



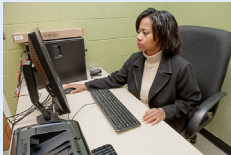
# Communicator

Information Technology Division

## MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY



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**Science professor finds creative way to inspire her students.**  
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**A database administrator's philosophy on logic.**  
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## New Content Management System on the Way

**T**he current Web content management system (Luminis or LCMS) used for the MTSU website is being phased out.

Last year, the parent company, Sungard SCT, announced that it was dropping its support for the product. A committee was formed representing all the divisions on campus to select a new CMS to manage the thousands of pages that constitute the MTSU website.

An RFP was created and submitted with three companies sending in proposals. The unanimous choice of the committee was OmniUpdate.

OmniUpdate's Web content management system is exclusive to higher education, being used currently by over 550 college and university websites and has been ranked the highest in customer

satisfaction in recent years.

One of the key selling points for OmniUpdate was its easy-to-use interface.

The Luminis system currently uses a product called Site Studio to allow users to edit Web pages, and it can be a very convoluted process that requires several steps to make a single change.

Demonstrations of OmniUpdate showed a system where a user can simply go directly to the page they want to edit through any browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, or Safari for example), click on a common login button, entering their username and password, make the change, and save it. Changes are then reflected immediately.

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## FootPrints Gets a Makeover

**I**TD recently upgraded its work order system, FootPrints. This upgrade is to prepare the system for additional new packages involving work flow and asset management. For most of the MTSU community this will result in little impact on what they see and how they enter a new work order. ITD staff will have an improved interface for view-

ing work orders and supporting dynamic filtering over many of the data fields commonly used. The new version also supports using smart phones and tablets for viewing work order data. Selected staff will start using the iPad technology so they have access throughout the campus while handling work orders assigned to them.

# SoftChalk Quiz and Activity Assessment Options

**S**oftChalk\*, an easy-to-use e-learning authoring tool is now available to MTSU faculty through the campus site license. It allows you to easily “mash up” your course content with many types of media (video, audio, images, interactive exercises, quizzes, and text.) Content can be uploaded to D2L or your MTmedia or MTweb account. Lessons will keep track of student scores that can then be reported to you through the lesson interface.

SoftChalk Quiz and Activity Assessment Options allow students to evaluate their own learning on the spot directly after receiving instruction. Instructors can ask simple knowledge-level questions, as the content is first introduced, but then move on into higher level questions that require students to comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate content.

**\*Note:** Information about downloading SoftChalk through the MTSU site license agreement can be found at the end of this article.

## Lesson Assessment Points Can Be Sent to Instructor

SoftChalk can track QuizPopper, Quiz Group, and Activity responses and can

be set to allow students to email their lesson assessment results back to the instructors, print certificates, or print summaries of the assessments.\*

**\*Note:** The certificates and summaries could be printed to PDF and uploaded to a dropbox in D2L.

## Questions Can Be Imported into Activities

Creating your questions in NotePad following a format such as the one below allows you to quickly create questions and import them into SoftChalk activities. You can then easily modify your question in SoftChalk by adding hyperlinks, images, video, etc. To find the correct NotePad format for your question type create a few sample questions in SoftChalk and export them to a text file. You can use this text file as a template and quickly type in other questions, copy and paste questions from Word, reformat them, and import the completed text file of questions back into SoftChalk.

## Sample NotePad Question Format

RAIDER XPRESS |What is the name of Middle Tennessee State University’s mass transit system?

MIDLANDER|What is the name of Middle Tennessee State’s yearbook that

saw its first publication in 1926?

JIMMY EARLE|Going into the 2010-2011 year, what men’s basketball coach had the most career wins as a Blue Raider?

ROGER STAUBACH|According to the MTSU football media guide the 1960s was the most “prolific for wins” in the school’s history. Arguably who was the most famous player to compete against the Raiders in the 1960s?

TBR|What governing body has direct legal jurisdiction over Middle Tennessee State University?

VOORHIES|What building was built as a part of the Works Progress Administration project?

## Export Questions to Respondus

SoftChalk questions can be saved to the library and then exported to Respondus and used in D2L.

## Publishing Your Lesson

We recommend one of two methods for publishing your course files.

1. Publishing directly to D2L if your lesson does not contain actual video and audio files but only links to these files. The lesson contains only text, images, and SoftChalk Quizzes and Activities.
2. Publishing to the MTMedia server. Use this method if your lesson contains actual video and audio files.

