



LRDC Computing Services

Computing Services Newsletter

September 1998

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Computing Services Welcome

by Karen Bassett and Gary Wilde

We'd like to welcome all newcomers to LRDC. With classes starting and new people coming on board, September is always a busy month. An influx of new people means computer account requests, computer orders, and office changes. To help make things go a bit smoother, these computer procedures are covered below.

Procedure for Requesting Computer Accounts

Computing Services can provide you with two accounts: a University of Pittsburgh **Network Authorization Account**, which gives you access to campus lab computers, E-mail, dial-up Internet access, and other services like the new e-Store; and an **LRDC File Server Account**, which gives you access to our local servers, allows you to share files with people in your project as well as other people at LRDC, and gives you access to network printers and software. To get your accounts, you will need to know your social security number, project leader, room number, and phone number. Once you have this information, you can stop by room 506 to fill out an account request form. Accounts usually take 24 hours to process. During the Fall rush period, however, it sometimes takes as long as 2-3 days. After your accounts are ready, you will be contacted by our group to discuss your documentation and training needs. You can arrange for an individual training session, which usually lasts about a half hour.

Procedure for Ordering New Computers or Software

Computing Services can advise you on both hardware and software purchases. Even if you know exactly what you want to order, we strongly encourage users to place orders through us, since we are familiar with vendors that offer educational discounts. Also, by ordering equipment through our group, we can better schedule your computer installations. We process computer setups on a first come, first served basis. This will put you higher on our installation list. If you need to order any computer-related items, please contact our group for assistance. To order a new computer or software, you will need to

have approval from your project leader and know which project and account numbers to use.

Procedure for Machine Moves

Moving computers between offices requires planning. Depending on the location and number of computers involved, computer moves may require network devices such as custom length cables, etherwaves for daisy-chaining, or network cards. We stock the most common items, which cost between \$40 and \$100. We can charge any items you need to your project. Some network cards have to be special ordered, and might take several weeks to come in. In some cases a port activation may be required, which can take up to 2 weeks. To avoid possible confusion, we ask that all computer move requests be issued in writing, either through a memo or E-mail. Normally, we ask for 3-4 days notice. However, during the rush periods (September through October, and January) we appreciate as much notice as possible, but will most likely need at least a week's notice. After receiving the request, someone from Computing Services will stop by to determine what networking equipment will be required and to schedule a time for the move.

Staffing Update by Karen Bassett

Last month Sherry Blauch left her position at LRDC to pursue work in her home town, Manheim, PA. As many of you know, Sherry enjoyed her position here, but after living in Pittsburgh for five years, she felt ready to move back home. After a brief job search, she accepted a position with a school district in her area. In fact, it is her alma mater's football rival. Her new position is similar to her job at LRDC, supporting PC and Mac users. This job was her first choice since Sherry enjoys supporting the Macintosh platform and is interested in learning more about PC's. As a Pitt alumnus, she will be coming up for football games and promises to visit.



Kawa Shwaish joins our group as Sherry's replacement. Kawa comes from Human Resources where he has been working as a Student Systems Analyst. He brings to this position experience with user support, configuring network computers, and World Wide Web development. He also has extensive experience with graphics packages such as Photoshop. Kawa is also pursuing a degree in Computer Science part time.

More staff changes include hiring a new Student Operator, April McCoy. Although new to our group, April has been working at LRDC since last Fall. April worked with Pat Kenney on the seventh floor, helping her with data entry. Also, Kim Flotta has been promoted to Head Student Operator. In this role she will take on more responsibility for training new users and student operators. Along with Shari Kubitz, she oversees our Help Desk operations.

Shari Kubitz has moved down to room 504, directly across from the main Computing Services office. Shari will continue to perform her Communications responsibilities. Moving down to the fifth floor will help facilitate her dual role. See the last page of this Newsletter for an updated Computing Services staff roster.

University of Pittsburgh e-Store

by Shari Kubitz

Now that the e-Store has replaced the PC Center and the annual Truckload Sale, LRDC'ers can take advantage of special prices on a huge selection of computers, printers, and accessories all year. Macintosh users will be able to purchase computers from the e-Store with the same discount provided by the PC Center. Many items are priced significantly lower than the PC Center was able to offer.

In order to view the prices and view all items available, you must authenticate at the e-Store's home page: **e-Store.pitt.edu**. Click on the **Apply for your digital certificate now** button and follow the instructions. This is an involved process and CIS will have a detailed help sheet explaining the process in the near future. If you would like to take a look at the e-Store before you authenticate, you can click on the **Take a sneak peak at our recommended products and pricing** button.

Once authenticated, you can take advantage of some helpful on-line features. You can select from various models of items and then view the features and specifications in a side-by-side comparison. Help is also available for users who need to upgrade the memory in their computer, but are unsure of the existing configurations. The one drawback is that there is no longer a way to "walk over" a purchase order and get computers or software the same day. As a result, please remember to plan your computer needs. The turn-around time for e-Store orders is only about 1-3 weeks. This is a big improvement on non-stocked items, which took as long as 12 weeks to arrive from the PC Center. Once LRDC is on-line with PRISM, turn-around time will be even shorter. In-stock items should arrive in a few days.

Please keep in mind that Software Licensing Services still handles software for University departments. At this time, the e-Store does not have many educational discounts for software. We recommend using local vendors who can provide prices similar to PC Center. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need assistance, please contact LRDC Computing Services at 624-7033.

Account applications and other computing services forms and help sheets are now available on-line from LRDC Computing Services' home page:

<http://www.lrdc.pitt.edu/compserv/cs.html>

Computing Services Staff Roster

Karen Bassett, Manager **Room 508A, x4-7037**
Gary Wilde, Manager **Room 506A, x4-7038**
Shari Kubitz, User Consultant **Room 504, x4-2881**
Kris Peterson, Systems Analyst **Room 507, x4-7060**
Kawa Shwaish, Systems Analyst **Room 507, x4-7060**
Kim Flotta, Head Student Operator **Room 506, x4-7033**
Tim Cooper, Student Operator **Room 506, x4-7033**
April McCoy, Student Operator **Room 506, x4-7033**