



UCD IT Services
Seirbhísí TF UCD

Reaching New Heights

Annual Review

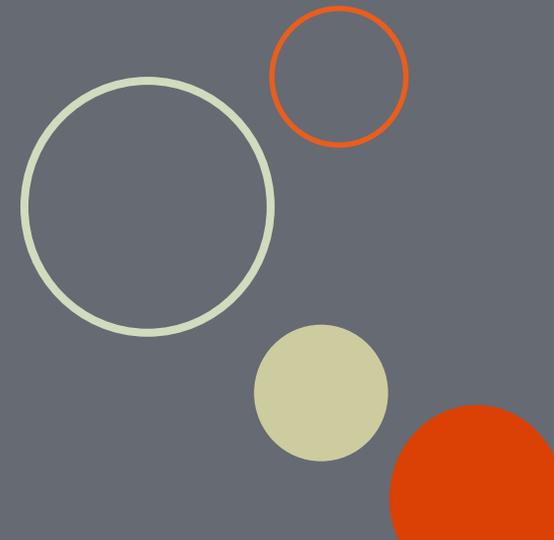
2010

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Introduction

The focus for UCD IT Services throughout 2010 was the sustained development of an innovative infrastructure, together with the systems and services which deliver electronic content to students and staff.





The Mobile Web

The Mobile Web

Providing mobile access to services and information is a key component of our IT strategy.

UCD Connect offers online access to an expanding range of services for UCD: our new calendar service launched in March 2010 is powered by Google and gives direct access from mobile phones to diary and contact details. Google Docs, a related application offers easy online access to files and will integrate with Google Mail when it is introduced for students in 2011.

New to UCD Connect since the summer of 2010 is the UCD Noticeboard which has proved very popular among the UCD community with over 1,500 submissions since it was introduced.

Similarly, the Teaching and Learning tab provides a wealth of services to the academic community, including feedback on modules and a calendar of events.

In September 2010 UCD IT Services offered an iPad loan scheme to staff - this was an instant success - giving staff access to the most popular new technology to try out for themselves.





The Future of Blended Learning

The Future of Blended Learning

Blackboard, our virtual eLearning environment, is used by students and academic staff to distribute course notes and materials, submit essays and interact with one another.

Blackboard was upgraded in July 2010 to provide the latest online facilities for interactive learning: the new service now includes in-built blogs and wikis, quizzes, assignments, surveys and discussion forums. In preparation for start of term 2010, Blackboard 9 quick start videos were developed to help staff get used to the new features.

Illuminate, our new virtual classroom environment and web conferencing tool, allows students and lecturers to interact as though they are in the same room regardless of whether they are oceans apart. This teaching and learning technology means the delivery of standardised education is possible to anywhere in the world. Available in Blackboard, lecturers can use video, audio, whiteboard, chat, web links and shared applications to communicate with students.

Lecture Capture, one of the latest technologies incorporated into the Teaching and Learning Spaces in the Daedalus building has facilitated lecturers to record their lessons for podcasting. A mobile lecture capture service is also available for use outside of the Daedalus.



Cloud Computing

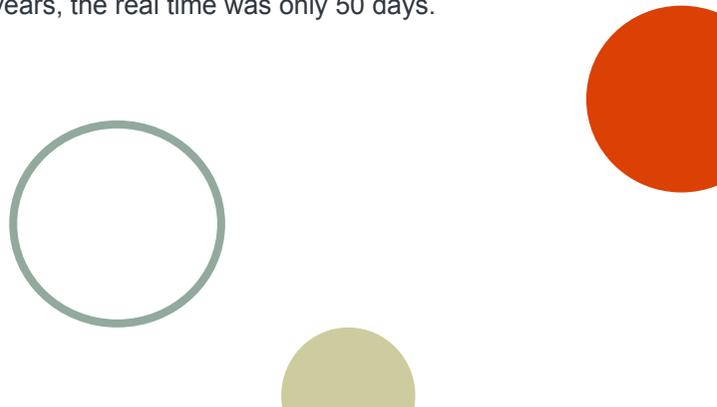
Cloud Computing

Using UCD resources and Amazon Web Services, a hybrid cloud was created to provide additional capacity in the HPC environment.

In 2010 UCD IT Services successfully integrated our in-house Phaeton Cluster with Amazon external cloud compute facilities creating a “UCD Cloud” with direct access for UCD users.

Researchers at UCD have a wide range of high performance compute (HPC) facilities in the Daedalus Data Centre such as the ICHEC Stokes Cluster, UCD Phaeton Cluster, and individually hosted research equipment. Even with this capacity, compute intense research projects can always progress faster if there is the possibility of additional resources. Using the UCD Cloud researchers can now add external nodes, in addition to our internal capacity.

Having access to the cloud allowed Dr Konstantinos Drakakis and Dr Scott Rickard to achieve the completion of the enumeration of Costas arrays of order 28, in a time that was previously impossible. The CPU time was 70 years, the real time was only 50 days.





