



News about **i**nformation **s**ystems throughout **MIT**

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**User-Centered Design Key to
MIT Libraries' New Web Site**

• Robyn Fizz and Nicole Hennig

In 1999 the MIT Libraries began the process of redesigning their Web site at

<http://libraries.mit.edu/>

This gateway to services and electronically available content also serves as the Libraries' presence outside the walls of the individual libraries.

Key goals were to make the Web site very user-friendly and easy to navigate. To achieve this, the Libraries have followed a user-centered design process, involving the MIT community in various ways to help develop the site. The Libraries have conducted usability tests, surveys, and more, in order to see the site from the users' point of view, rather than from their own perspective.

Some usability tests involved watching volunteers use the Web site to find answers to specific questions while thinking out loud. In card-sorting tests, volunteers were asked to create and name categories of information on the site. Volunteers included students, faculty, staff, alumni, and users with disabilities. The test results helped the Libraries design a site where users can find information quickly and efficiently. Full details about these tests and their results are available at

<http://macfadden.mit.edu:9500/webgroup/project.html>

Old Drawbacks, New Clarity

The original Libraries Web site was modeled after the physical world, so it didn't take full advantage of the Web as a medium. The primary links on the old home page were the names of the individual libraries at MIT. Other links were vague and unclear, such as "Resources" or "Services." Some links were library jargon or abbreviations that were unfamiliar to most people, such as "RSC" or "ILB." Some aspects of this design required guessing which department or unit was the source of the information you were looking for. Much of the information about what you could do on the site was hidden in lower-level pages.

The new site clearly shows all that the Libraries have to offer in the way of services and interactive resources. The site uses more specific and descriptive link names, and avoids library jargon.

The new categories on the home page are

- Search Our Collections
- Research Help
- Subjects + Courses
- Borrowing + Ordering
- About Us

These categories grew out of concepts from the card-sorting usability tests and reflect the points of view of users. In addition to the new categories, the Libraries have a search page (as before), and a new alphabetical site index.

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MIT LIBRARIES' NEW WEB SITE

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Creation, Design, Fine-Tuning

Many staff members helped create and fine-tune this new architecture during the summer and fall of 2000. A text-only version of the site, or "wire frame," let staff focus on content, structure, and wording without looking at the visual design elements, such as colors, fonts, or graphics.

The staff also rewrote individual pages to be more readable on the Web. Studies show that people skim, rather than read, most Web pages, and that when there is less information on a page, people perceive the page as more informative. To address this, the Libraries developed a style guide, *Writing for the Web*. It's available at <http://macfadden.mit.edu:9500/webgroup/writing/>

Last summer the Libraries sent out requests to several design firms recommended by MIT's Web Communication Services. The Libraries chose to work with Hecht Designs, a firm that had designed MIT's Capital Campaign Web site, and several other Web sites at MIT. They were given the Libraries' goals and criteria and came up with

several options for the new look and feel. A design was selected in September 2000 with the approval of the Libraries' Steering Committee.

The Libraries spent January through June 2001 moving almost 1,500 pages from the wire frame to the new templates. The site is made up of a group of interconnected sites, including those of 15 MIT library units and the Institute Archives. In addition, the site includes several database-backed resources such as

- Barton, the library catalog
- Vera, listings of databases and e-journals
- The Digital Library of MIT Theses
- Image collections from Rotch Visual Collections

After most of the pages were moved into the new templates, the Libraries conducted more usability tests to find out how the new design was working. Results confirmed that the site is much more user-friendly than the old one. Detailed results are available at

<http://macfadden.mit.edu:9500/webgroup/usability2001/>

<http://macfadden.mit.edu:9500/webgroup/usability2001/test2.html>

The Libraries also asked people with visual disabilities, including blindness,

color blindness, and low vision, to test the site. Testers who used screen readers reported that the descriptive link names made the site easy to navigate. The Libraries follow the guidelines for accessibility provided by the W3C at

<http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/>

Since the Libraries have totally reorganized the directory structure of their site, they've created some shortcut (or persistent) URLs that can be used to make links to the most important pages. These pointers will be kept current, so that if the page is ever moved, the shortcut URL will still work. These shortcut URLs are listed at

<http://libraries.mit.edu/shortcuts.html>

The Libraries will continue conducting usability tests and making improvements based on them. They have found these tests very informative: the results are much more useful than what can be learned from surveys and focus groups.

