ITAC Minutes: Nov 10, 2011

8:30-10:00


Recorder: Lori O’Bannon

Guest Attendee: Dr. Marchbanks

Item 1: Approval of Minutes: Minutes from October 27, 2011 unanimously approved.

Item 2: New IT Trends

- Jim Bouse indicated he has identified a threat, “RootKit (downloading itself on Ping.exe file) Jim believes risk begins by downloading ads off of internet. He ascertains that this particular attacker is going to websites leveraging rootkit to make money off the ads. Jim further relayed this attack does not show up on any scans. Presently it is still not detected or remedied. Willis Marti asked had it been reported. Jim responded, “No, but he will. “ At the moment, Jim is working on how to identify and remove the threat.

- Willis Marti stated at a recent conference “Hackers Halted,” a new threat was outlined: The ability of an attacker to use Google to pull back cloud perimeter’s services; using goggle pulls back cloud services and pulls data out from queries. Amazon EC2, 3rd party cloud services are not secured, just because require a password. Willis has not analyzed the entirety of the threat.

- Question asked was this a 3rd party service that exposes content through http – leaking into public spaces that go through Google. Willis Marti responded not a “leaking,” of content; rather, it is a byproduct of how Google searches. Another example of unintended consequences of making information available anywhere, anytime.

Item 3: Cloud Computing

Bill Chollett presented Xyhtos document manager using these links: [http://www.xythos.com/features_xod/](http://www.xythos.com/features_xod/)  
[http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Learn/Products/Blackboard-Learn.aspx](http://www.blackboard.com/Platforms/Learn/Products/Blackboard-Learn.aspx)

- Over the past 3 years the library has deployed Xythos in the library system for individuals as a means to manage, share and control storage space in a secured environment.

- Bill indicated the original purpose for the library system was to provide the ability for a controlled collaboration of files and anywhere access; which has worked well for the library.
Item 3: Cloud Computing  cont.

Bill displayed a YouTube video; Get the facts about Xythos Document Management (2:39m)
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZ3Iy891MVO&feature=related
- This video took the user through the capabilities of the product, summarized the applications. Xythos is an intuitive web interface which allows quick access to common commands and organization of folders and files. Also has storage encrypted portion for confidential information.
- Managing system- Every folder and file in the system has distinct URL. Work flow feature, book mark feature, create a “ticket/token,” an invitation to share info, determine time allowances, and is password protected. Allows users to use drop box to view and share and send file. For example: can send via a “ticket/token” amongst the lib folks to review employee schedule.
- Bill acknowledges, just like with many products, it has multiple features, library not utilizing all of them. Individuals and managers can go to internet to “help file” to learn more about product.
- Initial cost is not known. Presently the library pays $9 000.00 for yearly support for 500 users
- Negative Point: use WebDAV. One can store large access data base but it is slow, cannot edit large file without downloading it first.

Bill post meeting sent this link.
- Here is the “ticket/token,” an invitation, to sample the interface. The password is “itacitac” without the quotes. Can upload for free with a ticket expiration date of 30 days.
https://lstor.library.tamu.edu/xythoswfs/webui/_xy-2455508_1-t_Xog5XdpR

It was offered by a committee member; Jibe software offers similar solution

Cloud Computing: Stephen Balfour

Steve indicating his dept. was in a trial stage looking at 2 vendors (Celestix and Microsoft)

Celestix- offers specialized appliances to help virtualizing applications.
- Celestix is a web portal into whole bunch of virtualized applications which took care of some of needs, but not all of desired key requirements. Chiefly to allow people to have files and access applications needed to manipulate the data. (Want people to have the ability to work from home or any location). First demo fell short.
- Celestix returned with a-2nd demo/presentation: used their box, similar to Google application; virtualized web server you install into your infrastructure and they successfully virtualized a web browser in College Station, running on this hardware.
- The 2nd solution met the specifications his Dept. required: They have finalized and approved a contract to run the demo installation.
Microsoft Cloud Computing

- Microsoft consulting firm recommended forefront UAG solution with terminal services and RDP rouge desktop to get access to data, and app V., their virtualization suite. Give same sorts of capabilities, looks more like windows desk top.
- Make sure users can recreate Home drive and Share drive structures. The desire is the application look just like they are at their office no matter where their location.
- Celestix and Microsoft consultants are ready to go, as soon as Stephen’s technical employee is replaced, the demo applications will be installed.

