

Technically Speaking

p4SSw0Rds!

Have you ever had a hard time trying to remember your password that you created five months ago? If you think that was difficult, wait until you experience the password palooza of Northwest. You have four main passwords that you will need to maintain as a student: your login/email password, your CatPAWS personal identification number (PIN), your eCompanion/Northwest Online password, and your INFO/Webstar password.

Due to Homeland Security guidelines, your login/email password has several complexity rules. The password must be at least eight characters in length and satisfy three of the four following criteria: at least one capi-

tal letter, at least one lowercase letter, at least one number, and/or at least one special character (!, @, #, \$, %, *, _, +).

Before you take off, you must also consider that the password cannot violate rules built-in to the Microsoft Dictionary including: a string of similar characters (22222Aa*), common words/names or the username.

By the way, login/email passwords and INFO/Webstar passwords expire every four months and you cannot use the same password as the previous 24 passwords that you set. In case you are counting, you would have to go to school for 8 years to use the same password again if you only change it every four months. Your eCompanion pass-

word and CatPAWS PIN will not expire.

To keep your personal data on your computer secure, adhere to the following guidelines. First of all, don't share your password with others - it will most likely lead to problems down the line. Next, if you have to write down your password, don't leave it somewhere that someone is likely to find it. Also, try not to make all your passwords the same. Finally, make sure that you always log off of a computer when you are finished using it.

Keeping all of your passwords straight will be challenging enough, so try not to make managing them anymore difficult than it needs to be. 🐾

By Allen Lode

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On the Web!



Fun Links

www.nwmissouri.edu/compserv/clientcomputing/clientcomputingsupport.htm

- An excellent source for tutorials and information about the Northwest Network, online policies and the most up to date campus computing information available.

www.colleghumor.com

- A huge collection of movies, jokes, pictures and games of funny things found on the internet.

www.ToddAndPenguin.com

- An online comic portraying Todd and his pet Penguin and cat Oscar.

Northwest Computing Policies

By Erin Jewell

In order to ensure that the Northwest computing network is available for all users, certain policies are in place and must be adhered to by all those using the system. By following the guidelines, the university will be able to assure network stability and availability.

Personally owned computers on the network must have current anti-virus software and must be configured, named, and registered according to the instructions located online at <http://www.nwmissouri.edu/compserv/clientcomputing/PersonalPC.htm>. Computers cannot be connected to the network using a router. Only hubs or switches will be allowed.

Certain types of hardware and programs are prohibited on the network. If these prohibited hardware or programs are de-

tected by Information Systems, University staff will notify the users in order to allow them to correct the violation. The following are a few examples that constitute a violation if they are found on the Network: modems providing dial-in service, webcams, wireless access points and game consoles (ex. PS2 and Xbox). Game consoles are prohibited because they slow down network access for the rest of the campus.

If a student is found to be in violation of campus computing policies, they are required to attend a policy violation workshop. Additional violations will result in fines and possible expulsion from Northwest. By adhering to the University computing policies, students help create a more efficient network for the entire Northwest community. 🐾

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Support Services

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Help Desk Hours

M-T 8 am—10 pm
Fri 8 am—5 pm
Sat 11 am—4:45 pm
Sun 1 pm—10 pm

Notebook Support Center Hours

M-F 8 am—4:30 pm

Library Lab Hours

M-T 7:30 am—11:45 pm
Fri 7:30 am—4:45 pm
Sat 11 am—4:45 pm
Sun 1 pm—11:45 pm

Burning CD's on Your Laptop

On the campus laptops, you can use Windows Media Player or the drag and drop method to burn CDs. To use the drag and drop method, insert a recordable CD into the disk tray. Wait until a window opens asking you what you would like to do, then click view files. A window will open and, if your CD is empty, show no files. Now open the folder where your files are stored in a DIFFERENT window and click and drag the folders/files into the window for your CD. To burn your files to the CD, go to the File menu and select Burn Files to Disk.

Computer Lingo



Terms you should know

Blu-Ray Disks— The new DVD. These new disks will hold around 25GB (DVD's hold around 5GB) and have high definition capability.

Router— A router is a hardware device that routes data from a local area network (LAN) to another network connection. A router acts like a coin sorting machine, allowing only authorized machines to connect to other computer systems. Routers are not allowed on the NWMSU network.

Computer Tips



- Wireless access points are available in the Station, library and union.
- Be sure to restart your campus computer at least once a week, which will allow it to automatically download important anti-virus updates.

Use Your Notebook to Your Advantage

By Daman Kapoor

Having a notebook is a great resource during college life for writing papers, sending emails and using the web with the bonus of mobility. Below are some tips to help you efficiently utilize your notebook.

Save your work frequently and make backups of your assignments in your student storage or on a CD.

For academic success, you need to know how to use the Microsoft Office software suite. If you do not, you should take advantage of the Computers and Information Technology Course (44-130) offered at Northwest and other workshops, tutorials, etc. to get yourself up to speed right away. Don't fret— you're not the only person on campus who is not sure what PowerPoint is or thinks computers use cookies to feed their appetite.

Know the guidelines for your assignment before spending too much time creating fancy cover sheets and stylish formatting. None of your professors want to see pretty fonts or smiley-face bullets on your term paper.

Generation Game Consoles

By Taft Burnes

Within the next year, Microsoft, Sony and Nintendo are coming out with their "Next Generation Game Consoles." Determining which game system will be the best will have to wait until the new consoles are released. However, each company is focusing on something different to set their product apart from the others. Microsoft's XBOX 360 is leaning toward network game play and comes with a free basic network subscription. The Playstation 3 is supposed to have better game graphics and Nintendo Revolution is sticking with being more affordable.

