



Focus on the Information Technology Division

1 of 2

U-M Information Technology Division

Reference R1208 • October 1999

The Information Technology Division (ITD) provides academic and administrative computing services for the University of Michigan. These services include managing and operating the central computing, networking, and telecommunication systems owned by the University and providing leadership in the innovative application of information technology in higher education.

Access to Basic Services

Students, faculty, and staff with regular appointments on the Ann Arbor campus are provided with a Basic Computing Package at no charge. The package includes e-mail, access to login machines, use of the Online Campus Directory, laser printing in the Campus Computing Sites, MichNet dial-in access, file storage in the Institutional File System (IFS), access to ITD consultants, Internet access, Conferencing on the Web (COW), and Usenet News. Additional services may be purchased.

Access to Computers

ITD operates 15 Campus Computing Sites where faculty, staff, and students can go to use computers. Also, each residence hall has a computing site operated by the Residence Halls Computing Program (ResComp) that is open to anyone living in University Housing. More than 1,400 computers are available in these computing sites. In addition, 10 electronic classrooms are available. Many University schools, colleges, and departments run their own specialized computing labs for their students.

Machines at the Sites include Apple Macintosh computers, Dell models (with Windows NT), and Unix workstations, such as Sun. The computers are networked, and all are connected to laser printers and to the campus network and the Internet.

Many popular software applications are available at the Sites, including word processing, graphics, desktop publishing, communications, authoring, graphing, database management, and spreadsheeting.

ITD also encourages multimedia development and deployment through the operation of three specialized facilities. The New Media Center provides a state-of-the-art workspace for students, as well as a multimedia classroom and several media creation suites. The Instructional Technology Lab offers faculty a place to go to explore instructional media or create their own computer-based teaching materials with the help of ITD staff. Linda's Place is a computer lab, production studio, classroom, presentation facility, and gathering place dedicated to interdisciplinary teaching and learning.

A University computer sales program offers students, full-time faculty and staff, and departments the opportunity to buy selected computers, printers, and software at special educational prices.

Many members of the University own computers. In fall 1998, it was estimated that

- 75% of students own a computer
- 90% of faculty members own a computer
- 70% of staff members own a computer

Access to Networks

Computers at the Campus Computing Sites, ResComp sites, and many University offices are grouped into networks that are in turn connected to larger "backbone" networks. Most campus buildings, including residence halls, have Ethernet connectivity.

The campus backbone networks are connected to a regional network, called MichNet, which connects colleges, universities, and other organizations in Michigan. MichNet, in turn, is connected to national and worldwide networks, including the Internet. U-M campus networks use more than 200 miles of fiber-optic cable. U-M is a charter member of the Internet2 Project and has a direct connection to Abilene, the high-speed backbone network supporting Internet2.

ITD provides local dial-in access and, in collaboration with MichNet, statewide dial-in access to the University community. There are more than 1,445 modems in the U-M Ann Arbor modem pool.

In addition to providing data networking services, ITD provides on-campus telephone service to the University community and a campus cable television network called UMTV. The University's telephone system is the largest, privately owned, independent telephone system in the United States. It handles 17.7 million calls per month, 80% of which are internal to U-M.

UMTV

UMTV—University of Michigan Television—links classrooms and residence halls with the campus cable television system. UMTV offers campus units and organizations the opportunity to have their own channels. They can create programming and send it campuswide from an office or department. More than 60 classrooms and lecture halls have access to UMTV.

Help When People Need It

ITD provides a telephone help line, consultants at two of the Campus Computing Sites, online consulting help through e-mail, plenty of documentation, and computer workshops to help people learn to use computers and get answers to their questions about services in the Basic Computing Package. An online computing knowledgebase offers the University community guided troubleshooting and information on a number of popular software programs.

Administrative Computing

ITD is leading the University in using information technology to facilitate process innovation in administrative and academic services. Staff members develop and implement large-scale database systems for central administrative functions (admissions, alumni/donor, financial, purchasing, personnel, stores, student/course, and telecommunications data) and provide support to those who need access to these databases. Staff members also develop departmental databases and related systems, help users build their own information systems, and support systems that provide online bulletin boards and campus information.

A major project, called M-Pathways, is an initiative in which ITD is partnering with the University community to streamline the University's extensive administrative processes. The M-Pathways Web page (<http://www.mpathways.umich.edu/>) provides information about this project.

Online Information

The University provides considerable information about itself and its services on the Web.

- **U-M.** Information about U-M is available on the U-M Gateway (<http://www.umich.edu/>).
- **ITD.** Information about ITD and the services it provides is available on ITD's Web site, ITweb (<http://www.itd.umich.edu/>).