Learn More

The launch date for the new site was June 25, 2001. For more information or questions about the redesign process or the Web site itself, contact the Libraries' Web Advisory Group at <webgroup-lib@mit.edu>. ☎

MIT Libraries Launch New Barton Catalog

In July, the MIT Libraries launched an online catalog that replaced the telnet and Web versions of the previous Barton. This replacement catalog is the culmination of a two-and-a-half-year project to choose and implement a new library management system. The catalog name, Barton, remains the same – a nod to William Barton Rogers, the founder of MIT.

An Unfolding Process

Last fall the MIT Libraries selected ALEPH 500 from Ex Libris as their new integrated library system. Since then, staff at the Libraries have been working hard to design an intuitive and powerful catalog for the MIT community.

Searching is now easier and more focused. For example, you can search within just conference proceedings, theses, or journals. There will also be increased functionality later this summer: the "Your Account" section

will let you place holds, renew items, and modify your searching profile.

Ex Libris doesn't provide a telnet version of their catalog. The Libraries have asked the vendor to develop a Lynx-accessible version, which should be ready by January 2002. Lynx is a text-only browser that looks and feels similar to the previous telnet Barton sessions, and can be accessed by people using screen readers.

Training and Improvements

The Libraries will offer training sessions and a Web tutorial on the new catalog in the coming months. For details, see Barton's front page at

<http://libraries.mit.edu/barton/>

The Libraries will also continue to improve Barton through the summer and early fall. For news on updates, see

<http://libraries.mit.edu/about/news/new-barton.html>

You can send comments or questions about the new Barton to <webopac-feedback@mit.edu>. ☎



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IS Evaluates Office XP and Plans for Support

• Janet Littell and Bryant Vernon

On May 31, Microsoft released the latest version of its office suite for Windows, Microsoft Office XP. The suite includes Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, and Outlook, version 2002.

The IS Software Release Team has since begun its Office XP release effort for the MIT community. This includes testing, documentation, and gearing up the Computing Help Desk to provide support. As long as testing does not reveal any major compatibility or security problems, IS plans to announce support for Office XP by September 14, 2001. Support will be limited to certain programs and features of the *standard* version of Office; this means that Outlook and Access will not be supported.

Advice on Upgrading

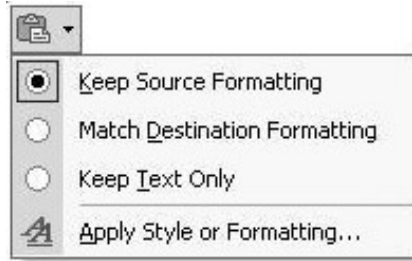
Until the Software Release Team finishes its Office XP release effort, IS does not recommend that you upgrade. However, users buying new computers or installing additional copies of Office may not have much choice, since Microsoft has stopped shipping all previous versions of the product. Office 2000 is no longer available to end users or to computer manufacturers, such as Dell, who bundle the software with their systems. Fortunately, users or departments with an Office 2000 installation CD can buy Office XP licenses and use them to legally install additional copies of Office 2000.

Testing for Compatibility

In its testing of Office XP, IS is focusing on three areas of compatibility. First, it aims to ensure that Office XP is compatible with other supported Office suites. Second, it explores how Office functions with supported business applications – such as SAP reports for the Web and BrioQuery reports – and with administrative templates such as the Travel Voucher, Request for Payment, and Journal Voucher. Finally, it identifies any problematic cross-platform behaviors.

The release team is listing compatibility problems that can affect the MIT community, along with other known issues, on the Office XP page at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/officexp/>



Smart tags provide contextual menus that alert you to important actions.

New Suite Features

The Microsoft Web site provides short and in-depth overviews of Office XP features at

<http://www.microsoft.com/office/evaluation/fastfacts.htm>

<http://www.microsoft.com/office/evaluation/indepth/default.htm>

Several new features improve the user experience. The Task Pane, a convenient side panel, provides fast access to recent documents and frequently used formatting and other commands, such as starting a data merge (formerly mail merge). The pane is especially useful in PowerPoint, for slide thumbnails, colors, and an animation builder.

