The University-wide site license program, managed by Information Systems and Computing (ISC), has seen much activity over the past fiscal year. Many of the plans we relayed in the Penn Printout article last September have been successfully implemented. This program—which saves the University hundreds of thousands of dollars annually—continues to be a strategic ISC objective for this fiscal year.

The site license program provides hardware and software to the University community at the lowest possible cost. The program targets products for which there is a fairly universal need (beyond an individual School or department), focusing particular attention on products considered strategic to improving instruction or research on campus, or that support acknowledged University standards or directions.

WHERE WE ARE

To improve the site license program, ISC convened a site license steering committee, comprising people throughout ISC and beyond who are involved in negotiating and managing licenses. This group, along with an advisory committee of School computing directors, helps ensure that ISC’s efforts and dollars are expended in pursuit of those site agreements that will provide the most value to the University community. In addition, the steering committee worked to advance goals set last year; it has accomplished the following:

• Established criteria for designating certain agreements and licenses as strategic.

WHERE WE’RE GOING

The steering committee continues to promote a coordinated site license program that ensures efficiency and responsiveness. We’ve made significant progress over the past year, but there are additional plans underway to make the program work even better. Some of the primary areas of concentration for the group include:

• Improve program coordination—since there is no one identifiable “site license department” in the ISC, coordination continues to present a challenge. Each ISC department involved in the negotiation and management of campus-wide agreements is involved in the steering committee. The group meets regularly to address such

• Identified a pool of funds, through internal reallocation of ISC budgets, to support the full or partial subsidization of strategic agreements and licenses in order to minimize their cost to the end user and promote their use on campus.

• Created an advisory group of representatives from the Schools, which will help identify and prioritize strategic agreements and determine the allocation of resources to support these agreements.

• Developed a consistent pricing structure for nonstrategic agreements designed to recover the direct cost of software and documentation and the indirect costs associated with the administration of the agreements, including ordering, billing, distribution, and support.

• Explored network and security technologies to distribute software, which will both improve access to software and minimize distribution costs.

• Developed a procedure for mobilizing ad hoc product-evaluation groups composed of users with expertise in particular areas (e.g., statistics, utilities, communications) to test and evaluate comparable products from competing vendors and to recommend the products that will be offered through the program.
issues as improved turnaround time. In the interim, we work to improve the service for each license that the member departments maintain.

• Improve the distribution process—this is an area where we can improve service and ultimately reduce both the effort required and costs involved in distributing software. Currently, there are several different methods for gaining access to software and documentation; we’re investigating options for common access, foremost of which is access via the campus network. Several pilot projects are underway to test distribution using the ISC’s ftp server. We are encouraging vendors to design network accessible and installable products and working with them to obtain permission to distribute products in this manner.

• Reduce the time between initial negotiations and execution of a contract—we’re looking at ways to streamline the process. In particular, we’re working with the University’s Office of the General Counsel to adopt standard text that vendors will be required to incorporate in contracts.

• Increase visibility for the strategic site license program—we’ll continue to promote the program and find the best methods for keeping product descriptions and acquisition information accessible and up-to-date. 

(continued on next page)

CURRENT AGREEMENTS

University Volume Purchase Agreements and Site Licenses with telephone contact information are briefly noted below; e-mail inquiries should be addressed to ssl@isc.upenn.edu. Please refer to PennInfo for more detailed information about acquiring each product. Note: This list includes products for which site licenses and purchase discounts have been negotiated but does not necessarily imply ISC recommendation or full support.

Database
• Ingres (DCCS, 898-3029)
• Oracle (in process, details will be posted in PennInfo)

Interactive/Publishing Technologies
• Adobe Acrobat Reader for Mac/Windows (ISC Communications Group, 898-1786)
• Authorware for Mac (ACS, 573-3587)
• Macromedia Director for Mac (ACS, 573-3587)
• Macromedia Director Player for Windows (ACS, 573-3587)
• SoundEdit Pro (ACS, 573-3587)

Mathematics
• Maple for Mac/DOS/Windows/Workstations (ACS, 573-3587)
• Mathematica Mac/DOS/Windows/Workstations (ACS, 573-3587)

Networking/Communications
• AppleShare (CRC, 898-9085)
• FTP Software for DOS/Windows (DCCS, 898-2883)
• LAN Workplace for DOS (DCCS, 898-2883)
• MacSLIP (CRC, 898-9085)
• MacTCP (CRC, 898-9085)
• MacX (CRC, 898-9085)
• MicroPhone for Mac/Windows/NeXT (Computer Connection, 898-3282)
• OSF Motif for Workstations (ACS, 573-3587)
• ProComm for DOS/Windows (CRC, 898-9085)

Scientific Visualization
• IDL for Mac/Windows/DOS/Workstations (ACS, 573-3587)

Security/Virus Protection
• Disinfectant (public domain) for Macintosh (CRC, 898-9085)
• FolderBolt for Mac (ACS, 573-3587)
• IronClad for DOS/Windows (ACS, 573-3587)
• Vi-Spy for DOS/Windows (CRC, 898-9085)

Statistical
• PC-SAS (CRC, 898-9085)
• S-PLUS for Workstations (ACS, 573-3587)
• SAS for RISC Workstations (ACS, 573-3587)
• SPSS for Mac/Windows/DOS (ACS, 573-3587)
• SYSTAT Mac/Windows/DOS (Wharton Reprographics, 898-7685)

Vendor-specific Agreements
• DEC Campus Software License Grant (ACS, 573-3587)
• HP Hardware Purchase Agreement (ACS, 573-3587)
• IBM RS/6000 HESC (UDC, 898-6449)
• Silicon Graphics Varsity Program (ACS, 573-3587)
• SUN Software Maintenance (ACS, 573-3587)
STRATEGIC SITE AGREEMENTS

One key focus area for the steering committee over the past year was to develop the strategic site license fund and requirements for its allocation. An annual pool of ISC funds has been designated to support this effort, and is used to underwrite, in full or in part, the cost of strategic licenses. A license agreement is considered strategic if it meets one of the following criteria:

- Advances an aggressive academic initiative to improve research or instruction. One product currently supported under this criterion is the Maple site agreement for use in the Mathematics Department’s initiative to enhance calculus instruction. Their goal is to fundamentally change the freshman student’s experience in learning calculus by standardizing on Maple and providing the supporting infrastructure to make this possible.
- Supports acknowledged standards and University directions, which may ultimately lead to increased compatibility and reduced support costs. MacTCP is an example of such a strategic product.
- Assists in protecting University data and information technology assets. The DOS/Windows virus protection product, Vi-Spy, is a good example of a strategic product that meets this criterion.

SITE LICENSE REQUEST FORMS

The ISC’s site license steering committee has developed a standardized form to be used when requesting products for consideration as site license or volume purchase agreements. The form ensures that committee and advisory group time spent negotiating and managing licenses is directed at the most appropriate products. The form also allows us to get a better overall picture of campus needs and academic initiatives that might be better supported through a reduced-cost site license or a subsidized strategic agreement.

Copies of the request form can be obtained through intramural mail, via fax, or electronically by contacting ISC at 898-1787 or ssl@isc.upenn.edu. Once completed, the form should be sent to the director of computing (or equivalent) in your School—who will forward it to ISC for the steering and advisory committees’ review and recommendation. If you are unsure of who this person is in your School, contact ISC using the information above.

The input of the campus community has been vital in improving the operations of the ISC site license program. As we continue to improve this service, we look forward to your ongoing advice and recommendations.

BONNIE GIBSON is Director of Finance and Administration for ISC; DONNA MILICI is Director of Academic Computing Services.