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Thin Client: Changes For Oakland County Desktops

by Norma Miller, Program Manager - Internal Services

During the latter part of the 20th century, PCs revolutionized the way people work. It's hard to imagine today's work place without personal computers (PCs). PCs have become as much a part of the modern office as typewriters and mainframe terminals once were.

The PC's simple user interface and increasing assortment of applications encouraged widespread deployment of PCs for use with shared applications, giving rise to the client-server computing model. In client-server computing, most software is loaded locally on a PC and the PC does the majority of the processing. Since all software and maintenance is done locally (that is, on the PC), the PC is referred to as a "Thick Client".

Client-Server Thick Client computing environment characteristics include the following highlights:

- Operating system and application software loaded locally on the PC
- Hardware and software annual maintenance fees apply for each PC
- Maintenance and upgrades require trips to the PC to install software, resolve operational issue, or replace device
- 25,000 hours life expectancy

It shouldn't be surprising that as the industry began analyzing the Thick Client computing environment, costs were staggering and limitations growing. An Independent IT Analyst, Gartner Research, Note dated February 26, 1998 reported that the average annual cost of operating and managing a network PC to be approximately \$9,983. In addition, industry PC Support and Maintenance staffs were finding it increasingly difficult to upgrade software versions, apply security patches, and the like on a timely basis since such upgrades frequently required trips to each, individual PC in the organization's network.

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Given the increasing limitations and mounting maintenance costs of the Thick Client computing environment, manufacturers introduced newer, simpler devices that deliver the same flexibility, user-friendly applications, and productivity as Thick Client PCs, but at much lower costs to service, support, and perform upgrades. They referred to the new devices as "Thin Client".

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Thin Client computing environment characteristics include the following highlights:

- Operating system and application software loaded centrally on network servers
- Hardware and software annual maintenance fees apply for servers
- Maintenance and upgrades rarely require trips to the Thin Client device
- 175,000 hours life expectancy

Table 1: Selected Thick Client and Thin Client Comparisons depicts some of the major differences between the two types of devices:

Table 1. Selected Thick Client and Thin Client Comparisons

FEATURE/COST PER UNIT	THICK CLIENT	THIN CLIENT
Replacement Cost	\$2,339	\$ 800
Life Expectancy	25,000 hours before failure	175,000 hours before failure
Energy Consumption	\$28.73 annually	\$ 4.06 annually
Cost of Maintenance Labor (approximately 2,000 annual Oakland County work orders result in trip to desktop)	1.75 hours per trip	Trips to desktop not required

In order to take advantage of lower-cost of ownership and enhanced, deployment flexibility (e.g., quicker ability to utilize new software versions such as Microsoft Office XP), the Oakland County Board of Commissioners supported Phase 1 of a project to convert selected Oakland County PCs to the Thin Client environment by spring 2004.

Phase 1 of this project calls for Information Technology to identify PCs to convert to Thin Client, design and build the Thin Client infrastructure, and convert approximately 285 PCs to Thin Client devices. After Phase 1, the goal will be to convert a large portion of the remaining Oakland County PCs to the Thin Client environment; thereby placing Oakland County in the position to save millions of dollars in PC maintenance, upgrade, and replacement costs over the next decade.

The Launch Of Mirapoint Webcal by Rob Carroll, Network System Specialist



During the fourth quarter 2003, Information Technology will launch a new calendar product, Mirapoint Webcal. This new calendar will replace the existing GroupWise calendar in use by several County departments.

With Mirapoint Webcal, users can access their personal and group calendaring information from any Internet connection in the world. The Web-based interface allows users to quickly perform routine calendaring tasks, such as scheduling meetings, checking for conflicts and setting up to-do lists. Combined with Mirapoint Webmail, users will have an integrated email inbox, address book and calendar information.

