Message from Chief Information Officer: Preparing Schools for Digital Age

In the Information Technology Directorate (ITD), our aim is to create a technology environment within the Department that will help prepare our students for life in the digital age.

We strive to provide our students with access to the best educational technology available and our teachers need a strong, reliable set of ICT tools and online resources that can empower their teaching practices.

The Department's ICT environment has been ranked as the largest and most comprehensive in Australia, with more than 500,000 computing devices in 2,500 schools, colleges and corporate worksites across the state.

My role as the Chief Information Officer is to lead ITD in delivering and maintaining this environment, the wide area network and internet services that all department staff and students rely on and the administrative, corporate and learning systems used across the Department.

Under our flagship program, *Technology for Learning* (T4L), ITD delivers thousands of new computers and other equipment to schools each year. In partnership with the regional IT teams, we've also commenced work on a set of T4L projects that are providing schools with a stronger, more flexible and responsive technology foundation that they can adapt and build on.

In 2012, more than 1000 primary schools were migrated to the new Enhanced T4L (eT4L) server and services environment. More than 1000 schools also had their local area networks (LAN) assessed and remediated where required, for better connectivity across learning spaces.

Last month, we were joined in this effort by Dianne Marshall, Program Director from the ground-breaking Digital Education Revolution (DER) program in NSW, which has now provided wirelessly enabled, next generation laptops to all students in years 9 to 12.

Dianne is our new Program Director, T4L and DER,

combining oversight of the final pieces of work under the laptop rollout with leadership of the T4L program. She will provide strategic guidance for eT4L as we finalise the primary school rollout and commence implementation into secondary schools and corporate sites. Dianne and her team's knowledge and experience will be an invaluable asset for us as we begin developing training and support for eT4L.

Welcome Dianne, and welcome to the new *Technology News for Schools* bulletin.

Stephen Loquet
Chief Information Officer - NSW DEC Information Technology Directorate

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UPDATE FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

I am very excited to join the ITD team and to share my knowledge and experience in schools as we embark on developing an even stronger and friendlier interface between schools and ITD, making the journey a lot easier for you.

Whilst in its initial stages, the program office is developing a website with news updates, learning tools, a knowledge centre as well as an array of other useful information and documentation - all aimed at maximising learning outcomes for students.

This bulletin gives you an update on what's happening at the moment and we look forward to receiving your feedback on the work we are undertaking.

eT4L UPDATE

What is eT4L?

ITD has been working with primary schools to transition to a new managed Windows 7 environment with a range of automated and self service tools.

eT4L offers improved security and privacy provisions as well as personal and shared file storage for staff and students.

By creating a platform for standardised and managed technology, eT4L allows teachers to focus on using tools to deliver better educational outcomes.

For more information, visit the eT4L Intranet site at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/t4l/t4l_projects/et4l_server_services.htm

For the estimated 1000 primary schools that have migrated to eT4L server and services, it gives them the necessary platform to easily manage their own ICT environment and create a collaborative learning community.

The Department has begun considering the next phase of IT infrastructure in secondary schools. In 2009/10 we saw over $70m of network infrastructure and wireless technology rolled out to schools with year 9 to 12 enrolments as part of DER.

During 2013 it is expected that work will start on refreshing the DER servers (DIP) in schools.

Requirements in secondary schools will differ from those in the primary sector. The first stage of this project will be consultation with stakeholders to better understand the needs of secondary schools and ensure existing DER and school infrastructure can work seamlessly together.

DEVICES UPDATE

T4L Rollout

The 2012/13 T4L computer equipment rollout is on schedule with deliveries and installations continuing to take place in March for Phase 2 schools.

Apple deliveries have not commenced for Phase 1 or Phase 2 schools due to supply issues. Information and updates can be found at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/t4l/rollout/t4l_computers.htm

Apple

Apple has advised that the MacBook Pro is almost ready and should be available in the second week of March. Apple is working towards early May for the release of the DEC iMac models. We suggest schools keep an eye on the DEC Intranet Hardware Standards site for updated information https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/equipment/hardware_stds/standard_pcs_schools.htm

DER-NSW 2013 Laptop Rollout

More than half of the 63,500 devices have been rolled out to schools. The Technology Support Officer (TSO) team across the state is busily commissioning the laptops for students.

This year's laptop is the fastest ever with a Solid State Drive to ensure top performance. Other hardware specifications can be found at http://bit.ly/dernswsl2013

DER-NSW 2013 Software

New to the DERNSW software list is the Adobe CS6 collection, Adobe InDesign and the game play and platform

creation software Unity Web. See the full software and hardware list at http://bit.ly/dernswsl2013

DER-NSW TSO Update

A brief guidance document has been put together on employing a TSO between now and the end of the year. See: http://bit.ly/dertso2013

Windows 8 Tablet Trial

Research work is progressing in the evaluation of Windows 8 installed tablets. Currently, a number of tablets are being trialled with a networked image.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Update

The draft DEC BYOD Policy is now in consultation phase. The Secondary Principals' Council (SPC) and the Primary Principals' Association (PPA) are currently reviewing the document.

Accompanying the policy will be school and parent guidelines, support and training materials for schools.

SAM Initiative

This month, every School Administrative Manager (SAM) will receive a new desktop computer and 22 inch monitor to assist with the transition to the Learning Management and Business Reform (LMBR) program.