Smart Tags provide contextual menus for completing a task quickly. For example, they guide you through pasting data correctly or fixing an error in an Excel formula.

Office Assistant is hidden by default. It appears only when help is activated. Further, you can ask a question simply by typing a question into the Office menu bar without launching the Answer Wizard or Office Assistant.

Application and Document Recovery features are especially useful. They provide a safe method for quitting a program that has stopped responding. You can initiate recovery of a document while you are shutting down the program or save an open Office document after the application has crashed. If you try to open a damaged file, Office will automatically repair it first.

Single document interface, introduced in Windows 2000, can be turned off, so that only one button per Office application appears on your taskbar.

Top New Application Features

In Word, begin and end points for behind-the-scenes formatting are now viewable. Automated formatting and list management is more restrained.

You can now drag Excel Web tables into a worksheet.

A PowerPoint presentation can have a different design in each section by means of multiple “master” slides.

System Requirements

Be sure to note the program’s minimum system requirements before installing, because they are higher than in previous versions. Office XP requires 210MB of disk space and 64MB of RAM. If you have an MIT-recommended system, your machine exceeds Office XP’s system requirements:

<http://web.mit.edu/is/desktop/pcadmin.html>

Office XP can run on Windows 2000/ME/NT 4.0 SP6 or later, and on Windows 98, second edition. It will not run on Windows 95 or on Windows NT 4.0 machines that do not have SP6 or later.

Purchase, Help, Training

You can buy an Office XP Academic License from NECX for under \$60, and use it as an Office 2000 license. It will be valid later if you choose to upgrade to Office XP. For details about this policy, contact MIT’s NECX account representative, Maureen Devlin at 1-800-961-9246 x10572 or <mitcentral@necxdirect.com>.

Extensive online help is available from the Word, Excel, and PowerPoint Help menus. Once IS announces support for Office XP, consultants on the Computing Help Desk will be able to assist you in using the program. You can submit a question online using the Casetracker Web form at

<http://casetracker.mit.edu>

or contact the Help Desk at x3-1102 or <pc-help@mit.edu>.

The Word and Excel user groups are another source of support. To find out more about these user groups, see

<http://web.mit.edu/mugs/>

IS Training offers noontime Quick Starts and hands-on classes for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. For course descriptions and schedules, see

<http://web.mit.edu/is/training/>

Questions?

If you have questions about the Office XP release effort on campus, send e-mail to the release team at <officexp-release@mit.edu> or view the Office XP Release Notebook at

<http://web.mit.edu/swrt/officexp/>



IS Rolls Out Wireless Access to MITnet

• Mary Ellen Bushnell

Information Systems has recently rolled out wireless access to MITnet in the libraries, most classrooms, and many public places on the MIT campus. The service is based on the 802.11b standard and is built on the dynamic host configuration protocol (DHCP).

Introduction of this service was prompted by academic initiatives from the MIT Council for Educational Technology, by the increasing availability of the technology in the world at large, and in response to rising demand from the MIT community.

Eligibility, Requirements, Registration

If you are an MIT student, faculty member, or staff member with an MIT ID number and a computer with an assigned MIT host name, you are eligible to register your laptop for wireless MITnet access.

To set up your laptop, you need a built-in Ethernet card and a wireless network card. You also need a static IP address and MIT certificates, and you must be registered for DHCP service.

Those without a static IP address – for example, MIT students – can bring their laptops to the walk-in area of the Computing Help Desk in N42 to register for DHCP service.

For links on how to set up everything – from getting an IP address and certificates to registering for DHCP and wireless access – check out the Mobile Computing@MIT page at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/dhcp/roam.html>

Recommended Wireless Cards

On Intel-based laptops with a free PC card slot, IS recommends the

ORiNOCO PC Card/Silver. This card provides drivers for Windows 98/NT/2000. Other cards based on the 802.11b standard will probably work, but IS doesn't support them.

Apple portable computers with built-in AirPort cards need no other card. If you have an Apple portable with AirPort capability but no card, you can buy and install the Apple AirPort card. Apple portable computers that are not AirPort capable but have an available PC card slot can use the ORiNOCO PC Card/Silver.

