



UNIVERSITY OF
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IN THE LOOP

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RETHINKING IT PROCUREMENT



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RETHINKING IT PROCUREMENT

Elizabeth O’Gorek

[UShop](#), the University of Toronto's electronic procurement system, has been in the vanguard of online procurement for the past ten years (Canadian universities are joining in: York University's online procurement system, went live this past summer). With UShop, U of T faculty and staff can purchase directly from vendors contracted to the university, shopping with the purchasing power of the entire university behind them. ITS is currently evaluating the procurement process for laptops, desktops, servers and other hardware in advance of a new Request For Proposal (RFP). This could directly impact the vendors and services available to ITS throughout the university, and deliver savings in time and money through UShop.

Although cost may seem to be the bottom line in procurement, Paul Ruppert, the lead in the ITS initiative, points to three key pillars of an IT Procurement RFP:

Technology, Vendor Relationship, and Budget (or Business) Process.

1: Technology

Selecting the right **technology** is a complex task in a constantly changing environment. Vendors must demonstrate the availability and reliability of a variety of technologies, and also that these are linkable with existing infrastructure, such as storage solutions and servers.

2: Vendor Relationship

A reciprocal **vendor relationship**. Winning companies should assist us in creating a technological roadmap for the future. Together with IT, vendors should be participants in the process of selection and integration of hardware, helping us make sustainable purchasing decisions as we integrate elements into existing and projected infrastructure. Quality of service, and a service relationship including certified technicians and service depots are important aspects of this relationship.

3: Process

Finally, the **business or budget process** will take a more fluid approach to the issue of price. Not only do we want to leverage bulk purchasing where possible, we need to make sure that we have the tools to project costs in a variety of situations, such as on deciding whether to lease or to buy. We need to have defined processes for exceptional cases, and to explore the ability to customize how business is conducted with the vendor.

Continued on next page...



The diversity of specifications outlined in the RFP could lead to a corresponding variety of new vendors. If the winning vendor sells their products online, they are likely to become accessible through UShop, opening up an even wider possibility for simple, convenient savings for IT departments and the university. Two benefits to IT purchasing through UShop, include

1. **Streamline Purchasing:** because purchases made through UShop are made with vendors already on contract to the U of T, many of the limits placed by university policy are removed. For instance, where a credit card is used, policy restricts spending to \$5,000. If you need to spend \$25,000 and up to \$99,999 you first need to obtain three separate quotes. Because of the nature of vendor contracts, you can make purchases of \$800 or \$60,000 through UShop using the same point-and-click procedures and with full policy compliance.
2. The **preferred supplier** standardized configuration means that products can be set up to fit in with existing architecture. This can reduce conflict between new machines and infrastructure if purchases are being made for laboratories or offices without direct IT consultation.

As more business is directed to UShop vendors, the university can use its considerable purchasing power to negotiate volume discounts and pass increased savings on to users. So the benefits of UShop purchasing are obvious in terms of hard dollar savings: some vendors, forgo shipping and cover the environment fee.

However, the serious savings are in efficiency. UShop purchases take an average of 5 clicks of the mouse, compared to 29 clicks in a typical online shopping experience. This is because requisitioner registration with UShop streamlines the process. Information such as shipping addresses and cost codes are defaulted in; funds are committed once the purchase is approved.

If vendors multiply in the next RFP, purchases should multiply as well, and with them the savings to the departments and to the university. With the new RFP considering addressing multiple specifications to multiple vendors, the benefits to the U of T community can only increase proportionally.

Making Purchases: UShop vs. Purchase Order *

via UShop 
5 clicks = 29 min

via Purchase Order 
29 clicks = 208 min

* Sourced from: <http://www.procurement.utoronto.ca/pdf/AboutUShop.pdf>

OFFICE 365

Getting to Know You

Information
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Work on implementing Office 365, the successor product to Live@Edu – **better known as UTmail+** – continues with the collaboration of staff from the ITS portfolio, the Library, and all three campuses.

Over the next few months, the project team will have prepared the foundation to migrate students from Microsoft's current Live@Edu offering to the new Office 365 suite of services. The target: Office 365 Wave 15.

What's Office 365 Wave 15?

Office 365 Wave 15 offers e-mail and a 25 GB mailbox, calendaring, Web conferencing, Sharepoint Online, Online versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and OneNote, 7 GB of Skydrive Pro storage, and more. Document collaboration, messaging and presence, phone functions – all in a familiar interface.

While there are many variations of the offering for Education, we are working with Education Plan A2. For more details about what's included in A2, [click here](#).

Knowing what's included with Office 365 Wave 15 is useful. Knowing how the suite of services looks and works will be really important. Microsoft has created a lot of documentation – in print and video formats – about Office 365.

