



Initiative Updates

View from the Top: in this week's column, we'll take a closer look at our active strategic initiatives: what the purpose/goals are, timelines, and current status.

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Research IT Review

Team Members: Kacie Reed, Mara Sedlins, Joe Strecker

-Update provided by Kacie Reed

The purpose of this review is to identify strengths, challenges, and potential improvements to Colorado State University's current Research IT (RIT) resources and support. To meet this goal, the review team is conducting interviews with a broad representation of researchers, administrators, IT experts, extramural groups, and is reviewing internal and published literature on RIT.



The team has conducted 29 interviews between February 2020 and June 22 2020 and generated an interim report including tentative findings and recommendations, which was submitted to the VPIT & CIO at the end of June. Further, targeted interviews and literature reviews will be conducted over the next several months to produce a final report by the end of calendar year 2020.

Peer Benchmarking

Team Members: Shawn Baker, Brandon Bernier, Dave Carpenter, Jason Huit, Steve Lovaas, Kacie Reed, Joe Volesky

-Update provided by Brandon Bernier



The purpose of this initiative is to scan our external environment to bring in new ideas and perspectives from other higher education institutions and national research. This will allow us to complement our internal initiatives designed to evolve our division for the future. This newly acquired information should result in recommendations for key areas to evolve our division in the areas of workforce, culture, and technology shifts that enable new models and transform our Central IT.

Kansas State University and Oregon State University are the first institutions the team has identified to meet with. The team will be collaborating with various members of those institutions to discuss organizational structure, IT support models, campus IT ecosystems, and IT funding and budgetary models.

These meetings are taking place from late-July to mid-August. The team will review lessons learned, compile trends and key findings, and deliver recommendations to the Central IT Leadership team by the end of August. This initiative hopes to conclude its work by early September.

Infrastructure Integration

Team Members: Bill Becker, Rich Blumlein, Curtis Brown, James Cizek, Ray Frush, Brian Gilbert, Ed Overacker, Jo Sampson, Kevin Swab, John Walker
-Update provided by James Cizek & John Walker

This initiative is working towards efficiencies and effectiveness in several areas:

- Operational Lifecycle: Infrastructure EOL & integrated architecture plan needed.
- Financial: Spending money & staff time on duplicate environments
- Duplication of Effort: Lost opportunities to do things because of duplicate work
- Security: One architecture & fewer devices will allow consistent security practices



This newly formed team is progressing well. The team has developed a document describing the project and problems we are trying to solve. We've identified elements that are absolute necessities, as well as items that are more robust and can improve efficiency and/or manageability of a chosen solution. The team is putting the final touches on this requirements specification and will submit to vendors for solution proposals by the end of next week. We have chosen 2 hardware and 2 software vendors that meet all the project requirements and are leaders in their Gartner magic quadrant ratings.

Next steps will include an evaluation of the vendor proposals, engagement with value added resellers (VARs), or additional manufacturers, as necessary. We have asked for proposals by mid-August, putting us on course to evaluate potential solutions this fall and winter with a purchase recommendation ready in early spring. The team continues to work together on this project and others, and are aided by enthusiastic participation in team building activities outside of the normal work scope (currently Trivial!). The team is collaborating well and are on target to meet all goals set forth in the charter at this time.

Communications

Team Members: Matt Albertson, Katie Banghart, Kathy Gargan, Dave Hoffman, Brian Page, Adam Warren
-Update provided by Dave Hoffman



This initiative seeks to create consistent messaging and delivery channels for our staff, as well as increase awareness and engagement with divisional strategies. Striving to incorporate a multitude of communication styles and ensure transparency.

The Communications Initiative team would like to thank everyone for their participation in the focus groups and survey that we recently conducted. As a team we have summarized and consolidated the findings from this discovery work which allowed us to brainstorm over a dozen ideas for improving our communications.

This week, we narrowed these ideas down into the ones we feel will make the biggest impact and will be making recommendations, create prototypes, and pilot these ideas. Over the next few weeks, we will be seeking your feedback on the effectiveness of these pilots as we work toward a final recommendation in mid-August.