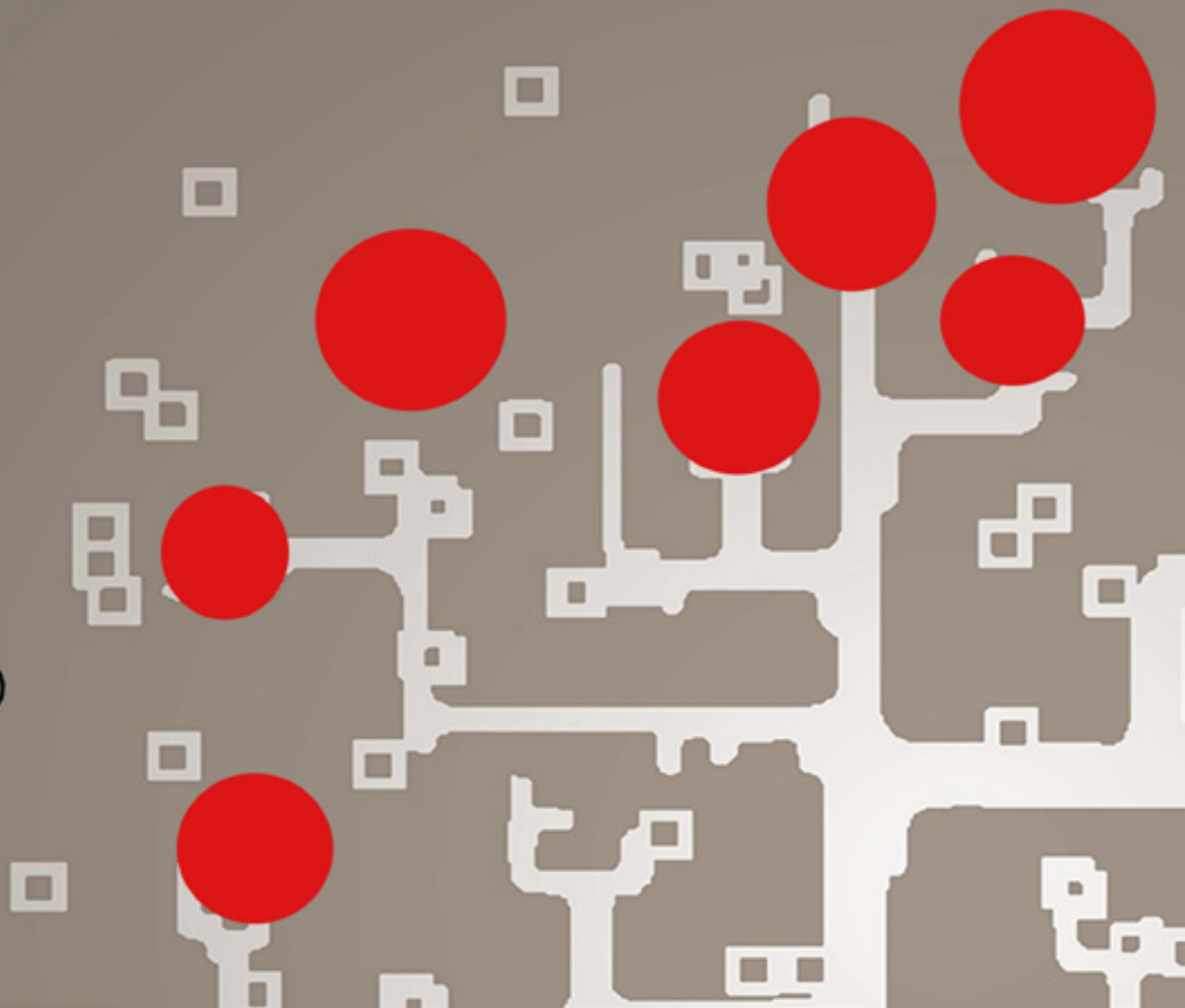


# wired@IT

Delivering the IT Promise

August 2015 Edition



IT has a new promise, and that is to be more open, transparent and collaborative. This newsletter is one of many initiatives to deliver the promise.

We plan to distribute a newsletter at least 4 times a year, over and above the news items that is constantly updated on our website. We see news as an important contributor to partnership building which is one of our seven strategies going forward.

There are lots of exciting news in this newsletter ranging from user contributions to technical articles, strategy and structure, and most importantly articles about IT's promise to add more value to Learning/Teaching and eResearch.

IT will strive towards maturity in different value disciplines in the next few years and try to balance our work better in terms of core business activities of the University. We do not want to be seen as a support function any more, but as an integral part of business, delivering value to grow and transform the NWU.

Happy reading – there are more to come...

