CNS /Update Newsletter Feature

UF Hosts Internet2 Day

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UF Information Technology

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# Table of Contents

UF Hosts Internet2 Day ................................................................. 3
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The Inaugural Internet2 Day, sponsored by the UF Office of Instructional Resources, was held on April 5, 2000, at the UF Brain Institute. Nearly 100 people attended a session on applications that run on Internet2's broad bandwidth, a video-conference demonstration, and a lesson on the infrastructure behind the second Internet at this first in a planned series of lectures on new information technologies.

People from all areas of the university community attended Internet2 Day. Faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, vendors, and education and instruction experts came to learn about how the new availability of broad bandwidth and low latency can affect the way they teach, learn, and work.

Ted Hanss, applications director for Internet2, discusses the possibilities presented by I2 at the UF Internet2 Day, held on April 5.

In 1996, a group of universities came together to discuss the fact that research was becoming difficult on the increasingly crowded commodity, or commercial, Internet. With commitments of time, money, and resources from each school, including UF, the Internet2 project was established. Ted Hanss, director of applications for Internet2, emphasized to the Internet2 Day attendees that these applications are not "click and wait" programs, but can support real-time access to remote locations, making interactive collaborations a reality. Shared virtual reality, where computers and people share resources without sharing a geographic location, can offer tremendous possibilities for research and teaching.

Some examples of Internet2 applications were explored during Hanss' session. They included Variations, an archive of digitized music available from Indiana University; Video Encyclopedia of the 20th Century at Northwestern University, a low-latency library of video clips that can be played without the usual buffering time that occurs with video over the
commodity Internet; and The Cave, a virtual reality environment developed at the University of Illinois/Chicago. The Cave is a program that allows researchers to go "inside" their own applications to better envision improvements and fixes. At the University of North Carolina, a two-stream video program brings touch and 3-D vision to a stereoscopic microscope image. With these and other applications, Hanss said, "graduate students can learn shoulder to shoulder with the leading scientists and researchers in their fields."

Dr. Alan George is the director of the High-performance Computing and Simulation (HCS) Research Laboratory, which is split between two physical facilities, one in Gainesville and one in Tallahassee. His group of faculty, graduate, and undergraduate researchers do much of their work on and about Internet2 technologies. The lab's two facilities are linked together by a high-speed network that serves as a spoke in the Internet2 fabric in the state of Florida. Activities in the lab focus on advanced research in high-performance computer networks, parallel and distributed computing, and fault-tolerant computing. Most of this work requires the high bandwidth and low latency of Internet2, but not all of it has to do strictly with research. Internet2 also comes in handy as a teaching tool. The 24/7 Virtual Meeting Room, for example, allows George to meet with staff and students in Tallahassee at near-broadcast quality over Internet2 from a room here in Gainesville. Courses can be offered simultaneously at UF, FSU, and FAMU, with one professor, without losing the real-time interaction between professor and student.

For more information on Internet2, contact Dr. Sue Legg, director of the Office of Instructional Resources at UF, or go to http://www.internet2.edu.

Your Comments are Welcome

We welcome your comments and suggestions on this and all UFIT documentation. Please send your comments to:

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