Item 4: How IT policy processes work

What happens to Rules at the University level?

Quick Outline Hierarchy Terminology

**Regulations:** General to System Level- takes a lengthy amount of time to pass through the system

**Rule:** University or Agency Level (1 year to pass)

SAP is subordinate to rule- Specific procedures (90 days to pass)

“Speaking to the concern that people do not have influence on IT policies”

- Once a request or response is received from the State to review a Rule/SAPs an extensive process begins.
- **DIR.: (Department of Information Resources)** determines that Higher Education has to agree that this new regulation applies to them.

**DIR makes the rules for all State entities;** Higher Education is just one entity. Higher education is not similar to other State agencies such as “Barber and other licensing boards.” Obviously very different criteria on many issues. Relative to this discussion is the view of the security requirements.

- “ITCHE” (Institute Technology Council for Higher Education) As a result, this organization was established to represent Higher Ed at the State level as a means to give Higher Ed/IT a significant voice in developing regulations.
  - Texas A & M is a member of ITCHE.
  - **ITCHE negotiates with DIR** to see how or if the rules or administrative changes will apply or effect Higher Education.
  - **After ITCHE’s discusses/makes recommendations, it goes (IPC) Provost Information Policy Committee:** Composed of group of people: Henrick Schmiedeche, IITAC’s representative, faculty, staff, OGC and students. The goal is to represent individual’s interests and gather their opinions on all material. **Once it is approved by IPC committee.**
    - NIS charged with reviewing the text for IT Rules and SAPS, and reporting to IPC
Item 4: How IT policy processes work  

- Recently NIS established a protocol of distributing Rules / SAPs to ITAC for feedback. ITAC members have an opportunity to influence by discussion, the text before it ever becomes a Rule. ITAC Password Committee is another example of having a major influence on how a SAP is developed.

- **IPC reflects IT staff.** There is great value in ITAC’s early participation in forming and shaping rules. This is the opportunity for ITAC to express earnest opinions, before the process moves forward and it becomes reality.

- **Next step, once it is approved by IPC committee, leaves IPC, and is routed amongst other interested groups:** such as Admin Divisions, Registrar, and Faculty Senate. During this step the admin staff does not have a voice.

- **After agreement reached, IPC receives and approves, the prepared text for SAP is executed and sent to Julie Kruder with URC (University Risk Compliance).**

- When back and forth questions/ answers completed: Signatures begin

- **Signatures required**

  - **Charlie Clark** with URC signs
  - **Pierce Cantrell,** IPC signs and routes to Karen Watson for final signature
  - **Karen Watson** signs, and submits the approved and appropriately signed SAP back to **Julie Kruder (with URC) to Post to Regulation Page:**


Open discussion

Ron Szabo asked feedback form committee concerning ITAC summary minutes. Consensus from the committee was it was a convenient way to disseminate ITAC production of work. Ron also conveyed minutes will be sent to Dr. Cantrell so he can stay apprised of ITAC’s efforts.

- Ron Szabo asked ITAC be apprised of the ITCHE process, prior to sending it to IPC. Ron states only way to have a voice is if ITAC provides feedback. He requested info earlier than presently receiving. Willis Marti agreed he will attempt to provide that to ITAC.

- Specifically, ITAC requests to be informed prior to IPC stage. Willis Marti stated, there is now has a calendar of planned SAPs for review. That calendar will allow Willis to pass along info sooner to the ITAC committee.

- In doing so, ITAC members can take advantage and pass along info to staff, and provide the feedback to ITAC.

- It was proposed to “For IPC consideration,” possibly being a standing item on the agenda. The opportunity for open discussion is necessary and would be fulfilled-to be decided at the next Executive Steering Committee Meeting.