

28 – IT News

Action Item Template Response

General Action Item Information

Lead Division/Office: Communication and Support

Action Item Number: 28

Action Item Short Name: IT News

Dependencies with other EP Action Items: 13 (Web Presence), 29 (Community Engagement), 31 (Data Remodeling), 38 (User Experience), 39, 40 (Mobile Applications), 41, 42, 43, 47.

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I. DESCRIBE YOUR PLANS FOR IMPLEMENTING THIS ACTION.

The future of effective IT-related communication and engagement with members of the university community requires significant and ongoing transformation in how we communicate with the IU community, including:

- Immediate leverage of existing technologies to meet the need for customized solutions that will ensure effective communications with students, faculty and staff
- Reliable and consistent placement of messages in the full range of venues and channels that the IU community utilizes and inhabits
- Dedicated research on emerging communication technologies.

While future trends cannot always be accurately predicted, some current trends are likely to continue and expand. Among these are: individual preferences for self-selected content and individualized communications channels, while dealing with growing challenges of message clutter and competition from other information outlets and sources.

Communication solutions should maximize the ability for individuals to customize message preferences as well as choose from an array of communications channels. Such solutions will help to ensure that relevant messages are consumed and that competition from message clutter and subsequent information fatigue will be minimized.

Note: The IT Communication Office now owns this Action.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

UITS news (<http://uitsnews.iu.edu>) now has Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube presences. RSS feeds leverage news to other sites and services, such as NU2IT@IU and uits.iu.edu. The UITS News web site has a new design with social media links, social bookmarking, search suggestions, hot topics quick links, rotating Spotlights, a tag cloud, enhanced visuals for IT Notices, and links to press releases, podcasts, support and training, and job opportunities. UITS news is a top campus news channel on IU Mobile at m.iu.edu. UITS is partnering with University Communications, Informatics, and PTI on the new university newsletter IT Matters@IU.

II. WHAT ARE THE POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR PLANS?

Because technologies change rapidly and audience needs differ dramatically, there are a number of issues we face in the implementation of this plan. Given the aggressive nature of this plan, UITS should be diligent in realizing the following:

(1) Audiences: Recognize that the university community is a heterogeneous mix, with various and divergent individual and group information needs. To develop strategies to accommodate this variety of need, UITS should immediately begin to engage in an ongoing, robust dialog with undergraduate and graduate students, instructors, tenured and tenure-track faculty, and an array of staff to determine specific messaging needs. Partnering with IT Community Partnership representatives, leveraging student ambassadors, and utilizing existing organizations and relationships, UITS should continue to identify specific audience-related messaging needs into the foreseeable future.

(2) Messages: Message content, to the greatest degree possible, should be tailored to the roles audience members play in their lives at Indiana University. Along with customized distribution venues, UITS should more effectively leverage message integration with OneStart, Oncourse, and other IU web pages.

(3) Stories: To enhance impact, key staff should develop more in-depth communications to illustrate important concepts in information technology at Indiana University. Such efforts will put a human face on technology and enhance meaningful impact for audiences.

(4) Tools: Multiple tools will need to be deployed to meet the greatest variety of individual preference. Partnering with Software Development and Distribution in the development of these tools will allow us to leverage their expertise, provide a maximum number of easy-to-use options for individual selection, and provide a comprehensive service. These include:

- Web - Leverage existing UITS web sites and services as well as university peer sites more fully to integrate message sharing across venues.
- News blog - Enhance the current UITS News blog with additional features to enhance appeal and functionality (social bookmarking, tag clouds, etc.).
- RSS - Create additional tagging and distribution models for RSS feeds and integrate feeds more broadly within UITS web space and with university colleagues.
- Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and emerging social networks: Where reasonable, explore and expand use of no- or low-cost social networking solutions to increase audience exposure. These tools require little financial overhead, involve minimal staff time, and ensure broad exposure.
- Email newsletters - Enhance existing newsletters to include html and visual content;

leverage CRM or similar software to manage and track readership and to distribute in conjunction with Listserve.

- Digital signage - As the university develops enterprise digital signage solutions, leverage opportunities to utilize that signage as outlets for IT News messages.
- Texting service - In concert with others across the university, work to deploy an enterprise texting service. Proposed vendor-licensed texting option would have a 3-5 year lifespan, reduce infrastructure costs, and provide needed communications solutions for colleagues within UITS and across IU.

(5) Multimedia: Increase usage of podcasts (audio and video) for distributing IT News and information. Create a series of weekly/periodic podcast updates with a roundup of the latest news, topical news, and feature spotlights.

(6) Metrics and assessment: To the greatest degree possible, find and utilize mechanisms for measuring the impact of our messages. This can include surveys, actions taken in response to messages (clicking links, signing up for classes, etc.), and other strategies yet to be determined. These metrics can then be utilized to analyze successful news articles, sites, modules, and widgets to make content and delivery even more meaningful and timely. In some instances, it will make sense to leverage tools, technologies and expertise already being used elsewhere at IU, e.g., Alumni Association, University Communications. In other cases, UITS will lead in the deployment of tools to capture evolving metrics and analysis, e.g., bit.ly.

(7) Market analysis: UITS should partner with Kelley School of Business marketing students and leverage their expertise in performing market analysis, measuring message impact, and creatively marketing news.

(8) Flexibility/customization/self service: The ultimate goal is to significantly streamline the way individuals across the IU community interact with UITS to get information without impediments. In providing individuals with the option to select the IT-related information they receive, there is always a danger they could opt out of channels that deliver must-know information. To ensure that all audiences receive default IT content that may be critical for their specific university roles and for the audiences with whom they identify, UITS will create customization options that individuals use to specify their university roles and provide news specific to their needs. This will enable UITS to funnel critical content to the audiences it impacts.

(9) Refresh cycle: A robust set of content will be routinely deployed to enhance the freshness of messages, recognizing that a mixture of new and routine messages will be key to the success of our information campaigns.

(10) Privacy implications: As we begin to collect and analyze information about how the IU community stays current about IT News, the privacy of the user data will need to be closely watched and protected in collaboration with the University Information Policy Office.

III. IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS.

Stakeholders will include anyone who utilizes IT services, support, or resources - virtually everyone across the entire university-wide system.