## Publishing Using the Import, Export, Copy Components Tool

If your lesson contains only text, images, SoftChalk QuizPoppers and Groups, Activities, and links to outside media such as YouTube videos you may publish your lesson directly to D2L. The quickest way to do this is to package

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## Communicator

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## SoftChalk

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the lesson as a Standard Zip file. Set the Track score setting to LMS with SCORM 1.2. Set the method you want to receive student scores, Print Certificate, Print Score Summary, or Email Completion Results. Notice the file name of the zip file that SoftChalk creates. Log into your course and use the Import, Export, Copy Components tool to publish your lesson to your course. (Choose to Import Components and search for the zipped file.) A content module will also be created.

### Publishing to the MTmedia Server

To publish to the MTmedia server you will first need to request an account on that server. Contact the Faculty Instructional Technology Center at 904-8191. After you receive your account and login information you will create a Network Place (folder). Package your lesson with no compression (don't make a zipped package, choose none) and copy your lesson folder to the server. You can then determine the URL to link to this lesson by opening the index.htm file in your browser (by double clicking on it).

### Learn to Use SoftChalk

Contact the Faculty Instructional Technology Center or Learning Teaching and Innovative Technology Center staff if you have questions or want to set up an appointment to learn SoftChalk. Workshops will also be offered each semester.

### SoftChalk Site License

MTSU now has a site license for SoftChalk that allows faculty members to download and install it to all computers that they use on campus and at home. Access to the download and licensing information can be found in D2L. Log into D2L and click on the student tab. Locate the MTSU D2L Learning Community course, click on the Content link

The screenshot shows the SoftChalk configuration interface. It is divided into several sections:

- Packaging Options:** Includes 'Package type' with radio buttons for None, Standard Zip (selected), Common Cartridge, Executable Lesson (Windows), Executable Lesson (Mac), and Executable CD. It also includes 'Track score using' with radio buttons for None, SoftChalk CONNECT, LMS with ScoreCenter, LMS with SCORM 1.2 (selected), and LMS with SCORM 2004.
- Score Tracking Options:** Includes radio buttons for Single attempt, Unlimited attempts (selected), and Multiple attempts until complete.
- Lesson Title:** Includes input fields for Title (Historical Information About MTSU) and Subtitle (Test the Quiz Score Response Function).
- Student Options:** Includes checkboxes for Print Certificate of Completion (checked), Print Score Summary (checked), and Email Completion Results (checked). It also includes a dropdown for Passing percentage (75), an input field for CEUs (optional), an input field for Institution (Middle Tennessee State University), and an input field for Your email (bkerr@mtsu.edu).

**An example of SoftChalk. SoftChalk Quiz and Activity Assessment Options allow students to evaluate their own learning on the spot directly after receiving instruction.**

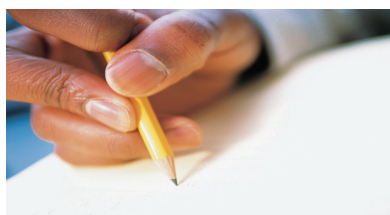
in the banner, and then scroll down to the Site License Software section.

### Resources

- Applying Bloom's Taxonomy: <http://www.teachers.ash.org.au/researchskills/dalton.htm>
- Multiple-choice questions based on Bloom's Taxonomy: <http://www.utexas.edu/academic/ctl/assessment/iar/students/plan/method/exams-mchoice-bloom.php>
- [http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC\\_88.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_88.htm)
- <http://www2.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev/guidebk/teachtip/questype.htm>

### Attention Faculty!

**You can have your tests scored and surveys scanned at the ROTC Annex and CAB basement. Scan forms are available at the bookstore. For more information, call extension 5160.**





## Security Corner

*From the IT Security desk*

# A worm is being spread via a Facebook application which reads, "Click here, then allow, to see the shocking video." Do NOT click this link.

# Outside the Box

Chemistry professor Dr. Monique Gibbs was faced with a challenge when she began teaching her physical science class last fall.

“A lot of kids are afraid of science and math, so they come into it with a very frightened disposition that makes it hard for them to be successful in the sciences,” she said.

As she searched for a way to eliminate the anxiety and trepidation from science, Gibbs thought outside of the proverbial box.

“I love PowerPoint presentations, but I wanted to pursue something new,” she said.

After consulting with members of ITD’s Academic & Instructional Technology Services, Gibbs found the solution to her problem in the form of SoftChalk.

SoftChalk is a software package that allows educators to generate professional, engaging, learning content that enhances their students’ learning experience.

“The beauty of it is that it allows me to use multimedia to present scientific concepts to my students,” Gibbs said. “So I use it in D2L, where the students are able to access it as they study. They’re able to look at interactive figures that we discuss in class such as YouTube videos that depict and explain scientific topics.”

