SSC Network Update

Inside this Issue…

The Migration: What's New and What's Not?

Heather Stevens

During the summer of 2010, we migrated the SSC Domain to the UWO Domain. That meant that we had to individually join every computer to the UWO Domain and copy over various files. If you were not here for the migration and you cannot find your files or icons, please contact our main office at ext. 82152.

Before we migrated your computers, we attempted to recreate the SSC Network environment within the UWO Domain. Then, we worked with a pilot group to make sure that we had successfully recreated the look and feel of the SSC Network and worked through the bugs. Many thanks to those of you who participated in the pilot group!

Once all of the computers were migrated, we had to gradually shut down services that were still running on the SSC Domain, disable SSC user accounts, and migrate servers. There were a few bumps along the way, and for that we appreciated your patience.

The final SSC Domain Controller was turned off Friday, September 17th and the domain was fully decommissioned on October 4th.

The main difference is that you now only have one account for access to all campus IT related services, which is provided to you by Information Technology Services (ITS). Access to services on the SSC Network is managed in SSNDS through group membership. Our blue SSC Network Account Request forms have changed to SSC Network Access Request forms. All users must have a UWO Domain account before requesting access to the SSC Network. Social Science members will be granted access automatically.

Thanks are extended to Anthony Dobravec in Psychology and Joe Smrekar in Geography, who worked closely with us throughout the process,

and managed the migration in their own departments. We also extend a thank you to our student employees who did a lot of the leg work during the migration: James Simpson, Computer Science; Chris Rumas, History and Computer Science; and Kyle de Gannes, Engineering. Finally, we are grateful for all the invaluable technical work and support from Martin Douglas and Lloyd Mills in ITS.

SSNDS Transition Update

Heather Stevens

With the Domain Migration complete, the transition continues with the migration of the departmental web sites, the migration of faculty and staff data storage (H: drives), and the migration of our remote access servers to MyVLab and Western ROAMs (Remote Office Access Management System).

Web Migration

The web sites will be migrated, one at a time, to our new virtual web server which is called Gemini2. The site will be recreated on the new server and tested before switching over. We plan to work closely with each department throughout the process.

Data Storage

We will be planning the migration of faculty and staff H: drives over the next couple of months. All of the existing data currently stored on your H: drives will be migrated but there will likely be a short access disruption during the migration. The tentative plan at this time is to switch all faculty and staff users over to the UWO Cluster system in December. The undergraduate and graduate data storage will be migrated to a new system within SSNDS in early 2011.

Remote Access

We are still planning to decommission our remote access servers. We are investigating licensing issues for software that we provide, that is not currently available on MyVLab. Our

remote access servers will be available until those licensing issues are resolved.

For those of you who use our remote access servers to access network drives, we suggest you use Western ROAMs instead. We are still working on a solution for Mac and laptop users who require access to SSC Network software.

Remote Access to Your Office Computer
Ali Hammoud/Heather Stevens

If you wish to use the Remote Desktop Connection to access your office computer and network drives, ITS is moving toward requiring you to login to Western ROAMs (Remote Office Access Management System) at *remote.uwo.ca*.

Details on the timeline for this requirement will follow at a later time. If you have not been granted access to this service, you have to complete the Corporate Data Access form found at *www.uwo.ca/its/identity/cda.html* and place a check mark beside Western ROAMs. Alternatively, a bulk access request can be submitted for your department. Please contact SSNDS for more information regarding a bulk request.

When you login to Western ROAMs, you join the Virtual Private Network and your Remote Desktop Connection and drive mappings are secured. By forcing remote access users to use ROAMs, the number of access points into the university will be significantly reduced, and the network will be less vulnerable to security breaches.

While connected to ROAMs, you can also map UWO network drives to your local computer as if you are on the UWO campus. More information on using Western ROAMs is available at *ssnds.uwo.ca/helpnotes/usingroams.asp*.

Student Group Project Meeting Room (SSC 1014B)
Kam Abado/Mary Van de Ven

Another meeting room has been created for SSC students to work on group projects for Faculty of Social Science courses.

Just like the first Student Group Project Meeting Room (1014), Room 1014B is outfitted with a networked desktop computer; a ceiling mounted LCD projector; a projection screen; a whiteboard; wired/wireless network connectivity; eight chairs and a table.

Students will have the ability to connect their laptops to the video projector. They will also have access to their H: drives and all software on the Social Science Network, from the desktop computer.

Room 1014B is available from Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., but is closed for holidays and weekends. This room can be scheduled by qualified students for a maximum of two hours at a time. Another time slot cannot be scheduled by the same group until the currently scheduled slot is used.

Room 1014, continues to be a 24/7 card swipe access room.

Students can schedule Room 1014 or 1014B by either visiting the SSNDS main office (SSC, 1008) in person, or by calling 519-661-2152. Normal office hours are Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Booking requests can also be emailed to: *ssnds-help@uwo.ca*.

At the time of booking, students must provide: full name; Western email address; related course number; professor's name, and the number of students in the group. For further information, please go to: *ssnds.uwo.ca/rooms.html*

Student Donation
Kam Abado

A special thank you to all Social Science Students and their Council (SSSC) for their generous donation which made it possible to equip the second SSC Student Group Project Meeting Room (SSC 1014B).

The SSSC has funded several past SSNDS projects, enabling us to provide better services to the Social Science student community. Some of these include:

- Student Group Project Meeting Rooms

- 24/7 access to the Social Science Building and SSC computing rooms (1014, 1020)

- 24/7 Laserjet printing services (B/W and Colour)

Again, thank you from SSNDS for your financial support.

