2015 Sautter Award Application for
One IT: Reimagining IT at UC Berkeley

Project Name
One IT – Together, We Are Reimagining IT at UC Berkeley

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Project Leaders/Sponsors
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Relevant URLs
technology.berkeley.edu/one-it
technology.berkeley.edu/one-it/summit-2014
technology.berkeley.edu/annual-report/engage
technology.berkeley.edu/action-plan

Selected Contributing UC Berkeley Organizations
Office of the CIO
Berkeley Law IT
Student Affairs IT
Educational Technology Services
Campus Shared Services IT
Student Information System Project
IT Managers Forum
IT Community Council
IT Leadership Group
Library IT
University Health Services IT
Real Estate IT
Information Services and Technology
Intercollegiate Athletics IT
Business Process Analysis Workgroup
Problem Statement

IT staff did not know each other. IT staff at UC Berkeley are highly distributed: across the campus, units operate separately, resources and reporting lines are not shared, and individuals have little to no insight into the work their peers are doing. Historically, there has been no direct incentive for collaboration and coordination, and there have been limited official contexts for teams to meet and interact. On any given team, it’s not anyone’s responsibility to facilitate collaboration or foster coordination between IT groups.

This state of affairs leads to uncoordinated provisioning of IT services to the campus, and similar projects being developed simultaneously. While we had made progress implementing IT systems, we had not been successful managing and building human systems at a campus-wide scale.

Solution Statement

In order to build trust and community in the UC Berkeley IT staff, we decided to attempt a series of in-person events for everyone involved with IT on campus. Providing a periodic venue for IT staff to get to know one another face-to-face would build the “Human Middleware” that was missing between the various IT units across campus.

If the IT professionals could be coaxed away from their computers, if they could be cajoled out of their buildings, and if they could be tempted to chat with strange colleagues from beyond their immediate org chart, we felt we would be able to build our community.

These events could create a context for raising awareness of the diversity of our campus IT portfolio, and eventually create a platform for coordination of how IT services should be delivered.

We believe that a critical component to the success of many of our projects is building a better sense of community, collaboration, and partnership across campus IT units. It is in our collective self-interest to work more closely together to efficiently meet the needs of UC Berkeley students, faculty and staff. The One IT initiative expresses the vision of building community, engaging with partners across campus, improving IT services coordination and, ultimately, providing the best possible service to all we serve.

It wasn’t immediately clear that a critical mass of IT staff would participate in these optional events, but the results exceeded our expectations.

History of One IT: Timeline of Implementation

In 2013, UC Berkeley’s new Chief Information Officer, Larry Conrad, met with campus leadership and IT colleagues to hear their impressions of how the central IT units were providing services to the campus community, and areas for improvement. The output of these discussions was a comprehensive, seven-pointed IT action plan to enhance the value IT provides to the University and provide the best possible service.
experience to everyone we provide services to or support. These strategic initiatives were undertaken across campus to solve real problems for our faculty, staff, and students to further the mission of the University.

One of these seven areas specifically focused on the ongoing challenge of building IT community across the entire campus. It came to be known as One IT.

As a large, tier-one research university, IT is distributed across many academic and administrative silos to the effect that, not only is there a lack of awareness of all the various IT projects, there is also a lack of community as IT staff sit miles from each other in different buildings and even zip codes across the city of Berkeley.

The One IT project was launched in the hopes that progress could be made on two fronts. First, by building community among IT professionals at UC Berkeley creating educational and social events for all 900+ IT employees to attend. It was our hope that those nascent relationships would begin to foster awareness of the larger IT portfolio, and ultimately inspire and support collaboration between IT units. Secondly, by enabling cross-campus connections, efficiencies in collaboration and operations would be achieved.

The CIO and his leadership group formed a committee to lead this work. That group, intentionally culled from different parts of the IT organization, began meeting and designing a comprehensive and detailed outreach program to build community and enhance collaboration among UC Berkeley’s IT professionals. In 2014, we created the One IT Engagement plan for the campus. Five social and educational events were planned for the year, each with a different academic or administrative sponsor. With support from the Office of the CIO, event sponsors were provided with seed funding to host events. One IT committee members met with the sponsors to help plan the events, and to help them craft and implement a communication/engagement strategy to garner as many attendees as possible. Our plan was more successful than we could ever have imagined.