By introducing SoftChalk into her classroom, Gibbs’ students are able to learn science lessons in a vibrant interactive environment without the monotony of traditional lectures. Since she began implementing the program, Gibbs has found that her students have become more attentive and enthusiastic about each lesson.

“SoftChalk also allows me to post quizzes and exams online,” said Gibbs, who graduated from Meharry Medi-



**After introducing SoftChalk to her classroom, Dr. Monique Gibbs’ science students are able to learn concepts in a vibrant interactive environment without the monotony of traditional lectures.**

cal College in 1997 with a Ph.D. in pharmacology and began teaching at MTSU in 2010 after working in the private industry for several years. “This program helps the diverse learner feel like they can be successful in science by making it more accessible. The videos help students memorize the key points of the lectures, and the students are excited when they come to class. They look forward to seeing the class presentations.”

## Teaching, Learning & Technology

# PROFILE

Gibbs, who taught herself how to navigate the SoftChalk program with

the assistance of Brenda Kerr and Darryl Leach of Academic & Instructional Technology Services, feels the software branches out to a broader range of students by including music, art, and poetry. Her SoftChalk presentations include a variety of media, from catchy jingles about plate tectonics to poems about seismic waves.

The songs and poems help serve as mnemonic devices for students to retain key scientific concepts, Gibbs noted.

“I have as much fun preparing the presentations as the students do listening to them” she said. “When it comes to the presentations, I like to find videos that really make concepts come to life, where students feel like they have a true understanding of the material.”

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*January/February 2012*

## New CMS

*Continued from page 1*

A second key point was OmniUpdate did not have several of the limitations with newer technology that the current CMS has. OmniUpdate is fully compatible with mobile technology, blog software (like WordPress), Flash animation, databases, etc.

The conversion to OmniUpdate is scheduled for completion in mid-March. Training for departments will begin in late February and continue through the month of March.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Albert Whittenberg at extension 5062.

# Telephone Tidbits



**Has your office recently moved? Has your campus phone number recently changed? Don't forget to update your personal directory information by logging into PipelineMT and accessing the RaiderNet tab. It is important to keep your campus information current, as this information is printed in the Campus Directory and is available 24/7 online via the electronic people finder on the MTSU website, as well as through campus operators and the automated directory system.**

## Virtualization Technology to Provide Students and Employees with Anytime Access to Desktops, Apps, Resources, and Personal Files

Middle Tennessee State University and Citrix Systems, Inc. have jointly announced plans to install new technology on the campus that will allow students, faculty, and staff free, anytime access to virtual desktops, programs, personal files, and network resources.

Officials with Citrix and MTSU said the implementation of Citrix XenDesktop, Citrix XenApp, Citrix XenServer, and Citrix NetScaler will give the University the largest virtual desktop service in Tennessee's higher education system.

MTSU has planned a multi-phase rollout approach with the help of Citrix Consulting Services to have more than 2,000 devices virtualized by the fall, after which the process will continue across the remaining campus.

The final phase will enable remote capability: students, faculty, and staff will have simple, secure access to virtual desktops, applications, network

resources, and file storage from any device, PC, Mac, notebook, tablet device, or smart phone on or off campus; University-owned or personally owned devices at any time, 24/7, and 365 days a year.

"MTSU prides itself in being the largest undergraduate university in the state of Tennessee, and as such we are focused on taking a leadership position with the most modern technologies," said Vice President for Information Technology and CIO Bruce Petryshak.

"We are committed to ensuring that our students, faculty, and staff are offered the very best technologies to enable them to learn, collaborate, and access information that ultimately impact student outcomes in a positive way," Petryshak added.

The systems, which include on-demand app delivery via XenApp running on Citrix XenServer, are expected to save MTSU more than 35 percent in desktop computing costs by enabling easy, centralized management of desktops and applications and reduc-

ing the need to refresh expensive PC hardware.

The virtualized solutions will also give the University the ability to leverage low-cost, thin-client computing devices to reduce electricity consumption and drive further simplicity across the infrastructure.

"Having all these new capabilities and being able to extend our reach while reducing costs is an absolute win-win for MTSU," Petryshak said.

The technology, which is being dubbed "DesktopMT," transforms any Windows, Web, or SaaS application into an on-demand service that can be accessed by any user, on any device, anywhere, with unparalleled simplicity and scalability, said Lorenzo C. Hines, assistant director of Classroom Technology Support.

Secure access for this new technology will be as simple as opening any browser, going to the URL and logging in with a username and password, Hines said. "It will allow faculty and

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# The Man of Logic

**W**hen it comes to information technology, nearly everything is built on the foundation of logic.

As someone who's worked with computers for more than 20 years, Neil Prater wouldn't prefer it any other way.