*Boeta Pretorius.*

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### Editorial Team

Me. Chandré Botha  
Me. Geraldine Gerhardi

### Website

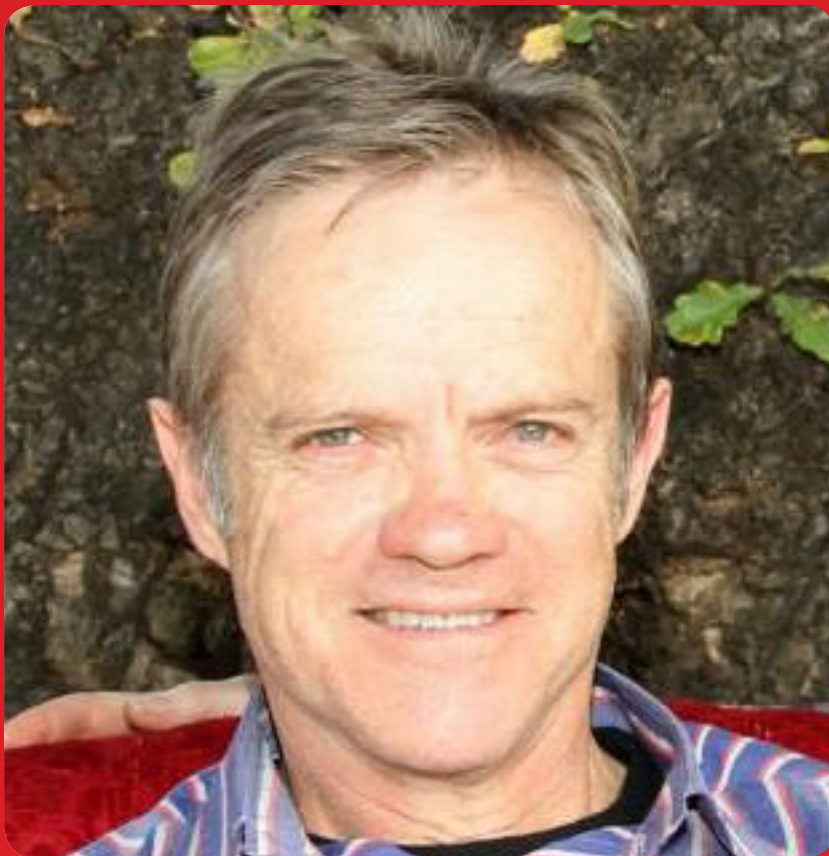
<http://www.nwu.ac.za/ithome>

### Feedback

Talk2IT@nwu.ac.za

# Meet the Chief **IT** Director

Foto: Mr Boeta Pretorius



dirt road on my mountain bike”. According to Boeta, taking 2014’s accomplishments into account, the following deem to be noteworthy:

- Taking eFundi content offline.
- Implementing the NWU eCommunication strategy.
- Piloting the Lecture Capturing.
- Implementing the new print strategy.
- Implementing the new student email strategy.

It has been said that a Director makes a 100 decisions per hour, if that holds true for the IT industry, it still remains to be discovered... Thus when Boeta was prompted to reveal the IT Department’s emphasis for the current year, he replied as follows:

**Start** a process to move towards maturity in all three value disciplines of IT, namely operation all excellence, customer intimacy and product leadership.

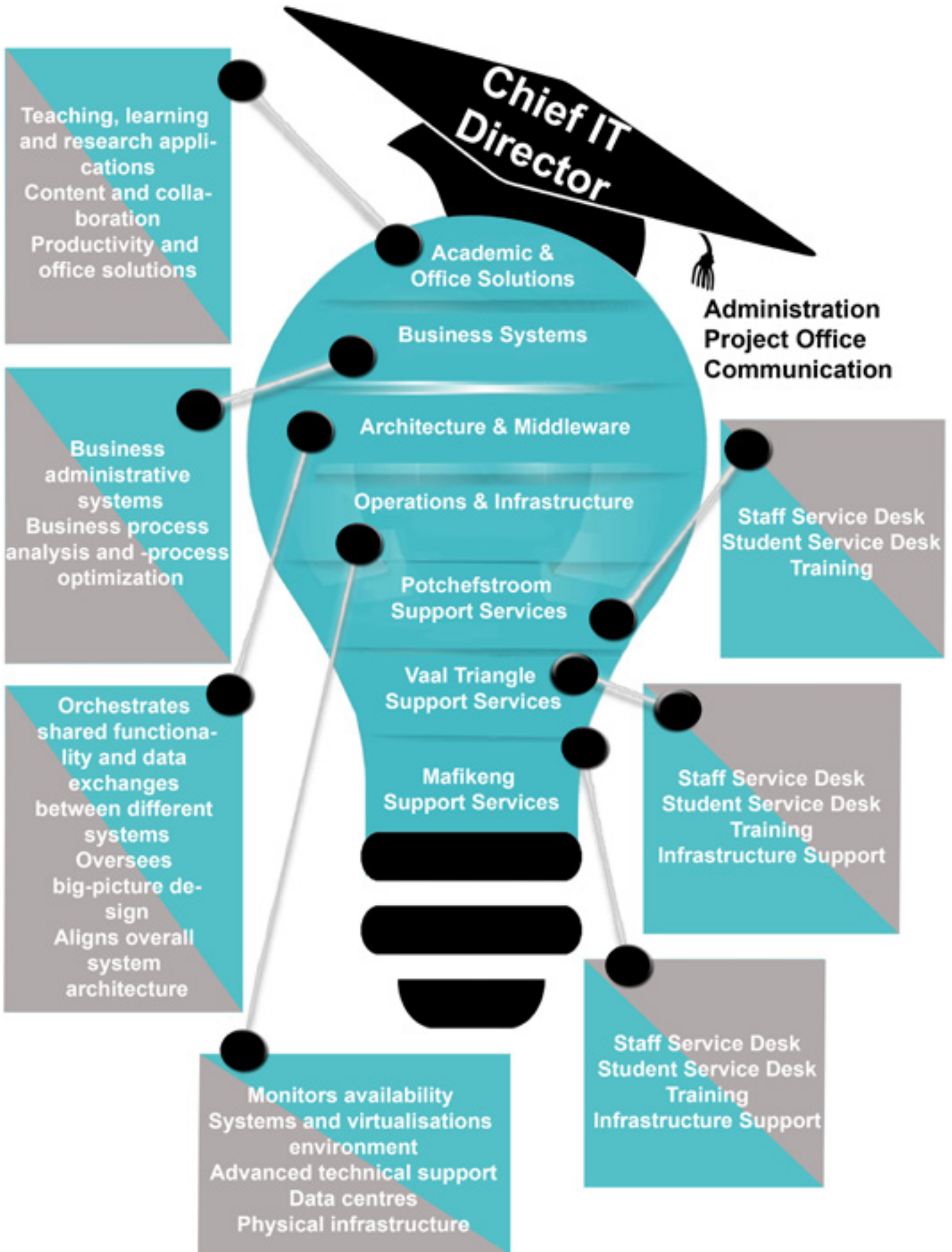
**Achieve** a better balance (projects, people, time, budget) in terms of our domains of work, namely: Learning and Teaching enablement; Research enablement; Administrative systems; Shared services; Ancillary services.

