



By Jonathan Davis

Windows 95: Shut it down

Yesterday I had the great pleasure of uninstalling Windows 95. I ripped it off of the hard drive of the newspaper's 486, and while it lay on the floor bleeding from core file corruption, a bunch of us set upon it like the Greeks upon Troy. The evil that is Windows 95 is gone. For now.

We want to pick your brains!!!

There is yet another notice flashed before your eyes when you log on to the network now. The Information Technology Committee is asking students, faculty, and admin to fill out surveys and email (to itc@upei.ca) suggestions for improvements to the technological resources available at UPEI.

Unfortunately, the survey almost needs a lawyer to translate to English. It seems directed at faculty far more than admin and students. It makes references to the reader's "unit", which I would guess is supposed to be the department, and asks many questions that are faculty or admin specific.

I think that probably the most important question on the survey is number Nine. "Is there sufficient support and training provided to help the following learn to use and effectively apply such resources?" To this, I have to say no. I have found many students to be unaware of the resources available to them, and incapable of exploiting them. There is access to the World Wide Web for students, but it can only be accessed from certain areas. And, once there, it is very difficult to navigate unless one is a competent computer user. So, the most important improvement that could happen any time soon would have to be, in my appraisal, better facilities for students to learn to access what we already have. There are great reference libraries that

Nicer Side of the 'Net

are available to search through Gopher or Web, but few, if any, know how to get to them.

Following knowledge to use what we have, comes the need for what we have to operate properly. The UPEI network is very slow, especially with external connections. When I telnet to my PEInet account, the connection is slower than connecting with a 2400 baud modem (which is slow, it was the standard about 5+ years ago). Making computer and internet resources more efficient in terms of speed should be a principle concern of the Committee.

UPEI, it must be remembered, is smaller and with a smaller budget than most universities. However, I will describe some common features of other university networks to give you a comparison point. I will principally be taking from Mount Allison, Dal, and Western.

Windows based network.

Almost all network and internet applications are now being written for Windows. Some people are presently able to load Windows in some computer labs, but I have yet to find the internet applications anywhere but the Data Research labs in the Computer Centre. The Windows Web browser program, Netscape, is infinitely superior to the Doslynx that is presently available for use. UPEI's Web page does actually have graphics, believe it or not. I know this because I have viewed it from my private internet account at home. It has to be realised though, that to do this all across campus will take a great expense in upgrading all of the computer labs to be able to run Windows.

Home access. Either dorm network connections, or dial-up connections. Many universities have network plugs in their dorm rooms. You pay a connection fee at the beginning of the year (a deposit on the hardware and software you need to connect to the network), and you plug your computer into the campus network. For those off campus, dial-up modem connections are frequently available. While this only permits access to email, news, and Web, not programs like Word Perfect, it does allow greater access to internet resources. At present, UPEI will extend dial-up accounts to students who have a

request approved by a prof, and they have open access to the library database. You can access the book catalogue on the terminals in the library from home. Theoretically, anyway. I have never been able to figure out the correct terminal emulation, and as such whenever I try to connect from anything but the terminals in the library, it just comes over as gibberish. In this way, I miss the old software that was more access-friendly.

Universal Internet Access

There are two sides to this argument. On one, the idea that if people can access newsgroups and the Web from all the computer labs on campus, people will crowd the labs to use these, and thereby shut out the people with legit work needs, such as writing a paper. On the other, you have people hacking access to the restricted functions anyway. My personal feeling is to give open access to the internet from all labs. I have rarely, if ever, seen the open access lab in the library (the one with the yellow screens) completely congested this school year.



UPEI Student Exchanges

Are you interested in travelling? Would you like to study abroad for a year at UPEI prices? If so, drop by Student Services to find out more about student exchanges.

UPEI offers exchanges to Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Mexico, Florida, and Australia. The deadline for exchange applications is Friday, February 9.

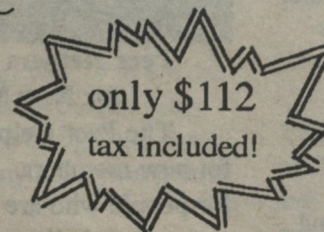
My office hours are:
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Lynette Barrett
 Student Exchange Advisor

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