One very good resource can be found in the Tech-Net library. It's a set of "Jump-Start" videos that provide rich background information about Office 365. These videos relate to the pre-Wave 15 version of Office 365, but they are still relevant. They provide significant detail about the services and their implementation. Some are a bit long so you might find yourself skimming, but there is still valuable information inside that will help understand what's included and how it works.

Another good resource, with more of an end-user focus, is the Service Description site, current version being 19 March 2013. [Here, the major elements of Office 365 are described](#).

Finally, we are working towards establishing a Wave 15 pilot site. When this is available, IT staff and others may request pilot accounts through my office. Once established, you can be part of the expanding learning and experimenting community. We will advise once this site is available. We do have a prior version of Office 365 in place – a prior to Wave 15 site. If you'd like to try out this version, let me know.

As well, if you would like to have someone from our team come to your org unit to provide an overview of Office, we would be pleased to do so. Just contact me at marden.paul@utoronto.ca and I'll work with you to establish the scope and contact of a presentation.

OFFICE 365 OFFERS:

- 25 GB mailbox
- Calendar
- Web conferencing
- SharePoint Online
- Online versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote
- 7GB Skydrive Pro storage

SUPPORT GROWING COURSES WITH AN ACTIVE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY STANDARD



The University's stellar reputation for excellence in academic leadership extends to its strategic application of educational technology. The University is consistently looking for ways to improve the teaching and learning experience for its instructors and students. This is a case study for the implementation of ECHO360 Lecture Capture software.

ECHO 360 press team, ITS/CTSI communications team

Setting the Standard

The first step was to conduct community-wide consultations and a needs-assessment. From there, a selection committee was assembled with representatives from variety of different disciplines, including engineering, dentistry, medicine, undergraduate arts and science, education, information studies and business. Achieving consensus was no small task, but ultimately the committee agreed on two key requirements for a lecture capture solution. First, they must be able to standardize the offer across all classrooms to provide consistency for instructors. And second, the new solution must also offer recording capabilities beyond the walls of the classroom to empower instructors and guests to create content wherever and whenever they desire.

[Dr. Avi Hyman](#), Director of Academic and Collaborative Technology at the University, led the effort to identify and select the institution's solution. "We tested numerous products but our selection committee chose Echo360 because it met the most needs for the University of Toronto," said Hyman.

Ultimately, the variety of recording options persuaded

the committee to select Echo360. "Echo360 delivers the diversity of capture options required by our academics, while providing a manageable, unified system for our technical staff," continued Hyman. Today, the University of Toronto offers a mixed approach to capture across the campus. The [EchoSystem SafeCapture HD](#) appliance records classroom-based lectures and presentations. Instructors have the option to use [Personal Capture](#) software on their computers to record content from their offices or even at home.

An Online Solution to a Face-to-Face Challenge

[Dr. Jim Wallace](#), professor of mechanical engineering at the University faced a significant challenge: how to increase enrollment in his Alternative Energy Systems course to meet rising demand from students without offering more sections in a single term? Wallace, a recipient of the 2012 President's Teaching Award at U of T, is no stranger to innovation in the classroom. The solution was to move the entire course on line, the first online undergraduate course offered by the Faculty of Applied

Science and Engineering. To do this, he turned to Echo360.

Dr. Wallace recorded his classes using Echo360 technology both in and out of the classroom, and then made the lectures available online. Student feedback was positive. "Students highly value the independence offered by scheduling their own time to attend class online", said Wallace. "Students get flexibility in their own schedules, and can stream or download their lectures over and over again, in their choice of the formats offered by Echo360."

But there were still problems with course delivery. The "generation of instant communication" wanted to ask questions and receive immediate responses from Dr. Wallace. More than one student often asked the same question. A written response was time consuming and didn't always address a complex topic. Using his Echo360 personal capture software, Dr. Wallace found a more creative solution. Using Echo360, "it was easy to create a mini-tutorial explaining the theory or concept in detail. For example, a formula or a diagram can be written out on paper... using a document camera to capture the process while at the same time recording a verbal explanation of the solution as a voiceover."



The creativity has paid off. “When students ask questions, I can create audio and video tutorials with illustrations that demonstrate the answer. It is an efficient way to serve a large, online student body and provide a more effective answer than an email,” according to Dr. Wallace.

The move to online has helped in more ways than one. Course enrollment has grown from approximately 50 students to over 140 today. Both graduate and undergraduate level students can enroll in the course due to the flexible schedule. For Dr. Wallace, it has delivered scheduling flexibility: “I’m no longer a slave to the classroom schedule. I can go to a conference and prepare my lectures ahead of time, making them readily available to students.”