**There** are lots of other challenges for this year, Boeta replied. “I will only mention a few: IT Governance, eResearch strategy, Restructuring (completed), IT strategy, Business continuity planning, Disaster recovery planning, broader transformation, peer evaluation improvement plan, national and international collaboration...” This inspirational words are both comforting and reassuring as Boeta states: “With a highly competent IT team, I feel comfortable to tackle any challenge coming our way”

Mr. Boeta Pretorius, newly appointed Chief Director of IT remembers his career journey as one where he had started off as a junior lecturer at Computer Science. He confesses, that it led him to this very challenging position where he, his team of managers and everyone in IT will strive towards excellence. He also stated that: “I never thought I would be in this position one day. When I think about all the great people before me, Prof. Giel Hattingh, Dr. Philip Welman, Dr. Cobus van der Walt and most recently Mr. Attie Juyn, it still feels too good to be true. Fortunately they laid a solid foundation for me to work from and I am very grateful for that”. Asking the question, which his best event was, Boeta replied: “Apart of this privilege, there are a few things that stand out in my

life - the choice of a lifetime partner, a highly talented daughter and a sporting career which enabled me to see the whole world”. Boeta is a highly motivated person, he claims that it derives from the fact that: “I stretch myself, even as a student I wanted to be first in the class, in sport I did not stop before I was the best in my age group, ...therefore I think that I was born with drive and enthusiasm and to always look out for new challenges”. On a lighter note, Boeta replied that his music preferences are strictly exercised during leisure time: “I have to be aware of cars when I am on the bike, so I do not listen to music while training. If I have to listen to music I will most probably listen to Bob Dylan or Neil Young”. For fun Boeta admits: “there is nothing better than to be out on a

# IT Structure





# IT Strategy

# 1

## STAFFING



Implement an agile staffing strategy that will improve the IT value proposition (aligned to the NWU success model) and have a balanced approach to the core activities of the University.

# 5

## CYBER



## INFRASTRUCTURE

Improve the provisioning of ample and appropriate computing capacity, storage for large data, broad and ubiquitous connectivity, and specialised and IT-integrated capturing and analytical instruments.

# 2

## RESEARCH



Add real value to research activities by implementing an eResearch strategy with all the necessary stakeholders (Research DVC, Research Office, IT, Library, Research groupings).

# 6

## SUPPORT



## MODEL

Improve the IT support model to provide differentiated support and enabling self-support while facilitating freedom of choice. Strive towards operational excellence.

# 3

## LEARNING &

## TEACHING



Position IT as a key enabler with the operationalisation of the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy.

# 7

## CONTINUOUS

## IMPROVEMENT



Continuously improve the current IT services to ensure higher availability and reliability thereby increasing productivity and user satisfaction.

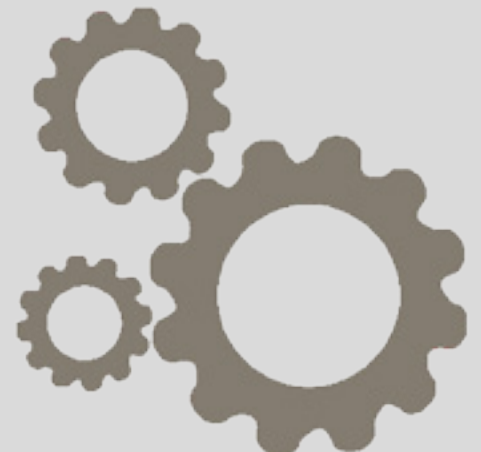
# 4

## STAKEHOLDER

## ENGAGEMENT

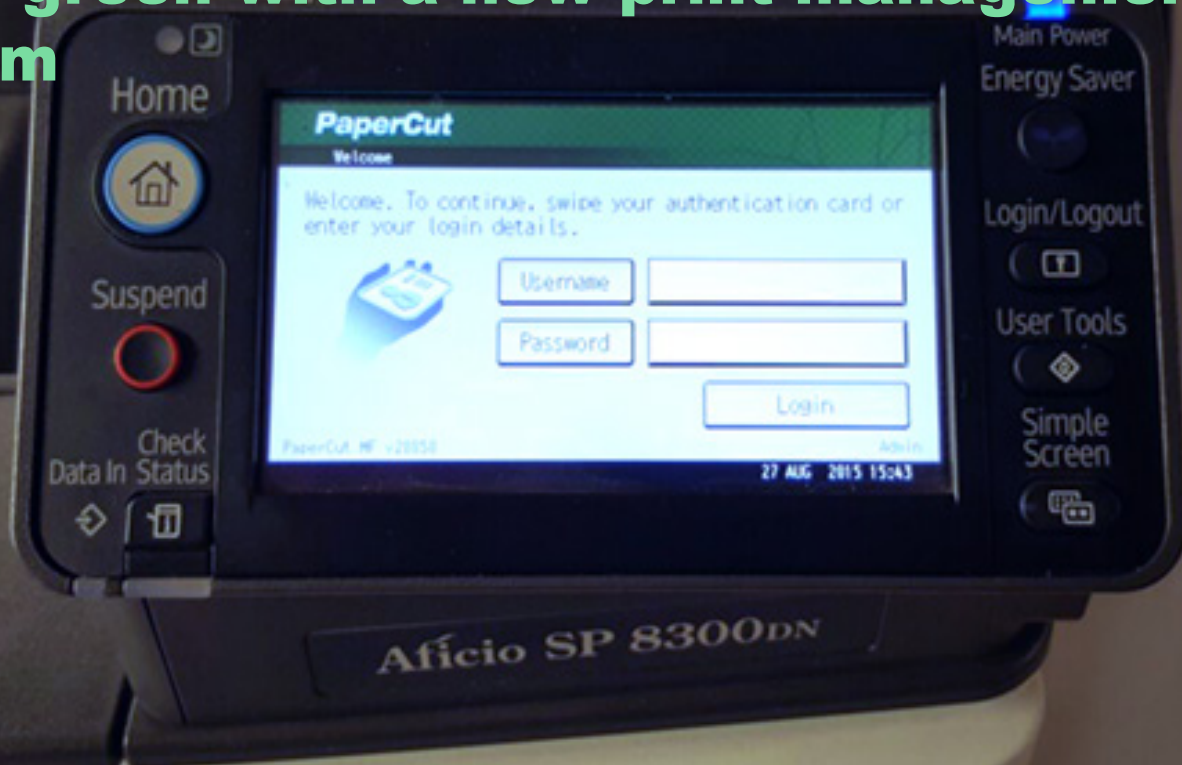


Engage with different stakeholder groups, building mutual trust and understanding to ultimately become strategic partners. Openness and transparency will be key in this strategy.