The device will be installed and managed according to standard school processes. Further information can be found at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/equipment/sam_computers/sam_comp.htm

SERVICE DESK UPDATE

Currently, ITD is reviewing the way ICT support is offered to schools and corporate/regional offices. The aim of the project is to develop an improved and standardised ICT support model.

A project team has been established and will begin to engage with a number of stakeholders, including the SPC, PPA, and regions.
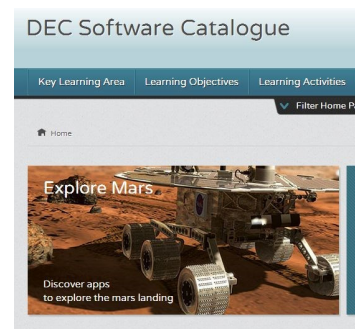
Sample schools have been nominated by regional IT managers and include a cross-section of schools currently being supported by regional teams and those using their own external ICT support staff.

The project team will provide progress updates via this bulletin.

ONLINE SERVICES UPDATE

Software Catalogue - As part of the eT4L solution, NSW primary schools will soon be able to access an online software catalogue. The catalogue will contain relevant software aimed at maximising learning outcomes.

The DEC Software Catalogue will be made available via a link in the DEC staff portal. It will provide authorised personnel with a quicker and easier process for installing the latest Enterprise Agreement and site licensed software versions to one or many devices.

The online catalogue will give teachers access to thousands of approved applications in a centralised domain. It will also ensure that schools will have access to the best possible software for their needs via a user friendly interface.

The website database and processes are being finalised. Phase 1 of the catalogue will be trialled in the first half of this year.

Library - Currently, a Request for Tender (RFT) for the new library management solution is being finalised.

The RFT is seeking a school library solution to replace the OASIS library component and to also provide schools with additional functionality, such as the capacity to integrate with eBook vendors.

The project will involve migrating existing data from the OASIS library to the new solution.

DER-NSW Professional Learning - DER-NSW PL series in Adobe Connect. Join one or more of these sessions to hear from and share with teachers best practice for the use of DER-NSW laptops in classrooms. We are looking for champions to co-lead sessions. Register or offer assistance at http://bit.ly/derpl2013

All DER-NSW Professional Learning and Curriculum Support resources are now available in one site at http://bit.ly/dernswcollection

Adobe Generations - Want to develop your creative skills for teaching? Join the free online course for teachers, *Digital Creativity in the Classroom*, helping to develop new skills and increase creativity when teaching. The course runs from 12 March 2013 for five weeks. Visit http://anz.adobegeneration.com for more information.

BlogED - BlogED continues to provide a safe, reliable and simple blogging solution for staff and students.
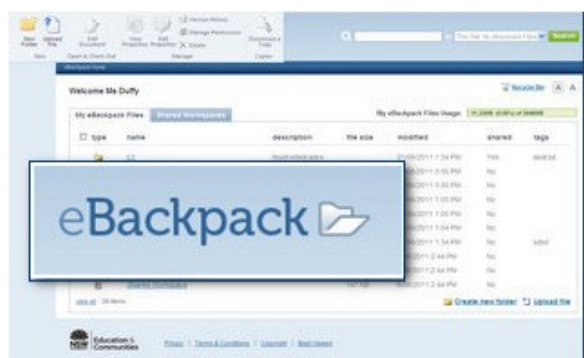
An audit at the end of last year revealed 500,000 comments on 14,000 BlogED sites were created during the academic year. So far this year, more than 1,100 sites have been created and used by an estimated 2,000 users.

Simple and intuitive to use, BlogED is supported by extensive resources on the Learning Systems Support site: http://bit.ly/nswdecbloged

eBackpack - eBackpack is a convenient tool that is available to all schools. Leveraging the Microsoft platform, eBackpack empowers students and teachers to work in collaborative spaces. Since it's full release in 2012, approximately 100 schools a month have been provisioned with the platform.

Using a web browser, eBackpack users can upload, view and edit documents from anywhere. Teachers can create shared workspaces or sites in which they can display class announcements, share files, list important web links and display student work.

eBackpack also brings Live OneNote sharing back to the classroom and integrates seamlessly with the DER-NSW

laptops. For full details and support visit the Learning and Support site in the Portal at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/learnsyssupport/index.htm

Principals can request provisioning of eBackpack to their school by calling the ICT Service Desk on 1800 338 483.

Adobe Connect - This interactive webinar platform supports web conferencing, online meetings and virtual learning. More than 2,000 staff have completed training in use of the platform. Information to support the use of Adobe Connect and your regional contacts can be found at http://bit.ly/nswdecadobe

Google Apps - The rollout of Google Apps for Education in DEC is in the last stages of preparation. We anticipate availability to all students and staff in Term 1. The final technical details are being configured to ensure an easy and simple interface for all users.

Major features include access via the portal and professional learning resources to support teachers in this environment.

Access this now at http://bit.ly/GoogleAppsPL. The apps that will be available include Google Drive (documents, spreadsheets, forms, and presentations) and Google Sites.

Further information for the release will be announced in SchoolBiz.

Software for home use - ITD has teamed with Microsoft and Adobe to offer an Enterprise Agreement (EA), providing the Department with a cost-effective licensing solution for the use of a range of Microsoft and Adobe software products on DEC owned devices.

The EA provides licensing for use of these software packages to be installed on one home computer for work purposes at a reduced cost. Insight Enterprises is the new provider of Microsoft EA software and more information can be found at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/it/software/softwareinfo/workathome.htm

About this publication - This bulletin will be published regularly.