Forward Thinking

Consistent with its heritage, programs at the University of Toronto will continue to expand and experiment with technology in the classroom and out. Roll out and adoption of Echo360 will continue over the next academic year, and Dr. Hyman expects more experimentation with blended learning and even flipping the classroom. “As more of our academic programs begin to leverage blended, inverted and online learning, having this suite of lecture capture software should be a significant boon to program delivery; the goal of deploying an institutional standard across the University is to develop a real and shared pedagogical and technical expertise,” Hyman said.

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APRIL 2, 2013
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LOGGING OUT

Joe Lim retires after 30 years of technology leadership

By Lanna Crucefix

Originally published by University of Toronto Mississauga News

Joe Lim isn't just a technophile – he's a bona fide technogeek.

Retiring this month as Chief Information Officer from the University of Toronto Mississauga, Lim even uses a Star Wars quote on his email signature: 'Do...or do not. There is no try.'

"I've always tried to live my life with that quote," Lim says about Yoda's words of wisdom. "If you've made up your mind that there's something you want to do, you've got to push through to achieve it."

Good philosophy for a man who began his U of T technology career in 1981. Lim has seen UTM grow from small Erindale College into the large and complex campus it is today. He's also help guide UTM through a technological revolution that has included the introduction of the personal computer, email, the Internet and World Wide Web (Lim created Erindale College's first website), wireless communications and mobile phones.

Lim started at U of T installing and repairing early digital systems designed to take the place of cumbersome punch card machines. Even then, Lim could see the future was in software. He took a computer science degree to prepare himself for what was coming.



PHOTO CREDIT: CESAR MEJIA, 2012

His chance came when a position opened up in what would eventually become UTM's computer services department. By the time Lim became CIO in 2006, he had been involved in initiatives that changed almost every aspect of how the campus functioned, positively affecting the student experience, research capability and staff productivity.

"We were the first campus to give each student a computer account and access to email, regardless of their program," says Lim. "UTM has always led in the use of technology."

One of the interesting shifts Lim witnessed was the transformation of how people react to new technology. In the early days, Lim's challenge was to get people to understand technology and adopt change. He remembers trying to convince faculty to move away from their typewriters once they had an email account, and training a student how to use a mouse – which was not by waving it in the air.

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STAFFING UPDATES AT ITS	RETIREMENTS	NEW HIRES		
	Ian Fann Connie Del Fuoco	Rodney Branch, secondment from SGS until Jan. 2014 Mike Spears, Mobile Lab Manager	Ivan Sestak, Client Support Manager Michelle Da Pointe Mark Johnston, Ken Tsnag Oliver Ng	Dana Pogaceanu Hossein Aliabadi Bethany Babinchak

Now, he says, the challenge lies in technology's very ubiquity. "Students expect the technology to be there. They know what they want and we need to ensure we have enough capacity and capability to support their needs."

This constantly changing dynamic has kept Lim motivated for the last thirty years. "It keeps you on your toes. There are always new technologies, applications and programs. We need to understand how we can best apply them to enhance the campus, teaching and research."

While at U of T, Lim also completed a Masters of Education from OISE's Higher Education program. "It was a challenge to my staff," he says. "I like to lead by example. I wanted to show them that you need set up time to upgrade your

skills, and that it's important to keep learning."

As for future predictions? Mobile, wireless and tablet technologies will become more important, says Lim, as will incorporating technology into the curriculum. Lim believes UTM will continue to lead other campuses in technology use. Already, the St. George campus uses UTM's application streaming servers to run an online geography course.

"Joe has watched and shaped the evolution of computing technology from the front-lines,"
says Paul Donoghue, chief administrative officer at U of T Mississauga. "In three decades, he has taken UTM from the age of rotary dial phones to advanced videoconferencing and beyond. It's an extraordinary legacy."

Lim also hopes he's left a legacy of risk-taking that will serve UTM well. "If you don't take risks, you don't know how successful a technology might be," he says. "That's something I've tried to instill in my staff and I hope they'll keep moving ahead."

Lim's retirement plans include working with gadgets and practicing photography. But despite looking forward to the rest, he'll miss the people he worked with at UTM. "My staff are a wonderful group – I looked forward to working with them every day. I always said, it's a very nice campus, the people here are great and I did interesting work. I can't complain."

Join Joe Lim to celebrate his retirement March 28 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the UTM Faculty Club.

Be social...

ITS is on Facebook and Twitter. Connect with us for the latest updates!



Fun Fact

Golden Buff (Red Star): They are bred specifically so that males and females are different colours when they hatch. Females are egg-laying machines that continue to lay well in the heat and cold, when many others slow down. The males are said to be good "fryers".

Photo and Content Credit: <http://mypetchicken.com>

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