moving along, two new mergers are in the works. The board of directors of both AT&T and Teleport Communications, Inc., have approved a merger expected to close in the fall. Teleport is the nation's largest competitive local exchange carrier (CLEC). (TR notes that the second largest CLEC is MFS Communications Co., Inc., owned by WorldCom).

The other merger is between SBC Communications, Inc., and Southern New England Telecommunications Corp. (SNET). Some think this merger could vault SBC, a Texas-based LEC, from a regional power to a national player.

These mergers will most likely require approval from the FCC and possibly the Justice Department before they become a reality. The players that ACUTA members may be dealing with in the future are always changing.

Positions Available

Only school/company names, position titles, and contact information now appear in the newsletter. Complete details are available on the ACUTA Web site. If you do not have Internet access, call Pat Scott at the ACUTA office (606/278-3338) to receive a printout of current listings. Please submit position-available information electronically to Aaron Fuehrer at afuehrer@acuta.org or to ACUTA's homepage: http://www.acuta.org. If you post a position, please notify Aaron when the position closes.

- **Dir. of Computing & Telecommunications, Gannon Univ.**: Contact Robert Cline, Dir. of Human Res., Gannon Univ., Erie, PA 16541, e-mail: cline001@gannon.edu.
- **Director, Information Technology Services, Embry-Riddle Univ.**: Contact Steve Nordlund, Human Resources, Embry-Riddle Univ., 600 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114-3900
- **Director of Networking & Communications, Embry-Riddle Univ.**: Contact: DNC (Director, Networking & Communications) Search Committee Chairperson, c/o Irene McReynolds, Embry-Riddle University, 600 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Daytona Beach, FL 32114-3900
- **Manager, Switching and Network Operations Center, Northwestern University**: Contact: Gary Corbett, Northwestern Univ., Leverone Hall G-168, 2001 Sheridan Rd., Evanston, IL 60208-2030. E-mail g-corbett@nwu.edu.

Welcome New Members

Institutional Members
- California State University, Fresno, CA. Darrell Martin, 209/278-3923. Tier 4
- Lake Forest College, Lake Forest, IL. Linda Mathiesen, 847/735-6220. Tier 1
- Lamar University, Beaumont, TX. Richard Brott, 409/880-2272. Tier 3
- Ozark Christian College, Joplin, MO. Mitchell Piercy, 417/624-2518. Tier 1
- Saginaw Valley State Univ., University Center, MI. Dale Irish, 517/790-4266. Tier 3
- St. Louis College of Pharmacy, St. Louis, MO. Kevin Palmer, 314/367-8700. Tier 1
- The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla, CA. Thomas Thistle, 619/784-8699. Tier 1
- Tuskegee University, Tuskegee, AL. Donald Fuhr, 334/727-8606. Tier 2

Corporate Affiliates

**Copper Level**
- Dayspring, Inc., Cleveland, OH. Len Rose, 216/431-8500
- National Media Network, Los Angeles, CA. Jeff Jenkins, 310/556-3014
- Solutions Group, Fall City, WA. Jim Williams, 425/644-6082
- Telecom Services, New York, NY. Susan Mazonson, 212/580-0022
- Xio Corporation, Burlingame, CA. Kathryn Messer, 650/375-8188

ACUTA 1998 EVENTS

**Spring Seminars**
April 26-29
Cincinnati, Ohio
- Technology Management
- Disaster Preparedness/Facility Security

**27th Annual Conference**
July 12-16
San Diego, California
Marriott Hotel & Marina

**Fall Seminars**
October 11-14
Dallas, Texas
- Enterprise Networks
- Marketing Student Svcs/Campus Security