# PaperCut...

going green with a new print management system



## How we use PaperCut

PaperCut is the new print management system that is currently being used in the student environment. The system enables printers to hold print jobs until users swipe their NWU cards to release the specific print job. Credits are only deducted from the users printing account when the print job is released. Print jobs are kept for 24 hours and deleted if the NWU card is not swiped during this time frame. This new way of printing respects

the privacy of the user, saves paper and reduces printing costs. The pilot implementation was done on the Vaal Triangle Campus where all student printers in the computer rooms as well as the Library were equipped with the necessary hardware. After thorough testing the system went live during March 2015 and has since been implemented on all three campuses. Students load credits to their printing accounts at vending machines on each campus. Print jobs

can be released on any student printer (not necessarily the printer in the same computer room as the workstation) by swiping the NWU card.

## Future Plans

The staff environment is to follow next although no dates have yet been made available. For more information visit our printing service at [www.nwu.ac.za/it/sc/printing](http://www.nwu.ac.za/it/sc/printing)



# Lecture Capturing making life easier...

## Bit of background

Lecture Capture, currently the new buzz word on all three campuses; comprises of technology that allows the lecturer to record what is happening in the classroom. Mr. Hans Erasmus advises, when using this technology: “Do not try and keep up with the times, rather think ahead, for this will keep your students interested in both you and your subject matter”. The man behind this insightful words is Junior Systems Architect, Hans Erasmus. He also shares responsibility for the new Lecture Capture system, together with a few other colleagues in the IT team. His responsibilities include designing new networks, as well as re-designing old networks where expansion is needed. He confirms his job-motivation is based on the following: “Everything that we do directly or indirectly makes a difference in our user’s lives. So by doing what I do every day, I take solace in the fact that I know somebody’s life somewhere has just been made a little easier”.

## More about the technology...

The decision to use the Lecture Capture software, was based on the fact that, although other software was viable for this project, it was pay-ware. So in an institution of our size, the li-



cense fees alone would have killed this project in its infancy. According to Hans: “this technology was decided upon roughly four years ago. It poses the advantage that it is scalable due to its simplicity, financially viable (license fees), and the hardware is best suitable to our situation”. The software being used is Open Source (refers to software which is made freely avail-

able to redistribute and modify) with a large community to support it. This technology is currently available in a few lecture rooms across all three campuses. For an up to date list of venues visit our lecture capturing service at [www.nwu.ac.za/it/sc/lecture-capturing](http://www.nwu.ac.za/it/sc/lecture-capturing). The way in which students can benefit from this technology is that: “it will enable them to watch a specific lecture over and over to ensure they understand the content. They will also be able to use it during exam preparation and hopefully have a better grasp in total of a specific module or course.”

## Looking back... on the classroom technology

In terms of 2014’s accomplish-

ments... Hans stated that: “the aims were to deliver a solution where the videos would be compatible with more than one device. Secondly we focused on the ease of use for both the lecturers and the students. That led to the improvement of the video player to be more understandable for the end-user.”

## Future plans...

The emphasis for this year (2015) will be to roll-out the technology to more classrooms, in order to provide more lecturers with the chance to add this functionality to their arsenal of tools in education.

## Lastly... Special thanks to...

Hans condoled his gratitude to quite a large number of people, as he stipulates: “Campus IT, Adelle Lotter, Ciellie Jansen Van Vuuren, Pieter Enslin, Eben van Zyl, Wimpie de Klerk, Koos Brits and Phillip du Plooy. We also had some help from the infrastructure guys when it came to all the hardware. Other departments involved included Physical Infrastructure and Planning, Electrical and Electronic Services as well as the Academic Support staff from the different campuses”.

## Hans concluded...

“The importance of life is capsulated in Religion, family, friends and hard work, so if one is not making a difference in life, what is the point of us being here? People have enough worries, if we in IT can help to solve only one of those worries, I feel we have made a difference”.



# Dr. Ina Gouws

## Making a difference with technology

### *A bit of background*

Dr. Ina Gouws, Senior Lecturer for Political Science at Vaal Triangle Campus, was identified as one of the lecturers that uses Technology innovatively. She is a Senior Lecturer for Political Science and teaches 1st years (Introduction to Politics, State and Government), 3rd years (Introduction to International Relations Theory) and BA Honours (Issues in World Politics).

### *Her motto...*

She admits: "Although my job title is Senior Lecturer, I am a teacher. That is what I tell people when they ask; I teach Political Science. It is this fact that motivates me. I believe it to be my 'superpower';" Her heart's desire is to make a difference for various reasons. Dr. Gouws claims: "It is required of me by the Institutional Plan to be innovative and to provide students with better access to learning. Secondly, I believe students deserve a good teacher who makes the effort to prepare well and provide an environment conducive to learning. Lastly, I take my personal development as a teacher seriously. In ever changing societies the higher learning environment will (is supposed to) change and a good teacher must keep up".

### *Why technology?*

She shared the fact that the Academic Development and Support services (ADS) on the Vaal Campus initiated the development of SMARTguides (instead of the old printed study guides). These guides provide a one-stop-shop

for students in any module and they have become invaluable in the way she plans any module she teaches. SMARTguides provide access not only to outcomes and key concepts; they also give stu-



Photo: Dr. Ina Gouws

dents access to additional material, articles and tasks on eFundi with one click. She also uses the SMARTguide as the presentation during contact sessions instead of PowerPoint. The guides contain an overview of the basic content of the module, but it also provides students with concept videos on module content, interactive quizzes, activities, case studies and examples of the module's real-life application, all of which are beneficial to students. As she puts it: "The possibilities are endless and that impressed me". The guides are made available to students on eFundi (The official elearning system of the North-West University, based on Sakai Technology) to use and to download.

