NETWORKING 101

WV Network Partners With URcast to Expand Student Learning Content

The West Virginia Network, which is a branch of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission, recently announced it has partnered with URcast to provide access to learning content for K-12 students throughout West Virginia without Internet connections.

URCast is a content distribution application customized for K-12 students, according to the HEPC, and it provides caching services that allow students to view content on computers, tablets or smartphones even without an Internet connection.

The process reallocates bandwidth and puts a caching server within the school.

"Caching speeds up student Internet access so classroom time is learning time, not waiting time," said Paul Hill, HEPC chancellor. "A faster speed of delivery can provide students with more personalized learning experiences and give teachers greater opportunities to engage their students on the lesson at hand."

Mt. Vernon Elementary School in Barbour County has been participating in the program as a pilot school. The school has been able to provide books and videos for students' devices that can be accessed on the school bus and at home on weekends or snow days.

"Access to technology is an essential component of a world class education," said West Virginia Superintendent of Schools Michael Martirano. "The partnership between WVNET and URcast will provide our staff and students with a valuable tool to help cross the digital divide and make learning exciting, relevant and meaningful.

WVNET is currently seeking additional pilot schools to participate in the project. Interested schools can contact Booker Walton, Customer Resource Specialist at WVNET, at btwiii@mail.wvnet.edu or 304-293-5192. Details can be found at www.wvnet.edu/urcast.

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CELEBRATING 4 WVNET AMAZING YEARS

Let's explore a day in the life of technology. Let's make it fun and use a day off, a Saturday, a day that is a balance of getting things done for life: errands, some banking, some necessary personal upkeep; haircut, new jeans, and some fun: lunch at the new deli and a drink with a friend. Technology affects all of these. Technology affects time and time affects technology. It's a final blow and saving grace all wrapped into one changing ball.
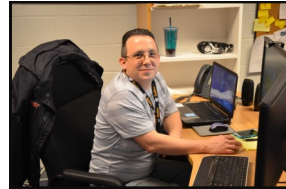
Anthony Masi

A piece of technology that is in the process of changing is credit cards. There are new types of credit cards in the works, from credit cards equipped with Bluetooth to ones that make tokenized payments from other cards using a magnetic stripe. One card in development uses Apple Pay in credit card form.

There is a card called the Stratos which is the first credit card to use bank-level encryption, generating a unique token at each transaction that must be decrypted by the bank to charge the card. It is claimed that the Stratos all-in-one credit card will organize your wallet. Users will be able to add credit, debit, gift, and membership cards into this one card. The card has dual-stripe technology and will work anywhere other credit cards are used.

The Stratos card is smart and will work and coincide with smartphones. Users will be able to sync other credit cards from the Stratos mobile app. The card has some unique features like touch sensors which will eventually use fingerprint security when the card is upgraded, and the ability to submit payment via Near Field Communication (NFC) so that it only needs to be in close proximity to a payment device rather than swiped.

The upgrades and unique features of this tech-driven credit card do come with a price. There is a membership fee, but as a consumer I think the price is worth it as long as the card lives up to its potential. If I can use one credit card for everything I do, and it is secure and will make my life easier, then I am sold.

Businesses are eventually going to stop accepting old school swipe-based transactions. The Stratos card will become a nice bookmark for this piece of technology. Is this card going to be safer and more secure than the cards we use today? Will this technology mean the end to currency? Is this technology going to define how we purchase items via internet? All of these questions, only time can answer.

WV Statewide Technology Conference Committee 2015 is pleased to announce the *eleventh annual West Virginia Statewide Technology Conference which will be held July 21-23, 2015 at The Waterfront Place Hotel and Morgantown Event Center in Morgantown, WV.*

Proposals for concurrent session presentations are welcomed. The goal is to accept proposals that will be of interest to a wide range of constituents including K-12 education, higher education, and state agencies. For a list of suggested topics, see the call for proposals link. *All proposals must be submitted on or before April 10, 2015, using the official Presentation Proposals Submission Form available at* conference.wvnet.edu The program committee will review all proposal entries to establish the conference program.

Please watch for email announcements with participant and exhibitor registration details. A reminder to exhibitors — all presenting vendor representatives *must* be included in the exhibitor registration for the conference. We look forward to working with participants and stakeholders to make this another successful conference.

There is a well known Oriental proverb that tells us, "*The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step*." Good advice, but all of us get a little anxious when we can't see the entire trip from beginning to end. We want to plan out the mileage, the stops, where to eat, where to stay, and what to see along the way.

When I left law school in Arizona many years ago heading to the Justice Department in Washington, D.C., I had that exact feeling. The amazing thing I realized after I was done, though, was that I made the entire trip but never saw further ahead than my eyes could see in the daytime, and my headlights could shine after dark.

And yet, even though I could only see a few yards ahead, I made the whole trip safely. Technology projects at WVNET are like that in many ways. We do our best to try to plan for every contingency. But, in the end, we get to a successful conclusion by simply seeing a little further and then a little beyond that as we go forward.

