

Tech Advisory Meeting
March 14, 2007

Presence: Rawdon Cheng (UHLS, notes), Jonathan Koppel (UHLS), John Love (BETH), Michael Whitney (EGRN), Laurie Louis (APLM), Chris Caban (APLM), Michael Sweeney (GUIL)

Vista deployment

As of this time, no library is using Vista but Mike S is using it on his own. It has a cool user interface and he likes it a lot. Though it is a hog on resource, it does a lot of nice features. The Event Viewer is much better design and provides better information than its predecessor. The group was interested to know if Horizon is compatible with Vista. Rawdon has tested the circulation functions in Vista and it is functioning.

Some hardware may not be compatible with Vista but more vendors are updating the driver in their website. UHLS has some old printers that the vendor did not put out Vista driver but the Vista DVD comes with the driver.

Vista comes with 64-bit and 32-bit version and there are a few editions. In choosing which version, libraries should consider what hardware/software it has especially network printers. 64-bit o/s requires 64-bit hardware drivers, and some 32-bit software will not run smooth in 64-bit o/s. Make sure to go to software/hardware vendor to check out the supported platform. The group suggests putting out a recommended hardware for the edition the Council recommends. Noted that some pc makers label their pc as Vista capable pc but it does not mean Vista ready. Though a pc can run Vista in minimum hardware requirement, the user experience may be less than satisfactory.

Some editions of Vista come with Remote Desktop Connection, which is differently from Remote Desktop Assistance. RDC allows a user remote access that computer at any time. RDA is for remote support. Local users initiate an email to support staff which embeds a token to allow remote access. This feature (RDA) is available in all Vista editions. For UHLS support, it is a new tool that can be used for providing support to library staff.

Mike W asked about upgrading from XP to Vista. Generally, it is not recommended. It is better off to install fresh.

Since there are so many new features in Vista, UHLS is not ready to support deployment at library level. If any library chooses to use Vista, assistance from UHLS is limited.

Power saving for computers

Since 2001, the energy cost has risen 20%. There is a study reporting that in near future, the cost on energy used of a computer will exceed the cost of hardware. There are ways to save energy cost of running computers.

Screensavers do not save power; some screensavers use more power than idling because of its graphic intensive needs.

Sleep mode will stop all processes in the computer and go to low power mode. All information stayed in memory is kept. The hard drive is slow down. Power consumption is minimal. It is the default setting in Vista when a user 'shut down' the pc.

Hibernation brings the computer to power off state. All information in memory is written to hard drive and shutdown. It uses no power at all.

There is a balance between saving power versus keeping computer on to do maintenance. Newer network cards (cards less then 3 years old) have capability to do wake on LAN. There is a freeware from solarwinds.com to do wake on LAN. Also new Dell pc has start up feature in the BIOS, though it will turn on itself every day on the set time. Sleepy, a freeware, can be used in conjunction with it to turn it off at days that is not used. Also windows update has option to turn off itself after updates are applied.

RSS feeds

Mike S demonstrated how to set up RSS feeds. A copy of his presentation is on our ftp server under public/guil/rss.

Web access statistics

Extremetracking.com has a free tool to analyze web access statistics. It breaks down the access stat by browser, o/s of the computer, IP, etc. John Love had developed his own reporting tool using asp.

Google apps

John Love demonstrated google apps. The biggest attraction of Google apps is gmail and calendar. Gmail user can set up calendar – similar to Outlook/Exchange calendar. BETH is using it for its staff in/out board. Calendar can be shared as public or private which individual has control over his/her own calendar while viewing others schedule.

Google apps is more than calendar and gmail. There are other apps users can use such as word processing, spreadsheet.

Others items

Michael W asked about protection screen for LCD monitors. Patrons often left finger prints on the screen which is hard to remove. Anti-glare screen can be used in this situation to prevent the LCD silk screen from damaging. Privacy screen (\$89) can also be used.

Desktop protection for public pc

Some libraries have bad experience with Cornerstone – it crashed hard drive a few times. They like Deep Freeze better, and have no problem with it, though UHLS has not experienced any yet. EGRN is using Microsoft Shared Computer Toolkit. Mike W will demonstrate it at the next meeting.

Next meeting: 9:30am May 16, 2007 at EGRN