Our first event, co-sponsored by Berkeley Law, took place during spring break 2014. Secretly the planning committee had hoped that 80 people or so would attend. As the day drew closer members of the committee began to hear more and more talk about the event. We started seeing the event appear on more and more staff calendars and email invitations from the CIO being forwarded to many other email lists than would traditionally be reached. There was definitely a buzz about the event, and people were clearly interested in attending. The event closed with well over 300 people attending.

We have had six events since that first one, and each has met or surpassed that high turnout. Subsequent events have all had learning components that invite IT staff to better understand the services that different IT departments provide the campus community.

In addition to these co-sponsored social and educational events, the One IT Committee also planned our first annual IT Summit. The IT summit was the largest event that the team planned, with over 450 IT professionals attending. It was the most formal and educational aspect of the One IT engagement plan. The all-day event was developed for IT staff to hear from leadership, to ask questions about issues of concern, to learn about
the strategic direction of campus IT, and to network with colleagues from across UC Berkeley. Additionally, we wanted to provide a venue for staff to share the terrific work they are doing across the campus and see where opportunities for collaboration may exist. One of the most successful aspects of the IT Summit was the poster session. Throughout the day, IT staff answered questions about their poster displays and raised awareness about the projects their department were working on. Lastly, the summit provided the rare opportunity for staff who are distributed across the organization to come together in break-out session and start the hard work of identifying and problem solving in areas in which there are common IT struggles. The IT Summit is becoming an annual tradition with the next event planned for June 8–10, 2015.

How One IT Meets the Sautter Award Criteria

**Innovation:** The effort to gather all staff in a single domain (the field of IT) regardless of reporting line is unique on the UC Berkeley campus. Additionally, we have not found or heard about such a sustained campaign at any other university. Therefore, this model is already being followed at UC Berkeley by colleagues in Human Resources and we plan to start sharing our project at conferences in the future.

**Improving operational efficiency:** By building a community of practice and enabling collaboration across the campus, the One IT movement has greatly increased efficiency in operations. Staff now have a wider network of colleagues across divisions on which to rely to troubleshoot issues and to partner with when designing solutions to common problems. Staff, especially those in smaller academic departments, are often isolated from other IT staff. One IT has helped to ameliorate this by providing a myriad of opportunities for staff to engage one another and to foster a larger sense of belonging throughout the organization.

Additionally, we have ample anecdotal evidence that as staff and organizations gain great knowledge of each other, career paths and opportunities are enhanced. The ability to work on cross-departmental or cross-campus projects allows colleagues greater visibility into advancement opportunities at the same time they get to further hone their skill in areas outside of their daily work.

**Be shareable and readily implementable elsewhere at the University:** Inspired similar initiatives across the campus (One HR). This work leverages the communities of practice across campus and makes all of IT one large community of practice as well.

**Be interoperable and integrated:** All the technology in the world will not solve a single problem without the staff and customers being aligned in their mission. One IT is therefore the focus on installing and implementing a human system, not a technical one. We are successful because our solution is deeply integrated and dispersed throughout the organization.
Demonstrate collaboration: By design, the One IT initiative is collaborative, and we are successful because the development and execution of One IT events is done collectively by IT professionals from across the campus. Because outstanding IT solutions rarely occur in a vacuum, collaboration is a key quality of winning applications. Successful applications demonstrate that the project design and implementation occurred as a result of a strong collaboration with a functional partner on campus or at another location, or as a result of a new partnership with another IT team. The experience should provide a lasting professional growth experience for the involved personnel.

Demonstrate assessable success criteria:
We demonstrate effectiveness by tracking:
- Growth in engagement of staff in One IT initiatives.
- Reporting-line diversity of participants – central campus and departmental staff.
- Reporting-line diversity of One IT event hosts.
- Experience diversity – old timers vs. newbies (senior and junior staff).
- Title diversity – non-technical IT staff, functional owners and technical users (web designers, programmers, BAs, and sysadmins), HR, communications, change-management, researchers.

One IT By the Numbers
Tracking the growing engagement of staff in One IT initiatives:
- 2014, March – Law meetup – 300 + people
- 2014, May – Community Picnic – 350 lunch boxes eaten, more people
- 2014, June – IT Summit – 450 + people
- 2014, August – Service Management Gathering – 120 + IT staff collaborated to help define Service Management at UC Berkeley
- 2014, October – IT Scavenger Hunt – 100 participants in this space limited event
- 2015, March – CSS IT Open House – 350+ attended this off-site event
- 2015, April – Student Information Systems Show-and-Tell – 250+ attended this off-site event

Event Posters