You can buy these wireless cards from NECX. To access the NECX catalog, start at

<http://web.mit.edu/ecat/necx/>

Developments and Availability

Chartered in August 2000, the wireless project is funded for four years by the Provost's Office, with additional support from Lucent Technologies (now Avaya Communication). The goal for the first year was to provide coverage in the libraries, classrooms, and some common spaces, and to offer a support plan for wireless networking at MIT. As of June 30 of this year, there are over 200 Lucent access points in service across campus.

To find out where wireless service is available, see the MIT Wireless Network Coverage page at

<http://web.mit.edu/network/wireless-locations.html>

Departmental Wireless Networks

The project team has also proposed enterprise-wide guidelines by which departments, labs, and centers can set up wireless networks that do not conflict with the campus wireless network or each other. To view the proposed guidelines, and to get an overview of MITnet wireless service, go to

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/wireless/>

This column presents announcements about IS-supported software. For more information about recent releases, see <http://web.mit.edu/swrt/>

IS Releases Eudora 5.0.2 for Windows

The Eudora Release Team has created an installer that delivers Eudora 5.0.2 for Windows customized for use within the MIT computing environment.

The Eudora home page at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/eudora/> has links for downloading the software, as well as links to installation instructions, a review of new features, and other documentation.

In order to provide a full range of services for this new version, IS will no longer support Eudora 3.x after September 1, 2001.

Service Pack 2 for Windows 2000 Now Supported

IS now supports Service Pack 2 for Windows 2000. Anyone running Windows 2000 should upgrade to Service Pack 2 to enhance the security and stability of their operating system, unless they are running one of the applications that have known compatibility issues. For details, see

<http://support.microsoft.com/support/kb/articles/Q289/9/07.asp>

Service Pack 2 includes the high encryption pack, so there's no need to figure out which version is right for you.

For information on Samba issues and acquiring Service Pack 2, including links to the downloads and CD order form, go to

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/win2000/sp.html>

IS Releases TSM 4.1.2 for Macintosh

IS now supports the backup program TSM 4.1.2 (previously ADSM) for the Macintosh. New features include automatic multi-session backups and the ability to manage backup/restore, include/exclude, authorization, and other options via pull-down menu.

Existing ADSM users can upgrade to TSM 4.1.2 by going to

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/tsm/tsm-mac.html>

New users will need to register for a TSM account. To get started, go to

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/tsm/>

Stock Answers about Wireless Service on Campus

Did you know that cordless phones, microwave ovens, and metal office furniture between you and an access point can interrupt service? For troubleshooting tips on solving wireless connection problems, along with answers to frequently asked questions, check out the IS Stock Answers database. Start at

<http://hdstock.mit.edu/stockanswers/>

Click on the Networking link, then on the Wireless link.



Apple and Dell Announce Back-to-School Promotions

• Kathleen Moriarty

Apple and Dell recently announced special back-to-school promotions. Apple is offering instant rebates for popular accessories bought with any desktop or notebook system. Dell has come through with big savings on two popular configurations – one laptop and one desktop system.

Apple Rebates

Apple's instant rebates apply to a variety of accessories. Choose either a Lexmark Z32 or Z53 Color Jetprinter, and get a \$69 instant rebate. The Lexmark Z32 prints graphics and text with a resolution of 1200 x 1200 and speeds of 7.5 pages per minute (ppm) for black and white pages, and 3.5 ppm for color pages. This model is free after the rebate. For \$70 more, you can get the Lexmark Z53, with a resolution of 2400 x 1200. It prints at 16 ppm for black and white pages and 8 ppm for color pages.

All other accessories include \$100 instant rebates. The Rio 600 MP3 player, for \$49, can capture and play up to one



When you buy an Apple system, you can get a \$100 rebate on a digital camcorder.

hour of digital music. The Handspring Visor Edge PDA, for \$279, uses the Palm OS and weighs just 4.8 ounces. The HP 315 digital camera, for \$179, features a 2.5x zoom, a 1.8" color LCD, and 8MB of storage. You can also choose between two Cannon digital camcorders – the ZR20 DV and ZR20 MC DV – for \$599 and \$699 respectively. These prices all reflect the instant rebate. This promotion runs through October 14, 2001.