This has never ceased to amaze me. But a lifetime of successful trips and tech projects has convinced me it is true. You have to trust in your ability to deal with whatever comes up and believe in the competence of the team you are working with to do the project.

At WVNET, I have always been proud of the level of dedication and competence of the people who have made it their life's work to enhance education through the use of technology. You can be proud of them too!

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY
And this month's winner is...

Hopefully the chill is ready to leave the air, and we can all unfreeze from the recent weather the State has been seeing. It is important to know that WVNET always has someone in the NOC 24/7 looking over our data center and standing ready to provide customer service, even in State of Emergency situations. That's our commitment to our customers.

Each month, WVNET recognizes a customer who took the time to fill out our Customer Satisfaction Survey and tell us how we are doing. We thank everyone who takes that extra one or two minutes to give us advice, kudos, or criticisms that can improve our service.

This month we would like to congratulate our winner, Phil McClung, a Professor for West Virginia University at Parkersburg. Phil was having an issue with functionality in a Blackboard Online course he was instructing. He called our Help Desk and was assisted by Mike McDonald who after further investigation found the proper availability settings to solve his problem. While most of the Learning Management Systems (LMS) Graphical User Interface (GUI) work is done by our Director of Distance Learning, Dr. Mary Stewart, there's quite the team that works in support of her as well. A former Help Desk member, Cory Morrison, has moved into a position working directly with Mary to help support our LMS and WVROCKS instances throughout the State of West Virginia. Also, our Help Desk is well trained in Course GUI Delivery and able to assist with most basic to moderate issues that come up for professors, students, and instructional technologists at the institutions that we support.

Phil was impressed by our response, saying it was *"Excellent support,"* and to *"Keep up the great work"*. Thank you, Phil. We take each problem seriously and make it a priority to get the situation corrected as quickly as possible. As a staff, we pride ourselves in that aspect. As always, at the end of every month, we will draw a winner and contact them by email, then share items of our appreciation. Please complete our survey by looking within the incident email of any interaction that you have had with us. All comments are taken seriously and help to improve what we do on a daily basis. Thank you again, Phil, and thanks again to all our customers who continue to shape and improve WVNET. *(Guest article by Booker Walton, III, Customer Resource Specialist, pictured.)*

WV Higher Education Technology Conference 2015

Waterfront Place Hotel & Morgantown Event Center
Morgantown, West Virginia
October 26-27, 2015

Dr. Robbie K. Melton

The WVHETC 2015 Conference Committee announces Dr. Robbie K. Melton *(pictured)* will serve as the Keynote Speaker at this year's conference. Dr. Melton will speak on "*Are Emerging Smart Devices Smarter than You? Standards of Quality for Teaching and Learning with Mobile Technology Tools.*"

Robbie K. Melton, Ph.D. is the Associate Vice Chancellor of Mobilization Emerging Technology for Tennessee Board of Regents. Melton serves as the chief system level administrator to oversee the system's mission and initiatives for the Strategic Mobilization Quality Assurances, Faculty and Student Use of Mobile Devices related to teaching, learning, training, and workforce development, and the coordination of research, product testing, pilots and security safety networks. She has published and presented around the nation on the impact and value of mobilization for education and the workforce and has acquired a new distinction as an "*App-ologist*" due to her study of the pedagogy and best teaching practices with mobilization, quality standards for the utilization of mobile apps, and for her creation of the Mobile App Education and Workforce Resource Center (50,000+ Apps that have been aligned with over ninety-five subject areas from Pre-K to Ph.D., including workforce careers, professional development and lifelong learning, according to one's mobile device of choice).

Dr. Robbie K. Melton has prepared a "*Mobile App Educational and Workforce Resource Center*" that contains over 20,000 apps from PreK-Careers and a listing of *smart educational iGadgets* at www.APPAPEDIA.org

Melton is the winner of numerous awards, the latest being CDE Top 30 2014 Technologists, Transformers and Trailblazers, 2013 Apple Distinguished Educator, 2012, WCET Technology WOW Award.

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The WV Bar Foundation Board of Directors has announced the outstanding members of the *17th class of Bar Foundation Fellows, to include Judge Dan O'Hanlon-Huntington,* among others. The criteria for the Fellows is "*those judges and lawyers whose professional, public and private careers have demonstrated outstanding dedication to the welfare of their communities and honorable service to the legal profession with the individuals selected reflecting the diverse nature of the legal profession in West Virginia.*" Since 1999, the Bar Foundation's Board of Directors has selected just more than 300 lawyers and judges to be Fellows from the more than 5,000 WV lawyers and judges. The Annual Reception and Dinner to honor the 2015 class will be held on Thursday, April 23, at the Marriott Hotel in Charleston. The well-attended event (black tie optional) begins at 6pm and the cost is $150 per person or $1,500 for a table of ten persons. *Congratulations Judge Dan O'Hanlon!*