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Web Hosting Service
Participants meeting

http://oit.ncsu.edu/web-hosting-service

Presented by:
Office of Information Technology
January 13, 2011

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Introduction to Web Hosting Service

Over a year ago, OIT began investigating how to deliver web services in a manner similar to those in the commercial sector. Our current web service, while stable and robust, is unable to provide campus users with the flexibility of more packages/applications and economy of scale that many of us desire to use for our web presence.

OIT has been piloting a model of this service with 5 participating units, all who have used the service to varying degrees.

OIT is now ready to expand this pilot into a beta by increasing our customer base and monitoring the administrative, technical and support load as we prepare to go into production mode.

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What makes up the service?

Service is running on the OIT production blade farm and the Linux-based operating environment is running atop a VMware infrastructure.

Customers have access to cPanel and Fantastico to manage their site(s).

WRAP-authentication, InForm availability; two levels of service: Lite and Full.

We have tested the service on external machines (hosted by a commercial provider) and are now testing running internally.

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What's different about web hosting?

- Initial account comes with 10 GB of space w/option to purchase more in 10 GB increments
- cPanel control panel to administer your site(s)
- Fantastico system that makes installing scripts easier
- Unlimited databases (mySQL)
- More features and applications for your web presence
- Two levels of service (Lite and Full)

We continue to offer
- NC State hosted URLs
- Nightly back-ups
- Unlimited bandwidth

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Full vs. Lite Service Offerings

Lite service
- Provides customers who have less technical knowledge or support with access to more popular applications but restricts some of the more complex options that the average user may find unnecessary.
- 4 main packages: Joomla, Drupal, WordPress, Lime Survey

Full service
- Provides customers with access to all the applications and scripting that one would find in a commercial provider with a few exceptions (e.g., e-mail is off; e-mail routed through smtp.ncsu.edu)

Support for the service is limited to what's available in the Lite version (e.g., there is not more support available if you are using the Full version).

Learn more: http://oit.ncsu.edu/web-hosting-service/service-offerings

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What about AFS web services?

AFS web hosted services are still available and will be for quite sometime.

However, as requests for sites come in and if they are a better fit in the hosted model, we will recommend they run on the new service.

OIT's plan is to begin a gradual phase-in to this new hosted service.

For information on differences between AFS and the new service, see:
http://oit.ncsu.edu/web-hosting-service/old-vs-new-environments

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Beta: February 1 - June 30, 2011

- Beta begins in February and OIT will accept participants on a case by case basis.
  - o Before you leave today, we'll tell you how to submit your request
- Cost is $20/month (regardless of which level of service - lite or full)
- Upon acceptance into beta, Service Level Agreement (SLA) will be sent for signature. Basics of the agreement can be found at:

http://oit.ncsu.edu/web-hosting-service/service-agreement-overview

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Why not go production now?

Simultaneous with opening up the service to more customers, OIT is releasing an RFP to evaluate outsourcing the service (hosted externally); OIT would continue to administer and manager all aspects of the service.

Once the proposals are evaluated, if the resources and cost models are good, OIT will begin offering web hosted services using an outside provider.

Regardless, our existing customers will see no difference in where the service is hosted and OIT is moving to this new model of web services.

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Requesting an Account

Send message to help@ncsu.edu.

Provide us with your:
- Name
- Requesting college, department or unit
- URL (request separately)
- Type of account: Lite or Full
- Please include "request for web hosting account" in the subject line

Once your request is received, OIT will generate an account for you. Please note that your URL request is a separate process and depending on what URL you want, it may take a while for approval. We recommend you complete the URL request before requesting a web hosting presence.

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URL Request: Domain Name Standards

- North Carolina State University uses the second level domain of "ncsu.edu".
- All official university Web sites, including those of colleges, departments, divisions or other fiscal or operating units of the university, as well as faculty or staff performing university functions, should use appropriate names within the "ncsu.edu" name space for Web sites or other use of the Internet.
- Generally, this means that all NCSU web sites will end with ncsu.edu and will be differentiated by additional levels as well.

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URL Request: Third Level Domains & www.ncsu.edu

- At the request of Vice Chancellors Hoit and Hice (Chief Information Officer and Chief Communications Officer) all third-tier and/or www.ncsu.edu short url requests are to be approved by Tim Jones and Harry Nicholos.
- Requests are considered on a first-come-first-served basis.
- Based on the importance of third-level domains, submitters should plan on an extended review cycle.
- Our preference is that URL requests come in separately from your web hosting request so that the appropriate parties can "own" the calls.

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URL Request: Information Required

- URL requested
  - If you have a preference for a backup one in case your original is not granted, please include this in your request.
- What department is this for
- What department college/unit does this department report to
- Audience type (internal/external) and audience reach (statewide/national/international)
- Justification for request

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Training and Support

Getting help:
- "Getting Started" document on web hosting service web site:
http://oit.ncsu.edu/web-hosting-service/getting-started

- Initial training class will be offered in early February for beta participants
- Beta participants using the full version will be supported only on the applications/packages available in the Lite version; submit all questions to help@ncsu.edu
- Subscribe to the "webhostingpilot" e-mail list to be able to share questions, ideas, suggestions to other hosting participants:
webhostingpilot@lists.ncsu.edu

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Questions / Comments?

Keep up with the project at
http://oit.ncsu.edu/web-hosting-service

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