



THE Leadership and Management Award

Outstanding ICT Team.

What we did to win a THELMA



Reason for entering – 1

Why this specific award?

So often in IT awards in HE the honours go to teams that have carried out a single ‘bleeding edge’ activities but this is rarely what our staff, student and business customers want.

Hence C&IT Services at Edinburgh Napier University concentrate on providing a quality balanced service rather than just interesting projects.

Reason for entering – 2 Universal Service

Our main reason for entering is that we provide a single broad based but flexible service that is used by 90% of all staff and students. This includes all but the most specialised student, staff and business IT users. This is something that almost all universities have strived to do for some time but few achieve. It not only delivers obvious technical efficiencies but also support and policy efficiencies. An example of policy efficiency is that we do not need policies to govern such things as ‘interfacing of departmental networks’ as we just don’t have these interfaces. Another example is that all our lecture theatres and teaching rooms have compatible high specification IT/ AV provisions so any lecturer can confidently use this equipment in any teaching room.

Reason for entering – 3 Service Ethos

In many ways our aim is to be invisible and just deliver what our customers want in a customer focussed way to support their studies, research and business functions.

Reason for entering – 4 Feedback and evidence

Evidence that we achieve this is shown by the fact that we are now viewed as the University service with the highest satisfaction in both staff and student satisfaction surveys. The student survey carried out in March 2008 gave the question '*The quality of IT services satisfies my needs*' a mark of 84% which was the highest score of any of the 28 questions covering the whole student experience



Additional Information - 1

- **Student Email to ‘The Cloud’** – Taking advantage of the current trend to ‘Cloud Computing’ by moving the student email service from a limited in house service to a far superior one hosted externally by Microsoft providing far higher functionality and vastly more mail storage. This move considerably improves staff to student communications.

Additional Information - 2

- **Green IT** – In universities IT is a major consumer of power both at the desktop and in the IT infrastructure hence to support the University's Carbon Trust sponsored energy reduction agenda a number of actions have been taken. Firstly, 'Wake on LAN' has been implemented to power on/off the 500 PCs in our busy 24by7 computer centre. Secondly, server power consumption has been considerably reduced by taking a Virtual Server approach which has allowed us to considerably reduce the number of physical servers deployed hence saving power. Thirdly, traditional server room air conditioning has been replaced by energy efficient water cooling delivered directly to the server cabinets.

Additional Information - 3

- **Dynamic Business Continuity** – Using the virtual server approach key systems such as our critical Virtual Learning Environment and business critical staff email service take advantage of this approach. The approach takes advantage of our multi campus nature with systems spread over two server rooms on two campuses in such a way that in a disaster situation services can continue from one campus with a break of no more than one hour in user service. Due to the far more dynamic nature of this approach over the more conventional one it can also be used to maintain user service when server maintenance/upgrade work is being carried out at one campus.

Additional Information 4

- **Out of Hours Support** – Most universities rely on the goodwill of staff to provide support for their IT infrastructure outside the working day. Due to the importance of these IT services to the University this approach was no longer regarded as appropriate hence a formal Standby and On Call arrangement has been funded and implemented.

Additional Information - 5

- **New Modular Structure** – Adapting the IT systems and business processes used to support teaching and the administration of students from eight 15 credit modules to six 20 credit modules.

Additional Information – 6

- **University Master Code Book** – Like most UK universities for our core business and academic support systems we use ‘best of breed’ systems in each area (SITS, Agresso, SAP, WebCT, etc.) rather than a single system that would probably not be the best in all, if any, of the areas. The down side is implementing efficient cross system processes and management information. To this end in 2008 we have run a project to produce a ‘University Master Code Book’ that defines standard data definitions for all the key data that is used across all the systems and procedures to control changes to any of these data items. This provides the underpinning for a project to improve University-wide management information during 2009.

Remember it is all about Serving Students, Staff and the Business.



A Final Warning

Beware the
Rory Bremner
Effect!!!!

Don't provide
a photo of your
Staff.

