IT Architecture and Infrastructure Committee

I. 9:00-9:30 ITS Service Review Survey Results (Brad Englert, Angela Newell, Ginger Yachinich)

II. 9:30-9:50 IT Service Desk Steering Committee - Discussion

III. 9:50-10:10 UT Web – Update (David Moss, Trice Humpert)

IV: 10:10-10:30 UT Web and Login Issue (CW Belcher)

IT Service Desk Steering Committee Discussion

ITS Service Desk History (as I have heard it)

ITS Help Desk

◦ Support for ITS provided services

◦ "Tier 1" support for certain units, fielding calls/tickets and routing as
　　appropriate

Shared Services Service Desk

◦ Intended as common point of contact for both IT and non-IT service
　　inquiries

Unwinding of Shared Services initiative placed it directly within ITS

◦ Strain on budget already showing problems

◦ No apparent oversight structure, beyond internal management

Importance to campus

• Paramount for heavily invested units (e.g. CoFA)

• Minimal for others (e.g. Moody)

• Paramount for internal ITS provider teams (e.g. ITS Systems)

Propose creation of AIC sponsored Customer Steering Committee

Possible direction:

◦ Monitor routine reports on service metrics

◦ Review and provide feedback on proposed changes to service levels
　　and offerings

◦ Recommend changes to service levels and offerings

◦ Report to AIC for approval of proposed changes

◦ Perform annual assessment of customer satisfaction (survey,
　　interviews, etc.)

Possible composition:

◦ Internal ITS (1-2)

◦ Unit receiving "Tier 1" support (1-2)

◦ Unit receiving only higher tier support (1-2)

Students? (1-2)

UT WEB UPDATE – NOVEMBER 2016

Background

The UT Web service is a shared Web hosting environment supported by Information Technology Services (ITS) launched in the fall of 2014; it has experienced rapid growth since its launch. One year ago, it hosted under 200 sites. Today, it hosts nearly 700 sites and is used by 17 of the 18 colleges and schools and dozens of units. It has allowed the campus Web community a convenient transition path for their existing sites from the previous hosting platform (the recently retired, nearly two-decade old Web Central) while providing requested improvements such as a Web panel for self-service site management and updated developer tools. But with a growing new platform comes challenges.

Service Interruptions: June-August 2016

UT Web experienced multiple service interruptions between June and August 2016. Despite being similar in appearance to site visitors (content not being delivered), the root causes varied. These included an erroneously-enabled backup job, a customer site running an out-of-date content management system, file system access contention created by a maintenance task, and instability due to UTLogin failures. Detailed incident reports are created for each outage and are publically available [1]. These various failures illustrate the fact that UT Web is a complex service with multiple layers and technical dependencies. However, the one commonality is that in each case, as part of the ITS standard problem management process, the root cause was identified and actions were taken to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Slow Page Loads: October 2016

Some UT Web sites experienced periods of slow load times between October 7-20. During this time, these periods became less frequent, shorter in duration and less severe in terms of impact. Application-layer optimizations to several sites (e.g. enabling caching, fixing a bug in a third party developer plugin in use on several sites) have contributed to this improvement. To safeguard the service, the onboarding process for new sites has been updated to include code and security reviews.

Improvements

The frequency of service interruptions/degradations over the past several months does not meet community expectations of the service. Efforts are underway to enhance its capabilities and efficiencies in multiple areas, including critical components such as the file system and content caching, which may help mitigate the impact of future incidents

New Web Hosting Options

Two new cloud-hosted ITS services for Web hosting are now available: UT Quicksites [2] and the CMS Hosting Platform [3]. Drupal and WordPress sites that do not have certain requirements (e.g. need to host confidential data, need to restrict content by EID/affiliation) may be better suited for these services.

For More Information
Please contact David Moss, IT Manager, dmoss@utexas.edu

[1] https://wikis.utexas.edu/display/systems/Incident+Reports
[2] http://links.utexas.edu/cdftvlo
[3] http://links.utexas.edu/rvitxy