ICT Services Strategic Plan

Center for Information Systems
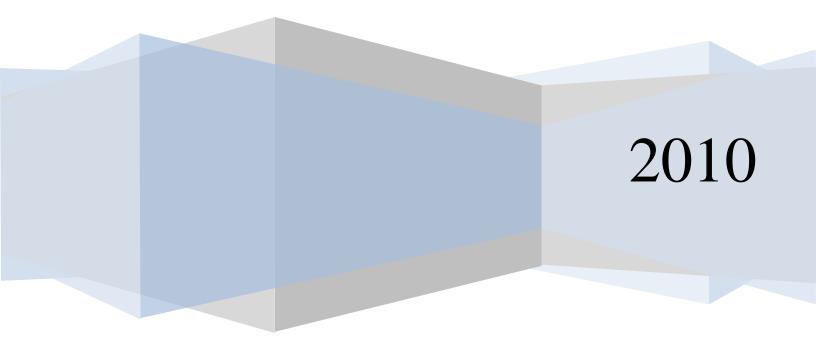CIS

2010

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Vision:

To support all University of Nizwa information technology and communication requirements and enable all members of the community to fully utilize technologies appropriate to their disciplines.

Mission:

The Center of Information Systems will continue to research and implement Information Technology solutions as strategic resources and focus on optimum user experiences. By integrating technology into the fabric of teaching, research, and services, CIS aims to support the University's goal of becoming a hub of knowledge and enlightenment through innovative ways of enabling and facilitating growth.

Objectives:

1. Create reliable solutions concerning Information Technology use in all educational contexts.
2. Maintain data integrity through the latest available technologies in the fields of Information Technology, computer applications and security methods.
3. Offer professional development opportunities in computer usage to faculty, staff, and students.
4. Give advice in the field of educational technology program design.
5. Adopt necessary procedures for the provision of resources and expertise to academic staff members in designing and making educational aids.
6. Provide computer programs and applications to the University's community.
7. Advise staff members regarding the use of computers, their purchase, and maintenance.
8. Offer consultancy to all sectors in order to evoke growth and development.

Strategic Plan Goals:

1) ***Increase and Stabilize Infrastructure****:* Through innovative expansion of the Intranet and Internet based systems, CIS will provide consistent and robust end user experiences.

   a) Constantly assess and upgrade the UON systems and network in order to provide excellent end-user experiences.
      i) Expand the already present wireless coverage allowing further and greater access for all members of the University community.
      ii) Accommodate emerging technologies, with a particular focus on mobile technologies.
      iii) Utilize emerging technologies that will increase the speed, coverage, accessibility and manageability via thin and smart access points and supporting applications.
      iv) Build strong enough Internet and Intranet services to meet the increasing needs for instruction and research using multi-media elements; particularly video collaboration. Internet speed should be improved through close contact with the main ISP provider (OmanTel) to replace the 16 mbps copper line to a fiber line. This will allow us increase the bandwidth upto multiple of STM1 lines. On the other side should get an alternative line from another ISP (Al Nawras) provider for redundancy and increased bandwidth. New technological options such as LTE from OmanTel and WiMax from Al Nawras should also be considered on their arrival.

   b) Provide proactive effective and evolving risk management solutions.
      i) Move the current data enter to building 26 for more security and enhanced operation continuity.
      ii) Upgrade the University Business Continuity Plan to cover current trends. This can be done through implementing a new disaster recovery site with practical stratigies to ensure operation continuity for core applications such as EduWave, WaveERP and email service.
      iii) Implement data backup services for database servers, application servers as well as enterprise operating systems, and departmental servers.

   c) Deliver easy to use technology to all members of the community along with prompt, amicable responses.
      i) Develop usability surveys to target and improve the use of IT at UON.
      ii) Provide more assessment materials to the University community to ensure that all needs are being met. Analyze results and create initiatives for improvement based on the assessments.
      iii) Improve attendance taking mechanism through integrating mobile RFID readers with the EduWave.

   d) Introduce new models and developments for IT support that are cost effective.
      i) Implement ITIL compliant IT services management that cover, incident management, Service Request Management, problem management SLA management and other ITIL practices.

ii) Train helpdesk members in ITSM guidelines and practices.

iii) Deploy effective methods for users training and awareness spread.

iv) Use of thin client workstations at general computing labs then spread across the campus for better ROI and total cost of ownership.

v) Improve email services through usage of cloud computing soltions

2) ***Innovative use of Educational Technology***: Use instructional design elements and models that will directly address the uniqueness of the University of Nizwa community.

  a) Collaborate with faculty, staff, and students to choose the most effective software and hardware solutions for their needs. Improve the learning environments for students, research efforts, and the administrative tasks of all members of the University community.

  i) Work with various committees to recognize and develop areas where technologies would best be used to enhance learning, research, and administrative procedures.

  ii) Create procedures aimed at assessing and distributing current developments in educational technology that would aid all members of the University community.

  b) Create a governing body to evaluate and innovate the uses of educational technology.

  i) The E-Learning Board will decide on which courses or projects will be turned into e-materials and presented online.

  ii) Design and deploy a testing stage (i.e., a laboratory) for students, faculty, and staff, to use new software and hardware solutions.

  c) Enlarge and enrich resources at the disposal of staff, faculty, and students. Promote champions in all of these groups to better help the deployment of educational technology.

  d) Deliver quality consultation for researching, projects, and solutions.

  i) Produce rubrics to better evaluate the efficacy of any given solution.

  e) Sign agreements with various public and private sector clients to run experimental projects.

  i) Current projects in this line are:

  (1) Free an Open Source Software project with the Information Technology Authority

  (2) GITTC – training government employees digital literacy.

  (3) Adobe Training Labs in both AL-Khuwair and Birkat AL Mouz.

  (4) Agreements with Global skills for IC3 and MOS training and testing accredited center.

3) *Competence and Professionalism*: Recruit, Train, and Retain instructors who are experts in their respective fields.
   a) Develop transparent and comprehensive human resource plans for University staff.
      i) Establish competitive compensation and benefits packages that will draw new, and retain old, professionals.
      ii) Create succession plans for all IT positions.
   b) Encourage professional development and motivation of IT staff.
      i) Oblige each member of the IT staff to have training based on their basic job duties and responsibilities.
      ii) Outline possible career tracks for all IT staff. Develop training programs to enhance staff experience and skill sets.

4) ***Research and Maximize Resources****:* Visiting conferences, tradeshows, and seminars, members of the CIS team will research current trends allowing them to provide optimal experiences for the University of Nizwa community.
    a) Produce awareness campaigns toting the various tools available through the library.
    b) Conduct workshops in current information technology and trends.
        i) Create a depository for these materials on the University website.
    c) Find new means and methods to generate interest in electronic research.