### *The History...*

She started developing SMARTguides with the guidance and

support of ADS in 2013 and the first guides were used from the beginning of 2014. Lecture Capturing and Live Streaming were implemented in the second semester of 2014. Dr. Gouws stated she participated in a pilot project that was launched by the NWU wherein several lecture venues were equipped with Lecture Capturing technology. Her curiosity spread out of boredom, as she explained: "One can only do so much with PowerPoint and a couple of YouTube videos and the same old study guides. But one did the best with what was available to teach with. Most importantly, we don't have enough and big enough venues for our contact sessions on the Vaal campus anymore. I was curious to see if Lecture Capturing and Live Streaming could address such issues."

### *Thanks to curiosity*

Her curiosity spread out of boredom, as she explained: "One can only do so much with PowerPoint and a couple of YouTube videos and the same old study guides. But one did the best with what was available to teach with. Most importantly, we don't have enough and big enough venues for our contact sessions on the Vaal campus anymore. I was curious to see if Lecture Capturing and Live Streaming could address such issues." Live Streaming of lectures take place during contact sessions where students who are not physically in the venue, can access the Live Streaming wherever they are as long as they have internet access. A meeting room is created on Ado-



be Connect and the link posted on eFundi for students to use. There were several lecturers on the Vaal Campus that participated in the Lecture Capturing pro-



Photo: Lecture Capture equipment

ject but, as Dr. Gouws stated: “Dr Jacques Matthee and myself decided to apply for a SoTL (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) grant to give this project an academic outcome. We’ve added Live Streaming of our lectures with Adobe Connect to the project and are now busy with the academic article focussing on our narrative as teachers as we experienced the implementation of teaching with technology. We’ll present this paper at different conferences before the end of the 2015”.

### *Student benefit ...*

Out of Dr. Gouws’ experience, technology provides a vehicle where “the teaching and learning experience of students is enhanced by providing flexible and varied learning opportunities which cannot be provided in the short space of time we have with them in class. We are unable to offer our students more time in class as our campus’ infrastructure, in terms of venues, is very limited. As a result, our timetable is overloaded which further makes it impossible to schedule extra lectures”. Her solution is that: “We aim to address the problem surrounding the access of distance and/or

part-time learners to teaching and learning experiences, by streaming the lectures live over the Internet”. The added benefit, according to Dr. Gouws is that: “Students therefore need not attend alternative classes or travel great distances to attend lectures. They can simply go online and virtually attend the lecture in real-time”. The benefit of Lecture Capturing is twofold, states Dr. Gouws: Distance and/or part-time students who could not attend the live stream lecture can still view the lecture in their own time; and Students who either attended the lecture or the live stream lecture will be able to recap what was discussed during the lecture.

### *Looking back... on the classroom technology...*

When questioned what the overall focus of last year was Dr. Gouws replied that: “We have successfully continued with Lecture Capturing and Live Streaming. SMARTguides were upgraded and the new look is so impressive. All credit to ADS VTC. On a personal development note: I’ve obtained my third award for Institutional Teaching Excellence Award (ITEA) in 2015. I am proud of that. I believe the use of classroom technology contributed to receiving this award. I participated in the annual Teaching and Learning Campus Seminar on NWU Vaal with widely positive feedback”.

### *Future plans ...*

”I will continue with the Lecture Capturing project. New software is being installed which will give the captured videos more functions and I’d like to see if this will

change the way students use the videos. The IT Team have been very supportive and enthusiastic. Live Streaming will continue although I’d like to implement more of the tools available on Adobe Connect. I’d like to make better concept videos to enhance the “flipped learning” approach. If we could have more and bigger venues equipped with Lecture Capturing technology in future it would be great.

### *Her advice to fellow lecturers*

Dr. Gouws mentioned when asked if she had any advice for other lecturers when it comes to applying technology in the classroom, she said: “Don’t use the technology just because it is there. It has to truly help you reach the module outcomes and enhance learning for your subject. Don’t be afraid. Once you’ve made the decision to use technology, take the chance. It may very well be the best decision you’ve made as a teacher. Be patient. Technology is temperamental.

### *Implement the following...*

Try to have a teaching and learning research outcome from implementing technology in the classroom. You do the work anyway, why not make it work for you? I’ve been given this advice and I’m the better for it”.



# Internet instability

## Causes beyond IT's control

### Background

The NWU makes use of the South African Research Network (SANReN), a high-speed network, primarily for research institutions and organisations. The current SANReN backbone consists of a 10Gbps ring between the cities of Pretoria, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and Durban. More than two hundred individual sites surrounding these national centres are connected to the SANReN backbone.

question: why? The major reasons are cable theft/damage and loadshedding. Although this is a South African problem in general, the NWU in partnership with SANReN and TENET does have contingency in place with redundancy built into the network. This is also the reason why the network is not completely unavailable, but just frustratingly slow.

