



entials

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Windows XP in Labs: Why and Where

Since September the Windows computers in the Hering lab, 1220 SC, have been running Windows XP. All the Windows computers in the Elder lab, 1231 SC, are still running Windows NT. But over the winter break the computers in the 1245 CAE classroom and Elder lab will be upgraded to XP.

You Should

Students who will be away for the winter break: if you have not used XP, before leaving change your password from an NT computer in the Elder lab.

Students who will be here during the winter break: go with the flow. And if you have never used XP, change your password from an NT computer in the Elder lab before it closes and the NT computers are transformed. You can change your password only one time every 30 minutes.

Why

CSS has been running Windows NT since 1997. When Microsoft released Windows 2000 as the upgrade from NT, CSS started working on preparing for the change to that operating system. For ease-of-management reasons, CSS decided to convert to Windows XP rather than 2000, and the staff has been working on making the XP installation as robust as the NT currently is. So why not stay with NT which has been stable? Because Microsoft has said that they will discontinue support for NT soon. Running an unsupported operating system is not feasible.

Account ID/ Hawk ID and Passwords

Which Accounts and Which Password?

Have you been confused by having an Engineering account ID that looks the same (e.g., bgreen) as the Hawk ID (also bgreen) but has a different password? What password do you use to login to read mail sent to your Engineering account (bgreen@engineering.uiowa.edu)? How can you tell which password to use when?

The password for your engineering account, bgreen in this example, gives you access to your engineering computer account which includes access to files in your home directory (H:\) and email, whether from Mozilla Mail, Netscape Messenger, Pine, Eudora, or WebMail.

Your Hawk ID may have the same form (bgreen, again, for example), but initially the Hawk ID has a separate and different password that you can change independently from your engineering account. See the ITS page about Hawk IDs for information about that password:

http://www.its.uiowa.edu/its/Shared%20Documents/students/student_hawk_id.htm

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Unless you set the Hawk ID password to be the same as your engineering account password, you'll need to remember at least two different passwords.

But there is more to know about the engineering account password. Until the end of the fall 2002 semester, there will be Windows XP and Windows NT computers in the Hering and Elder labs. (Currently Hering has XP; Elder has NT.) You can change your password from a Unix workstation, a Windows NT computer, or a Windows XP computer. If you want to change it again, you must wait at least 30 minutes to do so. Because password strength-checking is not currently available with XP, it is best to change your password from either Unix or Windows NT or using the account tools web page at <http://imap.engineering.uiowa.edu/mailtools/index.html#password>

History

ITS has been and continues to work on a long-term project to make signing in to the various electronic resources on campus simpler by issuing a single login ID and password for all electronic services. That goal has not yet been reached. One of the things that has happened is that the College of Engineering has tried to coordinate our computer account ID so that it is the same as the university Hawk ID. Another step that is coming soon is that changing your engineering account password will change your Hawk ID password. But not yet.

Help

Do you need help with your engineering account or its password? Talk to the consultants in 1253 SC: 5-5055 or send email to consultant@engineering.uiowa.edu. Talk to the ITS Help Desk for help with your Hawk ID.



Virus_Quarantine: New Mailbox for Viruses

When the Klez virus was making the rounds on campus, CSS instituted another way to deal with viruses in documents sent with email. Messages identified as being infected are now put into a mailbox called "Virus_Quarantine" rather than being delivered to the Inbox. If your mail program shows the attachment of such messages, the attachment will be suffixed with "I-AM-A-VIRUS.I-AM-A-VIRUS". Users who don't display file extensions will now see the duplicate extension "I-AM-A-VIRUS" and the capital letters shout a warning. Messages stay in the Virus_Quarantine folder for 7 days and are then deleted.

Email attachments that the virus scanner identifies as possible carriers of infection are suffixed with extension ".virus-scan-me.virus-scan-me". Users who don't display file extensions will now see the duplicate extension "virus-scan-me". Possibly infected messages are left in the Inbox for you to scan and then discard or open, as appropriate. You should scan attachments with an up-to-date virus checker to determine their cleanliness or infection.

Why the New Folder?

CSS tries to prevent damage from email-borne viruses in several ways, and we modify that protection as new viruses are reported. If you read your email on the engineering mail server (known as imap.engineering.uiowa.edu), you have the benefit of being warned about and protected from some infected email. If you read mail on the engineering mail server and forward it to another mail server, the forwarded mail is not scanned for infection and should be handled cautiously. If you do not read your mail on the engineering mail server, messages will not be cleaned and you should be cautious when reading messages from other mail servers.

Virus Help and Information

For information on what CSS has done to stem the virus infections passed via email, see the email page: <http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/email/index.html>

ITS's virus resource center <http://www.its.uiowa.edu/cs/helpdesk/virus/> has current information on viruses, links to a site to download the current virus definition files to use with McAfee VirusScan, information

on using Norton's LiveUpdate to get recent files, and related tools and links. Although the virus definition file is updated regularly, viruses are created more quickly. You should visit this site regularly to download the virus definition files and then use them to keep your mail clean and your computer safe.

