



Improvements to Residence Hall Network Planned for Summer 2017

Information Technology Services partnered with Blue Spruce Technologies to perform an in-depth assessment of the physical network infrastructure on campus. The purpose of the assessment was to identify key areas of need and to align all future upgrades and replacements of networking equipment with the University's stated goal of continual service improvements. As part of the recommendations, a determination was made that the University would benefit from upgrading the campus network switches and replacing them with the latest state-of-the-art models. Funding was acquired from the Massachusetts State College Building Authority (MSCBA) in the amount of \$211,000 to help finance this effort. (MSCBA finances, plans, designs, constructs and oversees the management of residence halls and student activity facilities for the nine State Universities.) Forty-six new network switches were purchased with the provided funds and they will be used to upgrade the network infrastructure in all of the student residence hall buildings. Information Technology Services has initiated a project to undertake these improvements and completion is scheduled for the end of July in 2017. The University is also in the process of identifying additional capital funding sources to further the effort and replace the networking switches in the other buildings on campus.

Why Upgrade the Campus Network Switches?

The technology needs of students, faculty and staff are continually growing and evolving. The emergence of mobile computing in the classroom and also as a study aid outside of the classroom is the greatest factor in requiring an infrastructure upgrade. It has dramatically increased the number of devices accessing the campus network and has also added significant variation in the types of devices using it. The applications that are being used to support learning, such as video and on-line content, also play a key role. They require much greater capacity and throughput to operate. The physical network infrastructure provides the backbone for all of the technology on campus and it is pivotal in making it work properly. The increased capacity and throughput offered by the new network switch will keep things running efficiently and puts the University in a favorable position to support future technology growth.

What Should I Expect?

There will be tangible benefits to everyone using the campus network. The new switches will offer greater capacity and throughput, so there should be a noticeable increase in speed, performance and reliability. It also is brand new equipment, so it is less susceptible to failure and it does not need to be replaced as frequently, leading to more uptime for all the technology in use across campus.

Questions or Concerns?

Please contact the Technology Resource Center at it@framingham.edu or 508-215-5906.