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Bits & Bytes

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Dates to remember:

Scheduled maintenance slot
The dates for the 2015 ICTS monthly maintenance slots have been approved by faculty and PASS IT representatives, the UCT Library, the University ICT committee and the Operations Management Advisory Group. These maintenance slots take place one Sunday a month so that ICT components and subsystems can be properly and proactively maintained. This ensures appropriate levels of availability, stability, security and recoverability of services.

For the duration of a slot (which runs from 09:00 - 17:00), there are no (or limited) ICT services available. Once

Looking back at some of the smart stuff from 2014

Over the past year, ICTS has upgraded and rolled out a number of services to improve the user experience on campus. These changes have ensured that you can access ICT services whether you are on or off campus.

For instance, we overhauled the whole process of managing your password. Your 14-character password will not expire and if you happen to forget it, you simply request a one time pass code which allows you to quickly reset it.

We also introduced an online Customer View in ServiceNow so that you can easily log a call and keep track of your IT calls. We will continue to expand the range of services offered via this interface so keep an eye open for announcements this year.

Imagine Academy helps you become a Microsoft Office specialist

Mastering your Microsoft Excel skills can be a great benefit to you in your job. However, without the necessary certification, current and future employers may not recognise you as being an expert in this field.

Thanks to UCT subscribing to the Microsoft Imagine Academy, you can now complete the necessary Microsoft courses and get a certificate of completion. Over 500 students and staff have already accessed this site.

E-Learning Consultant at the Faculty of Health Sciences' Educational Development Unit, Sinethemba Mandyoli, recently completed the Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Word courses and obtained his certificates of completion. "I was looking for a course to help with my personal development goals on my portfolio this year. Since these resources are uploaded by accredited instructors this made it easy for me to use them.

Use Microsoft IT Academy to enhance your technology skills

Microsoft· IT Academy
Program Member

"Imagine academy is a beautiful resource that does not only allow you to read content it also allows you to test your knowledge with small exercises," he added.

There are thousands of videos on Microsoft's Office programs ranging from basic computing to more advanced courses. You can even learn how to create your own web presence. To get started, you first need to create a profile and thereafter you can start your online learning process. Watch the videos on your PC, laptop or mobile device.

a year though, an extended maintenance slot is scheduled so that both UCT data centres can be shut down to perform routine and preventative maintenance and tests on electrical equipment. This maintenance slot has been scheduled during the June winter vacation, when there will be less interruption to campus.

The next ICTS scheduled maintenance slot will take place on **Sunday, 19 April 2015**.

Training

The Microsoft Office 2013 suite is one of the most common desktop computing software packages used in the workplace today. To help you get the most out of these programs, we've set up a range of courses that will equip you in using the functionalities available in Word, Excel, Access, Outlook and PowerPoint. Courses range from basic to advanced and are free for all UCT staff and postgraduate students.

There are also a variety of short courses that you can attend, such as the electronic newsletter design and mailing lists explained courses.

Have a look at the ICTS Training calendar to see when the various courses will take place. Remember to register for a course well in advance to avoid disappointment.

ICTS will once again be running lynda labs which allow you to get away from your office and work through any lynda.com course from the peace and quiet of the ICTS training lab. Check the ICTS Training calendar to see when lynda labs are running and book a place by sending an email to icts-training@uct.ac.za.

ICT equipment policy updated

Have you ever wondered how long a PC should last? Look no further than the Replacement cycle of end-user ICT equipment policy.

The University Information and Communications Technology

Once you have completed a course you will get a course completion certificate. But if you wish to take it to the next level, you can write exams which will earn you either a Microsoft Office Specialist, Expert or Master certification. All you need to pay for are the examination fees, as the campus subscription takes care of the training costs.

Increased storage space for researchers

Associate Professor Thomas Franz's work focuses primarily on computational modelling in cellular mechanobiology as well as the treatment and prevention of cardiovascular diseases. He and his research group create large volumes of data. After taking up his position as Head of the Department of Human Biology in the Faculty of Health Sciences, he started looking for affordable, secure, easily accessible storage.

"The eResearch Centre provided me with an easy and convenient solution for storage of my group's data without the need to procure any hardware myself. So far, we have used the space provided mainly for storage and backups of my entire research group" said Franz.

Realising a need existed for large volume secure storage, ICTS increased their central storage and offered it to researchers. This is just one of the services offered by the newly established UCT eResearch Centre.

Since then, 20 departments and research groups have already been allocated storage space with over 635 terabytes already in use.

Getting your hands on storage space for your research is as easy as logging a call with the IT Helpdesk and providing a motivation for consideration. Space is currently allocated at R3600 per terabyte.

For more information on what is happening at the UCT eResearch Centre as well as what services they currently provide, navigate to www.eresearch.uct.ac.za.

UCT increases its international Internet bandwidth

Our Internet Service Provider, TENET, has negotiated a reduced price in international bandwidth for South African universities on both the WACS and Seacom cables.

This discounted rate, means that UCT was able to increase its bandwidth on the WACS cable to 1.230Gbps, and reduce its usage of the more expensive SEACOM cable.

Cape Town cited as next world technology hub

Cape Town is a popular travel destination due to its beautiful beaches, breath-taking views, top class winelands and the majestic Table Mountain. And while the city's beauty contributes to the country's economy, it seems that in the not too distant future, Cape Town may also become a technology and life sciences hub.

Committee (UICTC) recently reviewed and updated this policy to ensure, amongst other things, that maximum benefit is gained from ICT purchases.

Another way to stretch those precious departmental budgets is to ensure that you place your PC orders through the ICTS Acquisitions Services team. They negotiate with various UCT preferred vendors to get you the most suitable desktop computer at the most competitive price, which includes a three-year manufacturers warranty. ICTS then includes an extended warranty for an additional two years.

A recent study conducted by T3 Advisors and Brandeis International Business School has listed Cape Town as one of seven global cities that represents the next frontier for emerging technology markets. Other cities included Santiago in Chile, Campinas in Brazil and Istanbul in Turkey.

The study was aimed at providing leaders of technology and life sciences companies with recommendations on where to grow and expand their businesses. Extensive research was done and numerous sources in the real estate and business sectors were interviewed, which resulted in these cities of tomorrow being uncovered as key global markets worthy of strong consideration.

The report states that "Cape Town stood out because of a combination of factors, including favourable business climate, skilled talent (particularly in engineering); an emerging start-up culture; excellent infrastructure; presence of quality institutions of higher education; favourable rents in a global context (75% cheaper than rent in the San Francisco Bay Area) and particularly in contrast to Johannesburg".

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