Help

If you have questions about these procedures or what to do with infected email, please call the consultants, 5-5055, or come to the consulting office, 1253 SC.

~Diana Harris

User Forum Response

(This response was published on the CSS web site — http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/css/oct_forum.html — in March 2002. The editor forgot to include the print version in the spring issue of Essentials. Here it is now. The information is still relevant.)

CSS sponsored a forum in October 2001 to hear from the user community what we could do to serve you better. Fred Streicher graciously agreed to moderate the forum. I'm certain he did a masterful job because the attendees stayed and talked for more than the scheduled hour.

Here are the highlights of what we heard and a bit about what we have done and will continue to do.

- There were many **positive statements** made about CSS's support. Thanks. The point of the forum was to find out what we are not doing well so that we can do better. But we are always happy to hear good things about our service.
- CSS does not support the **research** efforts of students and faculty in the college.
- CSS does not always **respond** quickly enough to requests.
- People don't know how or why **software** gets purchased or installed.
- CSS needs to let everyone know what its **mission statement** is and live by it.

Research

University policy dictates that direct CSS support for researchers be done on a cost-recovery basis. The College, however, has always maintained a policy that makes the engineering computers available to all users without prejudice for what is being run. The College does not monitor or control how the College-owned computers are used beyond enforcing compliance with the University and College acceptable use policies.

The University Operations Manual, Chapter 27.1 states: "The terms of any grant, contract, or gift to cover research shall...reimburse the indirect as well as direct cost of the research...."

Respond

In November 2001, CSS hired Dan Mentzer, a computer consultant who handles Desktop Support. Please direct questions about software and software installations to him: <mailto:daniel-mentzer@uiowa.edu>, 335-5753, 1253 SC.

Software

CSS and the Dean's Office has revised the model for software purchases. Software funds have been reallocated to departments, who now make all software-purchase decisions. Read the complete policy at http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/account_pol/software_acquisition_guidelines_802.pdf

Mission Statement

After the forum, the CSS staff looked at the College of Engineering's mission statement, which is:

The College of Engineering serves the state, the nation, and the world by producing talented, broadly educated engineers, conducting high quality research, developing breakthrough technologies, and disseminating and preserving technical knowledge.

Then we wrote ours:

to provide a secure and productive computer environment that supports the ability of the College of Engineering to achieve its educational mission.

This statement now appears on the About CSS page, in each issue of the CSS newsletter *Essentials*, and in other places you might notice.

Public Port Cables

For nearly a year there have been public computer ports active in the 2nd floor entry area, the Engineering Student Commons, all conference and seminar rooms, and the 3123 Business Visitor's Center. Those ports are marked with a green dot by the port. Because many people do not think to carry network cables with them, we are now adding network cables and those cables are green as well. To use these ports you need a computer, a network card, and an Engineering computer account. Now you don't need to carry a network cable to use most public ports.

For details about using the public ports, read the web page: http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/tools/etudes/public_ports.html

If you have questions about using the public ports, please call the consultants, 5-5055, or come to the consulting office, 1253 SC.

~ Doug Eltoft

New IDL Student Edition Now Available on the Web

The new IDL Student Edition is available immediately for Microsoft Windows 98, NT, 2000, and XP and is priced at \$79 USD in North America and \$99 USD outside of North America. Pricing includes all shipping and handling charges. Go to:

http://www.rsinc.com/newsletter/news_bn.asp?s=1006&wid=129859#IDLse

~ Susan Beckett

VIP News

Research Systems has announced that no further development or enhancements will be made to VIP. The product will be frozen at release 1.5 (we have release 1.4). RSI has no plans to develop a replacement product and will instead concentrate their programming efforts on IDL. RSI has said they will continue to support VIP to the best of their ability.

Essentials is a publication of Computer Systems Support (CSS) in the College of Engineering at the University of Iowa. Essentials is published during the year whenever there is sufficient news to report to the user community. You have permission to reprint all or part of this newsletter for nonprofit purposes if you 1) acknowledge this source, and 2) send a copy of your publication with the reprinted material to: Newsletter Editor, Computer Systems Support, 1249 SC, University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

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Jargon Rating: 0-2 ++. No image means there is no jargon and it should be easy to read and understand. Two plus signs mean lots of jargon. One plus falls between. All 2 plus articles include a no jargon summary at the top. No jargon this issue.

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Hours

Computer Labs — The Hering (1220 SC) and Elder (1231 SC) labs are open 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. With an access card, you can enter the building and the labs after the building closes.

Consulting, 1253 SC — M-Th 8am - 9pm; F 8am - 5pm; Sun 6pm - 9pm

CSS Main Office, 1256 SC — M-F 8am - noon, 1-5pm

Web Sites

This newsletter is published first to the CSS web pages at

<http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu/news/essentials>

The CSS pages are found at

<http://css.engineering.uiowa.edu>

The College of Engineering pages are at

<http://www.engineering.uiowa.edu>

The University of Iowa pages are at

<http://www.uiowa.edu>

CSS mission: to provide a secure and productive computer environment that supports the ability of the College of Engineering to achieve its educational mission.