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INSIDE|OUT

IT Services at ETH Newsletter

Deutsch

Dear Reader

One of the main purposes of the IT Services is to support core processes at ETH, primarily research and teaching, with the IT resources available to us.

Basically, we follow a three-pronged strategy: managing and improving existing services, developing and introducing new services and IT consulting. All of this while also taking into consideration the aspect of service quality and compliance with information security. Each of the three inside|out articles below corresponds to one of our three key strategies.

Happy reading,

Reto Gutmann
Director of IT Services

Contents

→ Maximizing ETH Communication

The future trend in communication is called "unified communications" (UC), or in other words "real-time communication". Different communication means are connected to each other to increase accessibility and collaboration. Starting March 2014, the IT Services (ITS) offer Microsoft Lync, a UC solution very well integrated into the ETH environment, which works on ETH workstations as well as on mobile devices.

As of March, the new Lync service is available to all ETH employees. Lync connects all communication services, increases accessibility of communication partners and accelerates business processes. What are the advantages Lync offers at work? Lync can be used to communicate

Carmen Alonso and Dr. Matteo Corti, Division Head User Services, use Lync to communicate internally and with other Lync and Skype users worldwide.

quickly and easily with other ETH members as well as with outsiders. It is similar to familiar apps like "WhatsApp and Skype" but has its own platform. It allows you to communicate and work with people around the world, talk from home without a phone via Internet and share your own desktop or presentation with colleagues. ETH employees can use Lync at the office as well as on the go with a smart phone or tablet. Read the ITS blog to find out how to activate or apply for the service.

Carmen Alonso, Group Mail/Directories, ITS User Services

→ IT-Security - Risky Business?

Headlines such as: "Spam attack originates from a Swiss university", "ETH overwhelmed by viruses and phishing emails", "Exam results manipulated due to lack of security precautions" are often the corollary of our own behavior. Internet security has many facets, just like those of us within the IT Services who are committed to protecting private and business data, privacy and other forms of information. Behind the scenes at ETH we are concerned with more than simple security issues, like backups, password policies, etc. A formal security infrastructure must consider the many risk factors behind the services and processes which drive our organization and ensure that quality has the highest priority.

Three ITS areas, one topic: David McLaughlin, ITS User Services-Mail Services, Stephen Sheridan, ITS ICT Networks - Network Security, Dieter Gut, ID Stab - IT-Security and Quality Management (from left).

To quote Warren Buffet "Risk comes from not knowing what you are doing". A threat which affects most of us is found in our everyday communications through email. ETH is inundated by more than 100 million spam messages and 300,000 phishing messages annually. Spamming and phishing are only two of the widely used means of abusing resources and misleading users into revealing sensitive information. Fortunately we have the ITS-Mail team to help combat this threat. The Network Security group is responsible for the daily operational aspects of identifying potential or actual threats to our networking and computer infrastructure. Malicious activities include computers infected with malware (viruses, spyware, etc.), attempts to steal or change important information or deny services from functioning correctly. IT-security, carried out by the "ID Stab" Quality Management, is concerned with identifying and eliminating risks as well as designing policies to protect data and privacy. The effort to protect information and services from abuse is an ongoing challenge. The greatest potential for reducing security risks, however, comes from active participation of each and every user informing themselves about safe computing practices - for example via the "ETH safeIT Security Awareness campaign" or the ITS blog.

Stephen Sheridan, Network Security ICT-Networks

→ All-inclusive Easy Care D-GESS

The ITS manages all the IT at D-GESS - a unique collaboration at ETH Zurich. To reduce hardware as well as support costs, the ITS has standardized processes and tasks and defined a common hardware fleet policy. Resources thus saved are re-allocated to GESS research.

ITS Service Delivery (ITS SDL) provides IT support to D-GESS since 2005. In 2010, the ITS concluded a general agreement with the department D-GESS which regulates support and hard/software for all GESS workplaces. To provide optimum support, the IT Services established an IT support team "ISG ITS D-GESS" headed by Benjamin Baum and located on the premises of D-GESS. This

Andarge Aragai, Benjamin Baum and Stefan Benz (from left), "ISG ITS D-GESS" field IT problems with the All-inclusive Easy Care Package.

promotes shorter reaction time, improved communication and increased customer satisfaction. In August 2013 ITS SDL further expanded this collaboration. An addendum was added to the general agreement which also covers services for D-GESS labs. In addition, since 2014, D-GESS is a shareholder at Scientific IT Services (ITS SIS). By joining ITS SIS, D-GESS has also secured professional assistance in research IT. Perhaps this is something that would interest you as well. For more information on collaboration and the All-inclusive Easy Care Package please contact Benjamin Baum or Dr. Jacques Laville, Division Head ITS SDL.

Benjamin Baum, Head Informatics Support (ISL) D-GESS

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