### For example

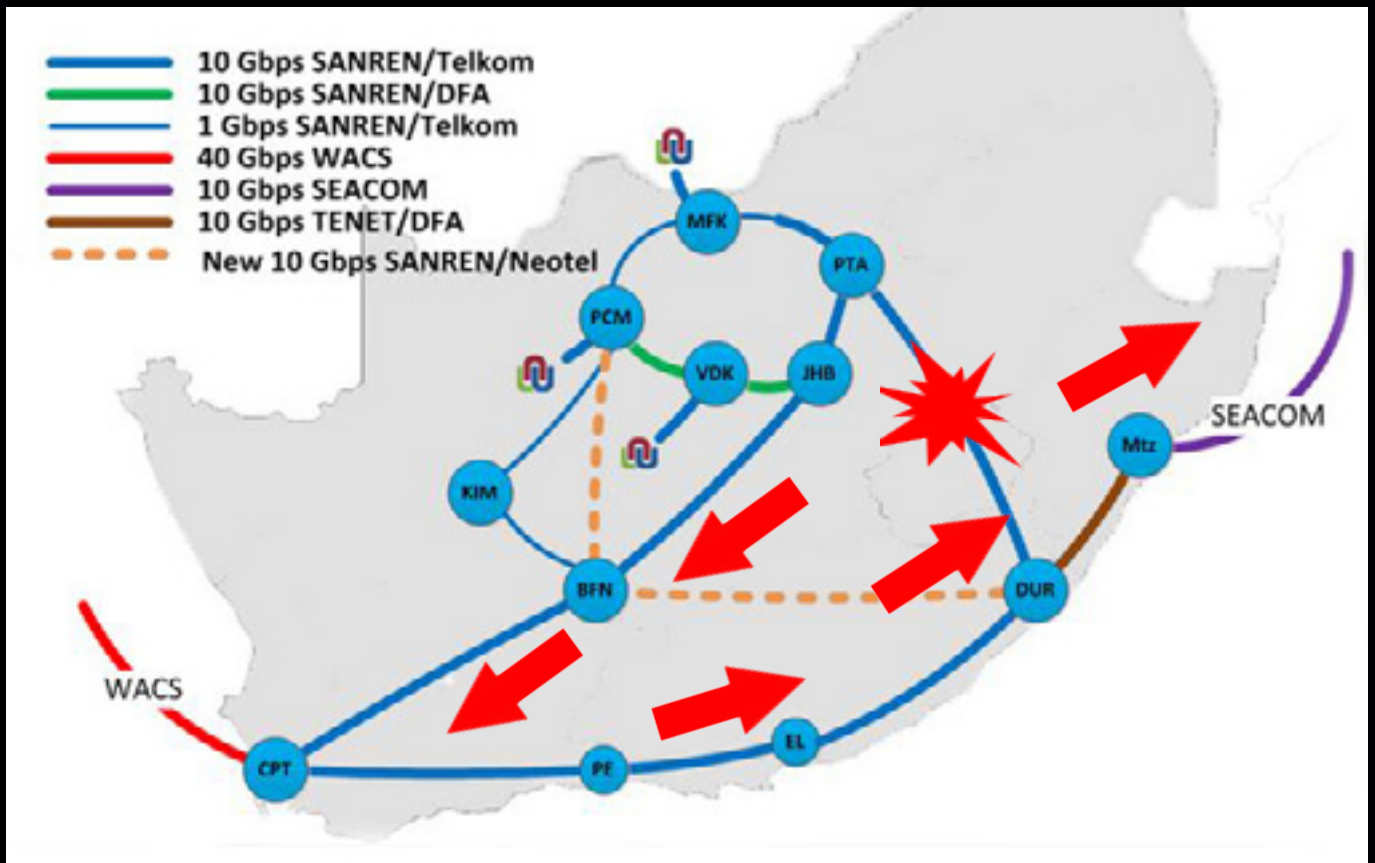
To illustrate what happens to the Internet traffic when a link is down, let's assume the link

why users will experience a delay in Internet browsing speed.

### 2015 events

2015 had it's challenges with a few cable issues causing outages and therefore having an influence on the Internet performance.

SANREN



### Internet outages

Over the last few months the NWU has experienced more than its fair share of Internet outages, or more correctly, Internet slow-downs. This has led to the

between Pretoria and Durban goes down. The Internet traffic will then be re-rooted from Pretoria via Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London and then to Durban. One can now see

### Some of the issues:

- Cable theft
- Cable breakage
- Cable damage



## Cable Theft

April and May was marked with cable theft as well as cable breakage. During a June incident the fibre optic between Johannesburg and Vaal Triangle was cut. Thieves looking for copper cable often cut fibre optic cable, only to find that they can't do anything with the loot. On many occasions the teams responsible for repairing the fibre optic cable have to be escorted by the Police or security officers as some of the areas are deemed dangerous.



## Cable Breakage

June we were targeted by mice who had a take-away on our fibre optic cable – this affected the line between Potchefstroom and Parys. Interesting to note that mice use the insulation to build their nests.



## Cable Damage

Potchefstroom Municipality was repairing sinkholes which occurred on the road between

Potchefstroom and Vanderbijl, when a cable was damaged. This resulted in slow internet browsing speed, due to all the internet

traffic that had to be rerouted through a 1 Gig link. Businesses affected were Vodacom, MTN as well as some others that shared this infrastructure.





# Internet Superheroes

## saves the day

### The History

On 8 July 2015 around 16:00 the Mafikeng campus was cut off from the outside world with regards to data and telecommunications. This was the first full campus outage in history, due to network connectivity outages.



Foto: Mr Peter Schön

The following morning, 9 July 2015, Mr. Peter Schön, (Pensioner and contractor for NWU IT) and Mr. Dawie van den Berg (Infrastructure Administrator of NWU IT) were attending projects and related issues on campus.



Foto: Mr Dawie vd Berg

After discussions regarding the outage with the Telkom technicians, Peter and Dawie decided to do some investigation of their own. Test where preformed, and it soon became clear that the connection



problem was 560m away from the Telkom terminal of the Mafikeng campus. With the information at hand, Telkom technicians went on with their own investigations.



Later that afternoon Telkom reported that Eskom had damaged the cable with a back actor just outside of the Mafikeng campus.



Unfortunately Telkom had no additional fibre optical cable available to replace the broken section of cable, but fortunately IT came to the rescue with available cable and supplied it to Telkom in order to repair the fault.







This was an exceptional challenging matter due to the fact that 2nd opportunity exams were taking place during this time. It took longer than was anticipated to restore the link and Peter and Dawie decided to see how they could assist to get the link operational. After some investigation and assistance Dawie went to the Maba-

tho Telkom terminal while Peter remained on campus, and intense troubleshooting followed. Trou-



bleshooting could only be done to a certain point as the infrastructure was in the Telkom domain. By 20:30 that evening Peter and Dawie managed to reach the Telkom expert and by 21:00 our local superheroes put Mafikeng campus back on line again!!

"A very special thanks to..."

On this note Peter and Dawie pays their gratitude towards Ms. Claudia Pietersen (Director IT) and her IT team (specifically Justice Metswi) for assisting them during this challenging time. Should you experience the Internet to be slow, know that IT is doing everything in it's power (keeping in mind that most of the time the cause is beyond our control) to get the service back up to speed again.