"Computers are based on the fact that if they do something one time, and if conditions remain the same, they will do it over, over, and over again," Prater reflected. "I like that because it fits in with my mathematics background. It's black and white without any gray areas."

It is this clear-cut, deductive reasoning that serves Prater in his daily duties as one of the Information Technology Division's database administrators, providing administration for Oracle and MS SQL Server databases that are encountered at MTSU.

Prater, who holds a bachelor's degree in computer science from Southeast Missouri State University, works with Jack Head and James Foster to provide high availability and easy accessibility to appropriate core data and information across the campus community; work closely with campus constituents to evolve the content and technology basis of the BlueInfo Data Warehouse; and research new data architecture, database, query, reporting, and data mining techniques and technologies.

Among its three members, the Database Administration team comprises about 75 years of IT experience.

"Our Database Administration group makes a great team," said Prater, who joined ITD in February 2008. "We come from varied IT backgrounds, so that gives us an opportunity as a department to develop a deep knowledge base. We try the best we can with the time we have to spread that knowledge among the three of us."

Before coming aboard ITD, Prater worked as a data implementation man-



**As a database administrator, Neil Prater helps to provide security, accessibility, data integrity, and data redundancy for all of the databases on campus.**

ager at SureDecisions, Inc., which is a subsidiary of Accretive Health, Inc. His responsibilities there included implementing collection and database loading processes of healthcare insurance claim and remittance data for more than 200 hospitals and clinics worldwide.

In addition, he managed a three-member staff of mapping programmers and gained knowledge in Visual Basic, Monarch Data Pump, SQL Scripting, and other tools in developing processes to map and load various standard and propriety data sources to SQL Server 2000/2005 databases.

Information Technology Division  
**STAFF**

He also was responsible for database tuning for further efficiency and dependability.

As a database administrator, Prater helps to provide security, accessibility, data integrity, and data redundancy for all of the databases on campus.

"We have so many varied and widespread databases that many folks of the campus community have put on their own servers," Prater said. "Many of these databases aren't being monitored or maintained. What we're developing is a clustered MS SQL Server environment that will allow our campus community to bring their databases in-house so that we can monitor them and keep them backed up, healthy, and fault tolerant."

One of the most important missions of a database administrator is to ensure the data integrity remains intact, Prater noted.

"We provide the security to prevent unauthorized users or applications to

## ITD Staff News

The 2011 Faculty Fair sponsored by the LT&ITC (Learning, Teaching and Innovative Technologies Center) was a success. Faculty members were greeted by representatives from a wide variety of campus offices and services, including committee members and recipients of several MTSU faculty grants. Center director, **Dr. Tom Brinthaup**, credited the success of the event to the willingness of campus groups to participate.

“We wanted to expand the event to serve as a ‘one-stop shop’ for faculty members,” Brinthaup said. “The reception from the campus community was excellent. Faculty who attended found the Fair to be quite valuable and informative. It was good to see so many attendees and to hear such positive comments about the event.”

This annual event also played host to awarding the Dean’s Teaching, Learning and Technology Roundtable Award. Prior to the Faculty Fair, a call for nominations was issued for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning and Technology. Winners receive travel and conference fees to attend The International Conference on College Teaching and Learning. Selected faculty from institutions across the country will be in attendance where they will be recognized and receive the “Award for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Technology” in a special ceremony.

**Dr. Becky Alexander** from the Department of Elementary and Special Education was the recipient of this year’s award for her submission titled: “Ready, Set, Action!: Video Production in a Problem-Based Learning Environment and Various other Integrated Technologies within an Education Course.” Congratulations to Dr. Alexander and best wishes as she shares her submission at the annual conference. Thank you to each of the MTSU College Deans for sponsoring and continu-

ing to be supportive with this special award.

For more information about the Dean’s Teaching, Learning and Technology Roundtable Award, please visit <http://www.mtsu.edu/tltr/index.shtml> for Innovative Excellence in Teaching, Learning & Technology.

The LT&ITC looks forward to hosting the Faculty Fair again next year and hopes you can join us for this extraordinary event.

As part of ongoing support for

accessibility in instructional design, the Learning, Teaching, & Innovative Technologies Center (LT&ITC) in collaboration with the Disabled Student Services (DSS) office and the Faculty Instructional Technology Center (FITC) presented a full-day program to increase awareness of disability-related instruction issues and provide practical tips on how to assist students to have successful learning experiences.