Dell Systems

Dell's featured desktop is a GX400, a powerful system with a Pentium 4 processor running at 1.4GHz. This configuration is expandable, with 256MB of RAM and a 20GB hard disk. It includes integrated 10/100 Ethernet and

is bundled with a 17" display. The discounted price is \$1494; use NECX catalog number 162323 to get full details about this configuration.

The Dell laptop is a C600 model, with a Pentium III processor running at 1GHz. The C600 weighs in at 4.9 pounds and comes with a 14.1" active matrix display. The configuration includes 256MB of RAM and a 10GB hard drive. It is MITnet ready, with integrated 10/100 Ethernet and a 56K modem. The promotional price is \$2363. Use NECX catalog number 162324 to get full details about this configuration.

Both Dell systems include a single media device that functions as a CD/RW and a DVD-ROM. Both ship with the Windows 2000 operating system. These prices are valid until September 30, 2001.

Ordering and Contact Information

These promotions are available for order via the NECX catalog for MIT at <http://web.mit.edu/ecat/necx/>

For information on these or other computer products, contact the MIT Computer Connection at x3-7686 or <mcc@mit.edu>. ☛

Use the IS Stock Answers Database for Troubleshooting

• Susan B. Jones

"Connection came up halfway and failed. (37:101)"

Did you ever get the error message cited above when you tried to check your Eudora e-mail? Were you frustrated because you were at home and it was after 5 p.m.?

You may have felt you were out of luck, but in fact there is an online resource that can help you troubleshoot common computing woes. It's the IS Stock Answers database at

<http://hdstock.mit.edu/>

By typing the error message or even a part of it, such as "connection came," into the Stock Answers search field, you would have found a detailed seven-step procedure for fixing the connection problem.

The Usual Suspects

The Stock Answers database contains the "usual" or "stock" answers to questions that are frequently submitted to the IS Computing Help Desk.

At present the database contains about 1000 questions and answers (Q&As) on 14 topic areas. Originally created to handle questions about using SAP under the new financial structure, the database has burgeoned since 1997 to contain answers to questions about e-mail, Kerberos, the Data Warehouse, voice mail, and more.

You may have already visited Stock Answers without realizing it, since many Web pages link to specific areas of the database. For instance, the E-mail at MIT page at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/email/>

has links to general Q&As about e-mail at MIT and specific Q&As about Eudora and Athena mail. The SAP page at

<http://web.mit.edu/sapr3/help.html>

takes you directly to the SAP Q&As.

Database Basics and Plans

Stock Answers is a FileMaker database, viewable and searchable on the Web. Questions and answers are posted by authorized providers using the File Maker application. All answers are reviewed for technical accuracy. Plans are afoot to provide a Web front end that would let providers submit questions and answers directly from the Web. At some point, the team hopes to move the database from FileMaker to Oracle.

While plans for enhancements are in place, the current incarnation of Stock Answers gets heavy use. Over a six-month period, the database received about 150,000 visitors. In the same period, about 150 new Q&As were added to the database. Recently Q&A #887 has been getting a large number of hits: "Where on campus can I make a wireless connection?" Now you know where to find the answer, at any time of the day or night. ☛



CSC: Campus Connection for Pagers, Cell Phones, and More

• Janice Spinetto

Information Systems maintains the telephone infrastructure at MIT. In a supporting role, the Customer Service Center (CSC) in E19 handles pagers, cellular telephone plans, calling cards, and telephone equipment. The CSC can also send and receive faxes, cables, and telexes for members of the community. For an overview, see

<http://web.mit.edu/is/tel/equipment.html>

Pagers

The two most common pager types are numeric and alphanumeric. The first displays only numeric information – usually a callback number. With an alphanumeric pager, you can receive written messages of up to 80 characters. Callers send messages by dialing a designated 1-800 number or by going to a designated Web site.

Newer two-way pagers let you respond to a page, originate a page, or send e-mail via a small keyboard.

If you travel out of state frequently, you may want to subscribe to a nationwide paging service. The service can be tailored to your needs, with some restrictions. Some foreign countries are also covered.

In addition, you can subscribe to a clone service. This makes it possible to page several people at the same time, using one common number. It can be set up for all types of pagers.

MIT has an agreement with Arch Wireless for pager rentals. You can reach the sales representative, Miguel Lopez, at <miguellopez@arch.com> or page him at (866) 869-8296.