## Next Edition

- More about our 7 IT Strategies
- Learning & Teaching with technology: Connect@NWU
- Usefull Information about virusses

# IT changes gears to support researchers at NWU

 Anthony Beitz retweeted



Anelda van der Walt @aneldavdw · May 21

@a\_beitz "#eResearch is the Renaissance of research" at Cape Unseminars in #Bioinformatics

IT @ NWU has a new vision for the relationship between IT and the University's researchers. IT wants to help accelerate research discovery through provisioning of relevant technology, infrastructure, and support. Boeta Pretorius, Chief IT Director says: "Research has been mentioned in the IT strategy for many years, but in 2015 we're actually going to do something about the way we support our researcher". So moving from words to action, in the past three months IT has done the following:

- added an eResearch specialist to their staff complement,
- joined conversations about an

African Research Cloud together with other prominent research institutes in South Africa and abroad, and

- obtained approval for NWU to feature as founding partner of a South African based institute that will be aimed at research in data intensive sciences.

These steps are the first towards establishing an eResearch Initiative at the North-West University from an IT perspective. Other eResearch partners are also gearing up to embrace technology in research support. According to Mrs Elsa Esterhuizen, director of Potchefstroom

Campus Library Services, eResearch highlights the importance of dovetailing between the various role-players. The Library Services do not only provide access to accredited information sources, but also training and support in the use of research tools. The Research Commons allows exclusive access to post-graduates and researchers. This collaborative hub offers relevant infrastructure enhancing the research process. Another strategic initiative from the Library is the establishment of Boloka, the NWU Institutional Repository where the NWU research outputs are showcased, more visible and online accessible.

## But what does eResearch entail?

Although the focus of eResearch is often on the cyberinfrastructure, Australia's Monash University eResearch Centre classifies eResearch capabilities under the 6 C's: **Collect, Compute, Comprehend, Collaborate, Communicate, and Customise.**

### Research equipment @ NWU

The university has access to a vast array of state-of-the-art research instruments generating many Gigabytes of data annually. One of the outcomes of the eResearch initiative will be to develop a comprehensive database of significant research equipment available to our researchers.

*Collection* refers to the capturing, storage, and management of research data. Data can be generated by research equipment such as microscopes, next generation sequencers, or high performance computers, or through online surveys, and of course even in paper format. Data has to be managed throughout the lifecycle of a research project and thereafter. Good research data management practices are essential for reproducible research and enables researchers to share and reuse data. Role players from an institutional

point of view include IT (physical storage and data transfer) and Library Services (development of research data management plans), as well as Research Support (focussing on compliance with funders' data management requirements).

Although the *Compute* capability is typically well-developed within research areas such as physics, engineering, and chemistry, data volumes have increased exponentially in various other disciplines including genomics, medicine, and huma-



## HPC @ NWU

In 2009 the North-West University launched its High Performance Computing (HPC) Centre. NWU currently has 48 active users on the HPC. Do you want to access the HPC? Let us know – [eresearch@nwu.ac.za](mailto:eresearch@nwu.ac.za)

nities amongst others. Increased data sizes combined with a need for integration of diverse data sets and other factors, have increased the computing requirements in these fields too. Access to adequate high performance computing resources (hardware and expertise)

is critical for modelling, simulations, and data processing. Collaborations between traditionally compute intensive research units, IT, national and international infrastructure providers is of utmost importance to ensure development of appropriate computing resources for research purposes.

It is well understood that the human brain can interpret complex datasets better through appropriate graphical or visual displays than in textual or numerical format. *Comprehension* of research datasets can be facilitated through the use of visualisation facilities such as the Highly Immersive Visualisation

Environment at University of the Western Cape ([www.uwc.ac.za/Faculties/NS/EarthScience/Pages/Highly-Immersive-Visualization-Environment-\(HIVE\).aspx](http://www.uwc.ac.za/Faculties/NS/EarthScience/Pages/Highly-Immersive-Visualization-Environment-(HIVE).aspx)), the Scientific Computing group's visualisation studio at the University of Cape Town (<http://www.dotthei.co.za/video-wall-uct/>), or the CAVE2 at Monash University (<http://monash.edu/mivp>). Visualisation of research datasets provides very interesting and complex challenges and is an active topic of research across the globe. Not only does it involve IT, but also subject specific researchers, computer scientists, engineers, arts, and software developers.

# eResearch all about collaborative training initiatives

Thinking about large international collaborative research projects such as the (SKA) *Square Kilometre Array* or Human, *Heredity, and Health in Africa* (H3Africa) one soon realises that new technologies and methodologies are required to support the *Collaboration* aspect of these project. Virtual meetings, collaborative document editing, collaborative software development, and collaborative training initiatives are only a few aspects where eResearch comes to play.

Throughout the lifecycle of research projects, data is gene-



rated (and managed), analysed and visualised. The stakeholders including the funders, fellow researchers and collabora-

tors, potential students, policy makers and governments need to be informed of the progress, process, and outcomes. Research *Communication* has also changed over the last few years. The use of social media and Web 2.0 - Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and discussion forums are now included. These communication mediums have been popularised alongside electronic journals to reduce the time to access new information and create new opportunities for collaboration and knowledge sharing.

# UCT eResearch

strategy is understanding ...

Anthony Beitz retweeted



UCT eResearch @UCT\_eResearch · Jun 24

Key to succesful #eResearch strategy is understanding and appreciating the researcher's mission - Jason van Rooyen #NATE2015

Finally one size doesn't always fit all. *Customised* solutions are often needed and can be developed through collaboration between researchers, IT, and other capability providers. Ag-

ile development methodologies are implemented with great success to build research solutions to fit with short funding cycles and the fast pace of change in the research environment.