So which system is the best? The primary consideration is the CPU of each console. CPU stands for Central Processing Unit and is the brain of the computer. The faster the CPU, the faster the computer can perform the tasks needed to run a program. The XBOX 360 CPU will have three cores running at 3.2 Gigahertz each. (Our laptops only use 1.3 Gigahertz CPUs.) Sony has created a new CPU called the Cell Processor that runs at 3.2 Gigahertz and the Playstation 3 will be equipped with three of them. Sony claims the Cell Processor will be more efficient with the calculations for graphics and game physics.

Plan your work schedule to allow for any ill-timed glitches. Print papers out at least 2 hours before they are due rather than 5 minutes before class. By printing early, you will have time to deal with dead printers, frozen screens, etc. and still turn in your work on time. Believe me – professors don't want to hear that the computer gobbled your homework.

Electronic communication can put you into uncomfortable situations. Be safe - double-check address lines to make sure the private message goes to your classmate and not to the professor.

Always check your assignment for errors before printing it to save you time, money and hassle.

Taking your notebook everywhere is a good idea. However, do make sure the battery is always charged to the max just in case you have a sudden urge to write your paper sitting by Colden pond. 🐾

The Nintendo Revolution will house a custom built CPU made by IBM, but no specifications have been released to the public.

Each console will use wireless controllers, have some sort of network connectivity and play some type of DVD formatted disk. The XBOX 360 is the only console that will have hard drive and the Playstation 3 is the only system that plans on using Blu-Ray Disks (HD DVDs) for their games.

To determine which console will be the best will depend on what games you like to play. Each console will have their console specific games that will appear exclusively on their systems.

A word of caution, Northwest's Computing Policies state "Game consoles are prohibited from connection to the Northwest network." Game consoles cause the network to run slower and can provide a means for viruses to attack the school's network. Connecting a game system to the network is a policy violation and will be subject to disciplinary action. Students are encouraged to instead system link the consoles together without utilizing the Northwest network. 🐾

Laptop Care and Feeding

Keep Your Computer Running at Top Speed

By Becky Rainford

If you have never owned your own computer, or even if you have, there are a few important things you need to know about keeping your laptop performing well.

Specifications:

You need to know what you are carrying around in your brand new bag. The following features make your computer useful. Without them, you would have an expensive doorstop.

Operating System: Microsoft Windows XP Professional SP2

Hard Drive: 40GB

RAM: 256MB

Processor: 1.3 GHz

CD drive with burning capability

DVD-Rom

2 USB ports

Parallel Port used for some printers

Microsoft Office 2003 (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access, Outlook, Publisher, OneNote)

Wireless network card, Ethernet card, and modem

Norton Anti-Virus

Each laptop is wireless compatible and will automatically search for a wireless connection. If a wireless connection is not available, you will need to use the Ethernet cable pro-


vided. Wireless access points are available in the Station, the Student Union and Owens Library.

You also need to know what your laptop does not have that way if you try using a floppy disk, you will not be confused. The new laptops do not have a floppy disk drive. Since the laptop only has 2 USB ports, use them wisely. Your computer will come with a touch pad instead of the traditional mouse. If you prefer to use a traditional mouse, you will need to purchase a USB mouse.

Care:

Your computer will require some maintenance. Basic spyware and virus scans are very important to complete weekly. Each computer is loaded with Spybot 1.3 to help you keep spyware off your computer. Spyware is what causes your computer to seem slow or slams you with pop-ups constantly.

Feeding:

Your laptop has about a 2 hour battery life so make sure that you plug it in to charge whenever there is an outlet available. Bring your ac adapter with you just in case you run out of juice. 

Student Storage


By Chris Grandfield

Student storage, also known as Catbert or your N: drive, is a place to store your files on the Northwest network. You can access any files in your student storage from any campus computer.

In order to access your student storage on a university owned computer, simply open My Computer and you will see under Network Drives s2##### on Catbert...(N:). Double-click on this icon to open your network storage folder.

If you have a personal computer, you can still access your student storage. Contact your

PERT on how to sign into the network to access your folder with your personal computer.

Student storage is a very helpful way to easily store files and can be used as a way to backup files that you don't want to lose or that you may want to access from year to year because nothing on your N: drive is deleted while you are a Northwest student. Each student has 30 megabytes of storage available to them. Student storage is there for you to use so take advantage of it and stay away from those unreliable floppy disks to store your files. 

Preview for Next Month...

Don't miss next month's edition to learn about Sharing Files on the Northwest network.

Technically Speaking is a monthly PERT Newsletter for residents in Dieterich, Millikan, Franken, Phillips, Tower Suites, Douglas, and South Complex.

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Running Out of Plugs??

Most computers that you buy today, including your university provided notebook, only come equipped with one or two USB ports. Many computer accessories require the use of one or more of such ports. A USB mouse, scanner, printer and network connection are just a few examples. The best solution would be to purchase an inexpensive USB hub, which would enable the user to plug no fewer than four USB devices into it for use. If the need were to arise, a user could purchase several hubs, chain them together, and permit dozens of USB ports on one computer.

PERT SPOTLIGHT

Allen Lode

Douglas Hall/South Complex

Allen will be graduating in April with a major in Management Information Systems and minors in Networking and Computer Science. You might also see him in the library as a Computer Lab Consultant and in Colden Hall as a teaching assistant. Allen is also a member of the Association for Computing Machinery, where he is serving his second year as vice president, and Delta Mu Delta Honor Society, where he serves as secretary, to name a few.

This past summer, Allen worked as a System Engineer/Database Administrator intern for Cerner Corporation in Kansas City. He also enjoys going out with friends, playing Xbox (Halo), rollerblading, watching movies and sleeping. Feel free to ask Allen questions regarding just about anything.