Short-Term Cellular Phone Rentals

There may be occasions when your department needs extra phones for a short period of time – for a special event, conference, or emergency. The CSC can help you arrange for these rentals.

| Length of rental | Cost per unit |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 1–14 days | \$5 + cost of calls |
| 15–30 days | \$15 + cost of calls |
| Over 30 days | \$30 + cost of calls |

Cellular Phones

Cell phones are everywhere these days, and are especially useful if you spend a lot of time out of your office or on the road. MIT has agreements with five vendors for cellular phone services:

AT&T. Lori Roberts: (617) 794-2118

Verizon. Tracy Clark: (617) 571-4214

Cingular. Jason Silverman: (617) 640-5410

Nextel. Allison Benedetto: (617) 839-0163

Sprint PCS. Taryn Perry: (617) 747-1413

These vendors offer a corporate rate to MIT, as well as a rate for individual MIT employees. When you contact any of the sales representatives listed, mention MIT to them and also ask about special offers, which change fairly frequently. The cell phone itself is often included in the special offer.

Calling Cards

The CSC offers AT&T calling cards for use by MIT departments, labs, and centers. You can get a calling card by printing out, completing, and submitting the subscription form at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/tel/cardform.html>

Once the form has been received, an AT&T calling card will be issued within four to five business days. Unless other arrangements have been made, the card will be sent via interdepartmental mail to the person and address noted on the subscription form.

Calling card usage charges appear on your monthly Detail Transaction Report (DTR).

Phone Equipment

ISDN phones at MIT are ordered by your department's administrative officer, working with IS Customer Service Representatives. For its part, the CSC sells analog desk and wall phones, shoulder rests, and cords, and coordinates purchases of headsets and speaker phones. If you need TDD/TTY equipment for people with disabilities, the CSC can provide it at no charge.

For CSC telephone and accessory pricing, see

<http://web.mit.edu/is/tel/equip-prices.html>

Contact Information

For more information about any of the products or services handled by the CSC, stop by E19-741, call x3-3690, or send e-mail to <telex@mit.edu>. ☎

IS to Install New 5ESS Switch; Line Verification Is Under Way

The classic 5ESS telephone switch that IS purchased in 1988 has reached its capacity, both in memory and number of available telephone lines. In addition, by the end of 2001, the manufacturer, Lucent Technologies, will no longer support or enhance this older hardware and software. Given these circumstances, IS has opted to buy a new 5ESS-2000 telephone switch.

Implementation of the new switch began on March 1, 2001 and will be completed by June 30, 2002.

Verification

To ensure that all phones will work after the new 5ESS comes online, IS needs to verify every existing phone line on campus (over 22,000 lines). A team will be performing this task over the next four to six weeks, both during the regular business day and after hours. Because this team needs to disconnect ISDN phones from within the switchrooms for a few minutes while they test them, ISDN phones will be tested between 6:30 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. Testing of analog phones does not require disconnecting them, so they will be tested during regular business hours.

The team will test telephone lines by building, starting in west campus. Two days in advance of testing, the telephone Administrative Officers of a building will be notified and a notice will be posted on the 3DOWN page at

<http://nic.mit.edu/3down/>

If a particular ISDN phone should *not* be taken out of service for a few minutes on the scheduled night, notify your customer service representative (CSR) so that the team can reschedule testing of that line at a more convenient time. If you experience an outage after testing is completed, call 3-HELP (x3-4357) and report the trouble as usual.

Updates

Updates on the 5ESS switch replacement project will be posted at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/delivery/5ess/>

You can also look for notices in *Tech Talk*, the MIT Home Page Spotlight, and the *i/s* newsletter.

If you have questions about any aspect of the project, send e-mail to <telecom-ops@mit.edu>. ☎



This column presents answers to frequently asked technology questions. For more Q&As, check the IS Stock Answers database at

<http://hdstock.mit.edu/stockanswers/>

Q In Eudora, is there an easy way to reply to an e-mail message and include only part of the original text?

A Yes. In Eudora for the Macintosh, do the following:

1. With the message open, select the text that you want to include in the reply.
2. Hold down the Shift key and from the Message menu, choose Reply Quoting Selection.