New Computing Hardware Purchases
Kam Abado

SSNDS can assist you with obtaining price quotes from UWO Preferred Vendors for your new computing hardware needs. We work closely with the vendors to develop a well-configured and tested desktop system configuration for the Faculty of Social Science. SSNDS can also assist you with customizing your system to meet your requirements.

UWO Preferred Vendors do warranty repairs locally on most common items sold to SSC. They will pick up and deliver items for repair from and to the Social Science Centre at no charge to you or to your department. Also, SSNDS is authorized to obtain parts from our vendors for desktop repairs so we do most of the desktop repairs in-house to speed up the repair time.

Supporting and dealing with different models and manufacturers can be very time consuming and frustrating for all of us. We encourage you to consult with us prior to purchasing any computing hardware and we will do our best to work with you to get the most suitable computing hardware for your needs. You can contact SSNDS at ext. 82152 or email us at:

ssnds-help@uwo.ca.

Windows 7 Operating System: 32-bit vs. 64-bit
Kam Abado

When you purchase a new PC, you might be asked whether you would like to have a Windows 7 32-bit or a Windows 7 64-bit Operating System (OS) installed.

The main benefit of using a 64-bit OS is most apparent when you have more than 4 GB of RAM installed in your PC, because it handles large amounts of RAM more efficiently than a 32-bit OS. It can also be more responsive when running several programs at the same time.

Most new PCs have processors and integrated devices that support the 64-bit OS. While the 64-bit OS can run some 32-bit applications without a problem, it is NOT compatible with 32-bit hardware drivers. This means you would need a native 64-bit driver for every device on your PC, and it could be a challenge to find support for your older hardware.

If you are considering upgrading the OS on an older PC to the 64-bit, the PC will need to have a compatible CPU; plus all peripherals and built-in devices will need to have a 64-bit driver. If you do have a 64-bit capable CPU, but you use older hardware, it would be safer to stay with a 32-bit version for the time being to ensure that your PC works well with the older equipment.

For further clarification on the 32 vs. 64-bit OS, please email us at *ssnds-help@uwo.ca.*

Increasing RAM to Enhance the Performance of Your Computer or Laptop
Kam Abado

Insufficient RAM can slow down the performance of your computer or laptop. Technically, when a program is launched, it uses the RAM available in your system to place some of the needed data. As the RAM gets used up, the program starts to use the hard disk which takes more time to access. The more RAM available in your system, the quicker the data is accessed and the faster the program gets loaded.

What Should You Do With Your Old Office Computer or Laptop?
Kam Abado

You can contact us at SSNDS, ext. 82152, to have an old computer or laptop removed from your office.

We will assess the equipment to see if we can use it within SSC. If not, then we take the useful parts out (i.e.: power supply, RAM, etc.) and place the rest into the UWO asset disposal bin. Most importantly, we run software that wipes the hard drive clean by overwriting your information with zeros prior to re-using the drive. If the drive is not re-useable, then we will physically damage the drive prior to the disposal process.

Tech Tip

Are the fonts on your screen too small or hard to read?

Press and hold the *CTRL* key while you scroll the wheel on your mouse to zoom in or out.

Is Your Computer Slowing Down? Tweak Your Hard Disk
Kam Abado

A badly fragmented hard disk, or a disk with errors, can slow your computer down to a grinding halt. Running a few simple utilities on your hard disk can enhance the performance of your computer considerably. Here are two recommended utilities to help improve your PC performance:

Check Disk

Running the Windows *Check Disk* utility once every few months can correct some errors and result in better hard disk performance.

To launch *Check Disk:*
- ➢ *Start*
- ➢ *My Computer*
- ➢ Right click *Local Disk C:* (or other local drives)
- ➢ *Properties*
- ➢ *Tools*
- ➢ *Check Now* (in Error Checking Box)
- ➢ Check box for *Automatically Fix File Errors*
- ➢ *Start*
- ➢ *Yes* (to schedule a scan after restart)
- ➢ Restart the system.

Disk Fragmentation

Over time, your hard drive begins to lose the ability to store data efficiently. As fragmented files accumulate on your hard disk, your computer gradually becomes slower. Every three to four months, you can run *Disk Defragmenter* which will rearrange fragmented files to increase free space on your hard disk.

Once you launch *Disk Defragmentation*, it is highly recommended that you do not use the computer until this task is completed.

Warning!

Disk fragmentation can take a few minutes or up to several hours, depending on the size of the hard disk.

To launch the *Disk Defragmenter*:
- ➢ *Start*
- ➢ *My Computer*
- ➢ Right click *Local Disk C:* (or other local drives)
- ➢ *Properties*
- ➢ *Tools*
- ➢ *Defragment Now* (in Defragmentation box)
- ➢ Highlight a disk drive
- ➢ *Defragment*

Launching Web Sites from Tabs in Internet Explorer

Kam Abado

Do you have several regular web sites that you would like Internet Explorer to launch with their own tabs?

- ➢ Open Internet Explorer 8 and navigate to one of the web sites.
- ➢ Click on the drop down arrow beside *Home*.
- ➢ Choose *Add* or *Change Home Page*
- ➢ Choose either *Use this webpage as your only home page* , if this is the first home page you are setting, or choose *Add this webpage to your homepage tabs* for subsequent pages

OR…

- ➢ Open Internet Explorer 8
- ➢ Click *Tools*
- ➢ *Internet Options*
- ➢ Select *General tab* and inside *Home Page* box, type the addresses of the sites you want to open
- ➢ Click *OK*
- ➢ Relaunch Internet Explorer and the tabs will be displayed.