Fostering Collaboration

Image courtesy of Jason Clarke Photography

Fostering Collaboration

We have introduced new, flexible community services for UCD by collaborating with Higher Educational Institutions on new and innovative initiatives.

UCD IT Services has the ability to allocate national “super computer resources” directly to researchers locally, since implementing the condominium share idea with the Irish Centre for High-End Computing (ICHEC). In August 2010, the Stokes compute cluster hosted at the UCD Data Centre, was upgraded through a collaboration led by ICHEC and supported by seven HE institutions.

The Innovation Alliance between Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and UCD is supported by a flexible wireless service (Eduroam) which was implemented in 2010 in conjunction with TCD IS Services. It provides users with access to any member organisation’s electronic resources from any location within the alliance.

Edugate, a new federated access service was launched in 2010, in partnership with Ireland’s National Education & Research Network (HEAnet). Now educational institutions in Ireland can share and access online resources using a single login point.

“Fostering Collaboration” was the theme of a joint eLearning Summer School organised by UCD IT Services as part of the Dublin Region Higher Education Alliance (DRHEA). The aim was to increase awareness of trends and innovations in eLearning. Nine from UCD attended. (Attendees at the launch are pictured on the left)

Here to Help



Here to Help

In 2010 Customer Services focused on reaching out and engaging with our customers.

The IT School Ambassador Programme is underway since May 2010 with IT School Ambassadors in place for each of five Schools:

- School of Chemical and Bioprocess Engineering
- School of Computer Science and Informatics
- School of Mathematical Sciences
- School of Physics
- School of Psychology

This programme helped us to gain a greater familiarity with our UCD colleagues and issues were uncovered that were not previously identified through existing support channels.

The introduction of 'Bomgar' remote support software in 2010, means we can now support our customers as if each support incident were happening on our own screens, regardless of geographic location or operating system. As a result we have been able to resolve more incidents at first point of contact.

The [Customer Charter](#) was revised in 2010 with new defined service level agreements and faster resolution times and provides the UCD community with a clear outline of our service and the many ways to contact us.



The Student Experience

The Student Experience

Students at UCD can avail of the numerous flexible services and eLearning resources provided. To ensure that they get the most out of these resources all new students attend IT Induction.

This year the highest ever figure of 4,314 first year students attended our IT Induction course.

Each student who attended received a 4GB disk key newly designed in 2010, which contained a link to the online IT guide and videos on how to connect to the wireless network.

Getting registered on the UCD wired network is much easier for students since the introduction of laptop self-registration. Instead of going to a drop-in IT Centre and filling out a form an automatic screen appears on the laptop requesting registration details.

Student feedback is valued and feedback on modules is now being received through a new online feedback tool designed and delivered by IT Services in conjunction with UCD Teaching & Learning.

This new tool, and the *InfoHub* reports that accompany it, provide School Heads and Module Coordinators with a valuable source of information to enable them to continuously improve module content.

The Staff Experience



The Staff Experience

Enabling members of staff to utilise the technology and software we provide is as important as the provision of these tools in the first place.

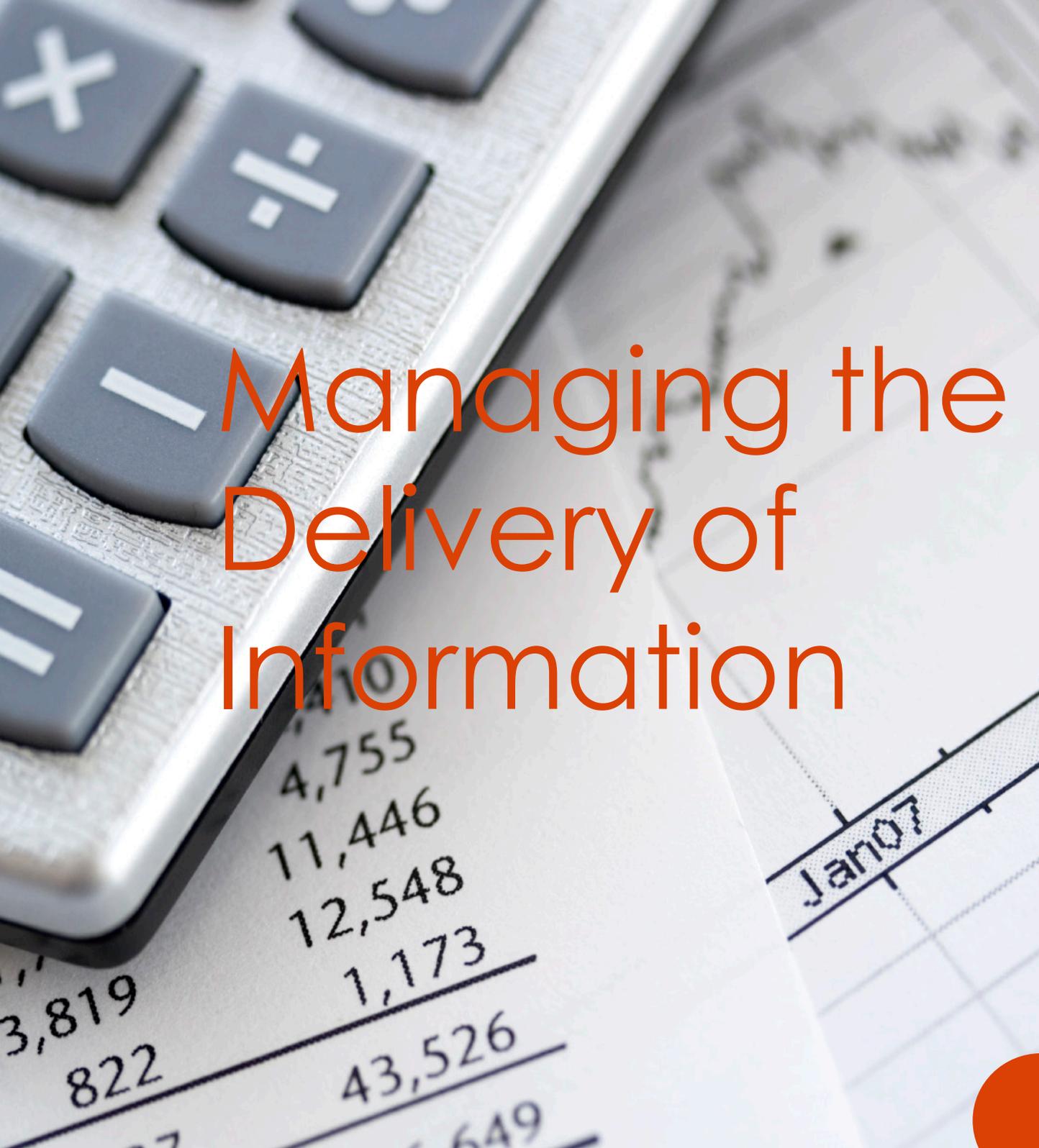
This year in anticipation of an increase in demand for staff email storage space, staff email was doubled to 4GB.