The morning session addressed general course accessibility and pedagogy issues, including how to make course

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## ITD Open Forums

The Information Technology Division is hosting a series of open forums during the course of each semester to help establish a culture of open dialog and to share ideas regarding information technology at MTSU. ITD will kick

off the 2012 forum season at 2 p.m. Feb. 1 at the KUC, room 322. For more information including agenda items and how to suggest agenda items, future meeting dates, and locations and times, visit <http://www.mtsu.edu/projects/forum.shtml>.

### ITD Open Forums for Spring 2012

Day	Date	Time	Location	Proposed Agenda Items Due	Agenda Posted
Wednesday	2/1/2012	2-3 p.m.	KUC 322	1/17/2012	1/24/2012
Tuesday	2/7/2012	10-11 a.m.	Walker Library 475	1/17/2012	1/24/2012
Thursday	2/9/2012	2-3 p.m.	KUC 322	1/17/2012	1/24/2012
Wednesday	3/14/2012	2-3 p.m.	KUC 322	3/1/2012	3/6/2012
Wednesday	4/11/2012	2-3 p.m.	KUC 322	3/28/2012	4/3/2012
Wednesday	5/9/2012	2-3 p.m.	KUC 322	4/25/2012	5/1/2012

### Staff News

*Continued from page 7*

content and materials fully accessible to students with a variety of disabilities. Attendees, including several visitors from other Tennessee institutions, participated in a roundtable discussion regarding issues and concerns on their campuses and worked together to determine possible solutions or improvements.

The afternoon sessions, led by instructional technology specialists from the FITC, included making multi-media, WORD and PowerPoint presentations accessible to students with disabilities. Attendees were also introduced to a new software, Softchalk (available to faculty via a campus license), that aids faculty in creating interactive accessible course content. Faculty should contact the FITC or the LT&ITC for instructions on how to download the software.

The LT&ITC will continue this initiative during the spring semester with a follow-up workshop – “A Course Accessibility Tune-up.” Please visit the LT&ITC website to register for this and other sessions throughout the semester.

### Neil Prater

*Continued from page 6*

obtain access to the database itself,” he explained.

Banner is the proverbial backbone of the University’s technology, and keeping that system patched, maintained, upgraded, and accessible to the campus community requires substantial effort, Prater noted.

“Downtime has to be kept at an absolute minimum for Banner because it’s the lifeblood of everything within our IT systems,” he said. “Downtime is a no-no.”

When he’s not working to maintain the University’s databases, Prater is an avid motorcycle enthusiast. He and his wife of 32 years, Beverly, plan to take to the road to visit the Smokey Mountains this summer. Prater also enjoys doing yard work, occasional golfing, and spending time with his dogs, Sugar and Minnie.



### Monique Gibbs

*Continued from page 4*

Gibbs’ students embraced the interactive lessons so much that they’ve been inspired to create scientific Softchalk presentations of their own.

“This program has helped inspire them to think beyond the regular classroom activities,” Gibbs said. “They’re able to use the content as they study, and it’s definitely improved their grade averages. It enables science to embrace creativity, and they have a lot of fun with it.”

Gibbs sees SoftChalk as a hybrid of two teaching styles – the traditional and the new. She uses her SoftChalk presentations as a guide for her in-class lectures, allowing students to use the information they gain from the interactive presentations to enrich each scientific topic.

“I think science is fun,” she said. “We just have to keep making it fun for students.”

For more information about SoftChalk, including quiz and activity assessment options, see the related article on page 2 of this newsletter.

## ITD Workshops Available For Faculty And Staff

**Get started with computer graphic programs such as Illustrator; edit and enhance pictures with Photoshop; get familiar with D2L and Photoshop; get trained in Word 2010, Excel 2010, and Access; learn to design Web pages; and more!**

### Registration is required (except where noted)

- Register on the Web or call ITD at x5345
- Most workshops are offered at the ITD Training Center in the Telecommunication Building
- Classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis
- Please give a 24-hour cancellation notice

**Individual consultation for instructional technology needs can be requested by calling ext. 8189. Other workshops are available upon request.**

**See our website for more information at [www.mtsu.edu/~itd/workshops](http://www.mtsu.edu/~itd/workshops)**

### Virtualization

*Continued from page 5*

staff greater flexibility in accessing work-related apps and data without being physically on campus,” he said.

Thomas Eacobacci, Citrix’s south-east region area vice president, said the company’s virtual computing solutions will “help individual students achieve their educational goals and, at the same time, ease budget worries and extend the reach of MTSU.”

“Citrix is proud to be a partner with MTSU and we applaud its efforts to be a leader in Tennessee higher education through the use of Citrix solutions,” Eacobacci said.