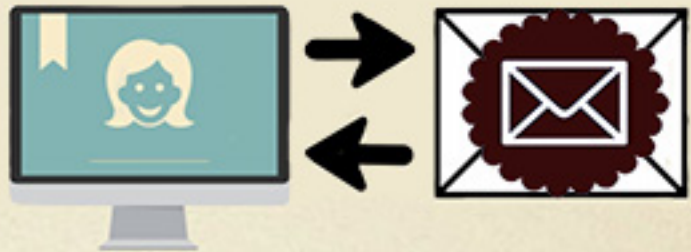
Over the next few months researchers at the NWU can expect to see a lot of activity around eResearch. For enquiries please send an email to [eresearch@nwu.ac.za](mailto:eresearch@nwu.ac.za). Visit [UCT eResearch Centre here](#)

The screenshot shows the UCT eResearch Centre website. At the top left is the logo 'UCT eResearch Centre' with the tagline 'Enabling Research Through Partnerships'. To the right is the University of Cape Town logo and name in English and Afrikaans. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: HOME, ABOUT THE ERC, THE TEAM, OUR PROJECTS, RESEARCHER RESOURCES, NEWS & EVENTS, CONTACT US. A search bar is located on the right. The main content area features a large image of server racks and a text box titled 'Accelerating Research: HPC Training at UCT'. Below this are sections for 'Our Partners' (ICTS, Research Office, Libraries) and 'eERC News' with two news items: 'Clinical Data Management at UCT: What Are Your Options?' and 'Software Carpentry: A Powerful Initiative'.



# 10 Basic tips for better e-mail etiquette

- 1) When communicating  
Don't say anything in an email which you are not prepared to say personally.
- 2) Use appropriate language  
Don't send a message when you are too emotional, save it and review it later.
- 3) Be clear  
The subject line should reflect the content. A blank line is unacceptable.



- 4) Don't use ALL UPPERCASE  
It's equal to shouting or screaming.



- 5) Emailing to external contacts  
Type the addresses in the BC - field. This will prevent the individuals from seeing each other's addresses.

- 6) Avoid 'shotgun' messages  
Sending a message to a group of people isn't an acceptable means to escalate the problem. Use CC and BC fields cautiously.

- 7) Email is an asynchronous medium  
When questioned, or given an order in an email, it is expected to reply promptly. Although when awaiting a reply, don't expect immediate feedback.



- 8) Preventing spam  
Be careful to communicate your email address to unknown persons or organizations.

- 9) High priority emails  
Don't mark messages unnecessarily as urgent, because the receiver will get a red email.

- 10) Attachment file size  
Take note that some organisations set limits on the size of messages and approved attachments.



## IMPORTANT

### *Do not send SPAM:*

Spam is posting or e-mailing unsolicited e-mail, often advertising messages, to a wide audience (another way of thinking of it is electronic junk mail).

### *Obey copyright laws:*

Don't use others' images, content, etc. without permission. Don't forward email, or use web site content without permission.





# Let the learning begin with lynda.com...

## *Background*

Since February 2015 NWU staff have access to lynda.com, an online subscription library that teaches the latest software tools and skills through high-quality instructional videos

taught by recognized industry experts. lynda.com is a high-quality resource for users looking to develop skills in Microsoft Office, Adobe Creative Suite, project management, communication, and a wide range of other topics.

## *Benefits for the user*

This is a great opportunity to brush up on your skills. The course library not only contains IT courses, but Business, Marketing and Education & Elearning courses to name a few. Experts have curated playlists on each course library to help you get started in any of our subjects. Users can setup a Playlist and add their favourite courses to the list in order to keep track of the viewing. Managers would be able to create a Playlist of courses and assign it to their group. By assigning a Playlist to a group, the users in that group can simply click and play from the assigned tab in their "My Courses" section of their home page - making it easy for the user. They don't have to go and search for the course.

## *Taking assessments*

Assessments are already deployed to the most popular lynda.com

courses, and new assessments will be added regularly. These assessments can be used to measure improvement and verify if the training was



worthwhile. An assessment can also be taken before and after a course, allowing users to skip instruction they already mastered and understand how much they have learned. For the programmers among you, lynda.com provides Code Playgrounds that is launched in a browser based code editor to practice along with the lynda.com video content.

## *Mobile options*

lynda.com offers a mobile option for users on the go. The mobile option can also be used to watch courses without Internet access – this is accomplished by downloading the course material to your device – your progress will sync back to your account when you connect to lynda.com again. You can view your courses on your iPhone, iPad, Android phone

or tablet, or other mobile device.

## *Face to face training*

Insert: Face to face training is also presented on each campus. Visit our Training page at <http://www.nwu.ac.za/it/training> for a detailed list of courses on your campus.

## *Course updates*

New courses are added regularly. The latest business courses are Windows 10 Essential Training,



Windows 10 New Features, Office for Mac 2016 New Features, Finance for Non-Financial Managers, and iPad Tips and Tricks to name a few. The number one course viewed by NWU staff since

February 2015 has been Excel 2013 Essential Training.



## *More info*

For more information visit our home page at <http://www.nwu.ac.za/ithome> and click on the lynda.com link.

# Wifi @ the NWU

## STAFF



## STUDENTS



## GUESTS



IT provides a Wifi service when on campus that enables mobile access to the NWU Network and is avail-

able to staff, students and guests. Wifi is free and can be accessed by connecting with one of the

following options (found under the Wireless Network Connections when on campus).

What does wifi offer?

NWUWIFI (for staff and students as well as guests staying longer than 14 days) Staff and students automatically have access to this service. For guests staying longer than 14 days, the hosting department will need to register the guest via the Guest Registration service. The registration will provide the guest with a NWU number and Network password in order to use the service

Only applicable for Guests

The hosting department must provide the guest with the **nwu-guest** password as obtained from the Campus IT Service Desk. The nwu-guest password expires every 14 days.

NWU-Saficom

*(for staff, students and guests, but only available in Potchefstroom and Vaal Triangle)*

## WIFI



Looking for more information?

The user visits the NWU-Saficom web site at **www.saficom.co.za** for the purchasing of tokens. These tokens could be used on the University premises and in some Hotels and Guest Houses.

Wifi Coverage

Wifi is accessible where wifi has been installed. The coverage areas for each campus are: Mafikeng Potchefstroom Vaal Triangle.

Click for Wifi coverage maps

More Information

For more information regarding our Wifi service feel free to visit us at **www.nwu.ac.za/it/sc/wifi**



# BACKpage



Thanks for  
“Walking”  
through, with us ...