A number of new training initiatives were implemented throughout 2010: IT Security Awareness training for administrative staff was rolled out in the form of lunchtime seminars which began October 2010 with a total of 160 staff in attendance.

Teaching and Learning technology lunchtime eVents also took place during October in conjunction with 'UCD Teaching and Learning' and proved very popular amongst the academic community.

In December 2010 we launched the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification in Intermediate Microsoft PowerPoint and Intermediate Microsoft Excel 2007.

These courses will continue throughout 2011 with certification in intermediate Microsoft Word and Access being made available in early 2011. To launch the service 32 UCD staff members received training and certification absolutely free.



Managing the Delivery of Information

Managing the Delivery of Information

In 2010 the latest web technologies were employed to provide faster reporting and more targeted services for UCD staff.

A new service *InfoHub*, accessed via single sign-on from UCD Connect, draws information from UCD's business systems and utilises the latest web technology to provide staff with faster reporting and easily deployable online forms. Reports delivered in 2010 included management reports on student information for Schools and Colleges as well as class lists and grading lists for Module Coordinators. A facility to email selected groups of staff is also available.

The process of managing funded research proposals and grants was enhanced during 2010. Researchers now have a web-based facility to register their funded research grants and initiate the online grant approval process as well as a grant reporting module that provides their project details and financial budget versus expenditure figures.



Creating Digital Content

Creating Digital Content

Training, advice and the development of digital content for schools and units in UCD have never been more in demand.

The UCDscholarcast podcast series has gone from strength to strength after an explosion of interest in the initial three months of in excess of 350,000 hits. Now in its fourth series, UCDscholarcast is averaging 3,000 unique hits a month.

During 2010, a series of videos for UCD Teaching & Learning was produced to showcase good teaching practice within UCD and included the topics of problem based learning and study skills.

Multimedia eLearning content was produced for a campus wide initiative aimed at developing and conducting world class, multidisciplinary research into food and health.

Professor Mike Gibney, UCD Institute of Food and Health, was very pleased with the project *"We, at the Institute, are delighted with the videocasts produced on our behalf by Media Services, IT Services. We are working together to develop several other initiatives, which will appear on our website in the coming months."*

Pictured left is Andrea Johnson during filming on the School of Information & Library Studies Peer eMentoring Project.

Our [digital media showcase](#) hosts a wide range of media-rich content completed for Schools and Colleges in UCD.



Part of the Community

During the year the Student Welfare Fund received a 'large' cheque amounting to €27,356.78 from Ricoh Ireland Ltd in conjunction with UCD IT Services, the cumulative result of unused printing credit from closed accounts.

Pictured here from left to right Student Union President 2009-2010, Gary Redmond and Vice President for Students, Dr Martin Butler.

2010 The Year in Numbers

2,847,495

kWhrs used in the Daedalus Data Centre, this is equivalent to the electrical consumption of 870 Irish homes

29,399

the peak monthly number of unique devices on the wireless network, March 2010

8,033

the number of unique Software for U users for 2010

41,000

support calls received (centres and helpdesk) in 2010

3,581

simultaneous users on UCD Connect at 11:55 on 1 December

28,446

module feedback responses were received in Semester I