In Eudora for Windows, follow these steps:

1. With the message open, select the text that you want to include in the reply.

2. From the Message menu, choose Reply.

Q Can I remove the excerpt bars that appear alongside the text of a replied or forwarded message in Eudora?

A Yes. To remove the excerpt bars, press Command-Option>' (quotation mark) on the Macintosh or Control-. (period) on Windows machines. This removes one level of excerpt bars for the entire message. Use the keyboard combination as many times as needed to remove the desired number of levels, if more than one level appears in a message.

Q In Eudora (Windows) I want to use Directory Services to find an e-mail address, but the To: button is grayed out. How can I activate it?

A In the Directory Services window, under the Databases panel, make sure that the MIT Directory with Protocol Ph is checked and that the MIT Directory Server with Protocol Finger is not checked. The To: button should now be activated when you type in a query.

Q I've upgraded to Eudora 5.0.2 for Windows and started it up, only to find that my mailboxes are missing. How can I retrieve them?

A Your existing mailboxes may be in a different folder than the user folder that was set up when you installed Eudora 5.0.2. For instructions on how to move your existing mailboxes into the right location, go to "Eudora (v5.0.2) for Windows: Moving User Folders" at

<http://web.mit.edu/is/help/eudora/5migrate-win.html>

Summer Break: Teachers Dive into Adventures in Modeling

• Lee Ridgway

Can computer-based modeling of complex, dynamic systems help teach science and math to junior and senior high school students? That's the premise of *Adventures in Modeling*, a summer workshop now in its fourth year that gives educators hands-on experience in creating models.

The workshop is co-sponsored by the Media Lab and the Santa Fe Institute, with sessions held both at MIT and in Santa Fe. It is led by Eric Klopfer, Director of MIT's Teacher Education Program and Assistant Professor of Science Education. This year's MIT session, held in July, hosted about 20 participants, primarily high school teachers from the Boston-Cambridge area. While most specialize in science and math, a few teach social studies, English, or business computing.

StarLogo

At the center of the workshop is StarLogo, a programmable modeling environment developed at MIT's Media Lab. It was designed for creating models

of decentralized systems, in which patterns emerge from interactions among many individual objects. Such systems include bird flocks that arise from interactions among many birds, and traffic jams that result from interactions among many cars. Building a model in StarLogo consists of writing simple rules for individual behaviors; it does not require advanced programming or mathematical skills.



Participants are given challenges that fit many disciplines, for which they analyze, design, and build models and simulations in StarLogo. For example, one challenge is to model the interactions of creatures with their environment.

New Ways of Thinking

The workshop also enhances the teachers' thinking about science. Non-computer exercises help them visualize systems in new ways and encourage abstract thinking. Abstraction is key in paring ideas down to the essentials needed to get a problem across. If a model is too elaborate, students may have difficulty manipulating and testing it to get meaningful results.

Modeling also helps the teachers think about how to present science to students as something other than rote exercises. Modeling a system parallels the usual methods of scientific investigation: take an idea, create a model, experiment, revise the model, experiment again, revise again. Along the way, you may find out it is all wrong, but you may also see new, better approaches to solving the problem.

Workshop participants take away at least one completed project to use in their classes, as well as the methods to work on their own. Follow-up by Klopfer and his team, and an e-mail list among participants, provide ongoing support and exchange of ideas. Back at school, the teachers report improvement in students' understanding of science, numbers and relationships, and problem solving.

New Companion Book

The workshop has served as the basis for a book, *Adventures in Modeling: Exploring Complex, Dynamic Systems with StarLogo* by Vanessa Colella, Eric Klopfer, and Mitchell Resnick (Teachers College Press, 2001). For details, see

<http://www.media.mit.edu/starlogo/adventures/>



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Surf Sites: Shortcut URLs from the MIT Libraries

The MIT Libraries have made a big splash this summer with their new Web site and new Barton online catalog.

One handy feature of the Web site is a set of shortcut URLs. These "persistent pointers" to key Web pages won't change, even if the actual URLs do. These shortcuts are the best URLs to use to link to one of the pages from another Web page, or to refer to one of the pages in a print publication.

Some of the shortcut URLs are listed to the right. You can find the full set at <http://libraries.mit.edu/shortcuts.html>

Ask Us!

<http://libraries.mit.edu/ask/>

Barton: MIT Libraries' Catalog

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