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Moving To A New Computer? by Matt Pawlowski, Software Help Desk

When moving to a new computer, you'll find that you have to create a new Outlook profile before you can send and receive email. After following the **Outlook Profile Creation** instructions found at <http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/documentation>, you will be able to see your inbox on the mail server again. However, a new profile will not restore your contacts, calendar or other personal folders. Your contacts, calendar and other personal folders are stored locally and must be transferred to the new computer. To export your Personal Folder File:

These instructions should be performed on your old computer:

- 1) From the main Outlook menu, click **File...Import and Export**.
- 2) Click **Export to a file...Next**.
- 3) Click **Personal Folder File (.pst)...Next**.
- 4) Click **Personal Folders**, check **Include subfolders** and click the **Next** button. You may have other folders in the list. These folders are on the mail server and will be available to you on your new PC. Therefore, you don't need to export them.
- 5) Your exported file is likely to be large and will not fit on a standard floppy disk. If you are moving from an Intergraph PC with a SuperDrive to an Intergraph PC with a SuperDrive, you can use a SuperDisk. In this case, type **A:\backup.pst** in the **Save exported file as:** text box. Otherwise, you will have to find another method to transport the file like a writeable CD or a network drive. If you use a network drive, be sure to remove the file from the network drive once the import is complete. Click the **Finish** button.
- 6) The Encryption Setting can be ignored. If you are saving the file to a network drive, you may want to password protect your profile. Enter a password in the **Password** field, hit the **tab** key and re-type the password in the **Verify Password** field. Whether you have entered a password or not, click the **OK** button.

Your Personal Folder File will now be exported to the location you specified. Importing your Personal Folder File is a very similar process. It should be performed **AFTER** you have gone through the **Outlook Profile Creation** instructions. To import your Personal Folder File:

These instructions should be performed on your new computer:

- 1) This procedure is best performed when you have just opened Outlook. If Outlook was already open, close and reopen it.
- 2) From the main Outlook menu, click **File...Import and Export**.
- 3) Click **Import from another program or file...Next**.
- 4) Scroll down to, and click **Personal Folder File (.pst)...Next**.
- 5) Click the **Browse** button and browse to the location where you saved your file. Click the **Next** button. If you password protected the file, you may be asked for that password now.
- 6) Verify that **Personal Folders** is selected in the **Select the folder to import from:** list, **Include Subfolders** is checked and **Import items into the same folder in:** is selected and says **Personal Folders**. Click the **Finish** button.

Your Personal Folders should now be imported into your current Outlook Profile. If you have questions regarding this procedure, please contact the Software Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

Mirapoint Webcal offers a full set of access and privacy controls for both personal and group calendars. Using the Web-based administration tools, users have the ability to define which colleagues are allowed to view, modify, proxy or subscribe to their calendar.

When a meeting is scheduled, an email notification is sent to the attendees. They have the option to accept or decline attending the meeting before it is written into their calendar. Overall, the features which are available in GroupWise calendar are included in Mirapoint Webcal.

Information Technology will first assist departments who are currently using GroupWise Calendar with migrating over to Mirapoint Webcal. After the existing user base has been migrated, assistance will be offered to other departments who would like to use this product.

When a firm installation date is set, Information Technology will send out a formal notification. If you have any questions, please contact the Software Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

Don't Forget To Backup!



Whether you have a document saved on a floppy disk, a database saved on your "D" drive, or a spreadsheet saved on a network drive, make sure you have a backup copy, preferably on different media. Equipment fails and accidents happen!

Backup instructions can be found under <http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/assets/docs/Winntbu.pdf>. If you have any questions, please contact the Software Help Desk at (248) 858-8812.

Training Statistics For 2003

Training classes for Microsoft Office 97 applications are held at Information Technology each month. Listed below are the training statistics for January - June 2003:

Number of Classes Held: 19
Number of Attendees: 149
Number of New Attendees: 15

The training class schedule, course descriptions and registration form can be found on the Information Technology Web site under http://www.co.oakland.mi.us/ittrain/class_info/instructor.html.

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This newsletter is designed to share useful technology news and information with Oakland County Employees!

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