New Photo Archive Set to Launch

Computer Support and Audio Visual are getting ready to launch a new online Photo Archive solution for the college. Purchased at the end of 2009-10, this new system will provide the college with a digital, searchable repository for the thousands of pictures and videos we have amassed over the years.

The Photo Archive software, called FotoWare, allows users to search, upload and download photos anywhere in the world through just a web browser.

We will be working with PIO and Graphics to establish guidelines for adding digital media to the repository. Once the guidelines are in place and the system is active, we will send out an announcement to the college. Stay Tuned!

3CDUG Coming to COC in January

College of the Canyons is pleased to host the statewide Datatel Users Group meeting January 12th to 13th, 2011. Called 3CDUG for California Community College Datatel User’s Group, their purpose is to provide a forum to discuss/share issues and ideas related to the implementation, use, training and enhancement of Datatel products.

All Datatel users are welcome and encouraged to participate in the conference. There will be several tracks ranging from a technical track for those “Power Users” and other tracks that cover end user topics like reporting, application demonstrations and best practices. Anyone is welcome to submit presentations for the conference. If you have something innovative in your department that you would like to share, this is the place.

The conference sessions are FREE to College of the Canyons employees. However, if you want to participate in the meals and snacks during the conference there is a $60 charge to cover the cost of food. Watch your email for more information or check out www.yccd.edu/3cdug.

If you are interested in assisting with the conference planning, please contact Alex Fors at alex.fors@canyons.edu.

Proper Use of COC-All

As most of you know, coc-all is the email distribution list that reaches every employee with a College of the Canyons email account. Over the years, I have sent out several reminders as to the proper use of this distribution list and our email system in general. I wanted to take this opportunity to recap some of the highlights:

- Our email system is for college business only.
- Attachments greater than 1MB in size should not be sent.
- Do not “Reply to All” when responding to distribution list emails.

Our email system and coc-all is an important communication tool for the campus. Following these guidelines will help ensure the integrity of this system. Any questions about the appropriateness of a message or for help with attachments, please contact the Help Desk.
Technology Tips and Tricks

Check your Spelling on your Mac

- Mac computers running OSX have the ability to check the spelling of any word “on the fly” from within any application on the computer. For single words, your Mac will highlight it with a dotted red line. Simply, “Control-Click” the word and you will be prompted for possible replacements.

- To spell check the entire paragraph or document, press “Command+Shift+;”.

Quickly Sum a Group of numbers in Excel:

If you ever need to quickly count, sum or average numbers, use Excel. Simply enter all the numbers in a new spreadsheet. Then, highlight/select all the numbers. At the bottom right of the screen, Excel displays the number of items you selected, the sum total of all the numbers and their average.

Is your Content Compliant?

As news of a new lawsuit against Penn State begins to be discussed within our district and the California Community College system as a whole (http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/penn-state-accused-of-discriminating-against-blind-students/28154), faculty, staff and administrators may be wondering what they can do to ensure their department doesn’t face similar litigation. I’d like to offer the following tips that will help your department, program, or course be accessible under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, the main bodies of law behind the Penn State lawsuit.

Caption! Caption! Caption! All multimedia videos and presentations must be captioned, regardless of whether or not your course is on ground or online. Captioning is mandated by law for videos shown in class, for required multimedia course assignments, for in house created content, or whenever purchasing new multimedia content. In short, any media purchased, produced, stored, or distributed by the district must be captioned.

Check your web page. One of the primary complaints against Penn State is that their website and course management system are inaccessible under Section 508. Flash media, roll over bars, and floating/disappearing images are notorious for being inaccessible. If you are hiring a third party web page development company, the district may not pay said company until their creation is compliant under section 508. If you are creating your own web page in house, one of the easiest ways to determine if a page is compliant is by navigating the page using only your keyboard. If you can access all of the links, form fields, and navigational tools without ever having to use your mouse, then most likely your web page is accessible. If you are unsure about whether or not your web page is compliant under section 508, send me an e-mail and I will be happy to review the page for compliance (scott.mcafee@canyons.edu).

Blackboard is your friend! The Santa Clarita Community College district has no formal policy requiring the use of a specific course management system. While there are many good CMS tools and systems available, one of the downsides to not using Blackboard is that the course facilitator must ensure that the new CMS is accessible. Blackboard is an established and vetted CMS that has been tested for compliance throughout the CCC system. Using an unknown and un-vetted CMS may cause access issues similar to those experienced at Penn State.

Some of the steps taken by Penn State to address the issues raised in the lawsuit were to hire an Access Coordinator and establish policies and procedures regarding access for the campus. College of The Canyons already has an Access Coordinator and, in my professional opinion, we have some of the most comprehensive and progressive procedures regarding 508 and campus wide access within the CCC system. If you follow the three tips above, then most likely your course, department, or content will be accessible. If you have any questions regarding Section 508 or the ADA, please don’t hesitate to call or email.

Pete Hernandez has been working in the Computer Support department at College of the Canyons for three and a half years. Starting in June 2007 as a College Assistant while pursuing his degree in Computer Networking, Pete has been a valuable addition to the Computer Support staff.

Pete’s responsibilities have grown over the years from simple day-to-day service requests to providing support to our off-site locations and finally assisting with the maintenance of our growing laptop population.

Pete is quite the daredevil and when not at work, you can find him at the track on his motorcycle or pedaling for miles on his road bicycle.