Utilizing the Microsoft Outlook Client

Microsoft Outlook is located on all teacher machines within the Microsoft Office 2010 suite. In the event that the UCPS website has connectivity issues you will still be able to retrieve your email through the Microsoft Outlook software-based program.

Features of Microsoft Outlook include:
-A calendar you can personalize
-The ability to create events and invite participants
-Icon and pop-up window notifications of new emails
-Status notifications of your recipients and/or senders related to their Microsoft Lync status

Please consult your school's Instructional Technology Facilitator for assistance with setting up your account. Additionally, you may reference the link below for a simple tutorial.

http://techserv.ucps.k12.nc.us/documents/Outlook2010_setup.pdf
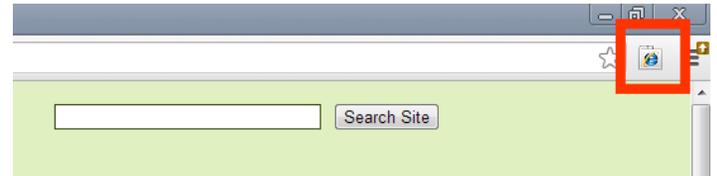
Current Network Speeds

Technology Services is aware of the varying network speeds that have been occurring lately. Please note that we are diligently working on this matter in an effort to meet the needs of our students. If you are experiencing slower network speeds please inform your Desktop Support Engineer assigned at your school. When planning your lessons, please be aware that there may be times when certain web-based applications are unavailable or may operate slowly. Please be mindful that situations like this will inevitably occur when working with technology, so please continue to have an alternative lesson in mind if Internet access is temporarily unavailable. Thank you for your patience in this matter.

Google Chrome Web Browser Extension

As Google Apps for Education are further integrated into our county, the preferred web browser will continue to be Google Chrome. Google Chrome is an efficient Internet browser that functions best with many of the applications utilized in the county including Google Apps and Moodle. Currently there is no universal browser that works best for every website and Technology Services realizes that some websites function best with Internet Explorer. In an effort to allow teachers to use one browser for every need, the IE Tab extension has been added to teacher's Google Chrome Browser. The IE Tab is a button on the top right-hand corner of Google Chrome that allows a website to be viewed in Internet Explorer. The window will still appear in your Chrome Browser, but will actually be running through Internet Explorer.

Another Chrome Extension recently added pertains to YouTube. If a teacher loads YouTube in the Chrome Browser, a cleaner interface will appear cutting back on some of the advertisements and related videos.

Backing up Information

It is important to back up information frequently. Before the end of the school year Instructional Technology Facilitators will hold sessions at their schools to discuss various options for backing up information. Teachers can easily store and secure their information on a USB flash drive or external hard drive.

◉ IT TIP OF THE MONTH

Oftentimes teachers would like to display an item to their students while being able to do other tasks on their computers (i.e. NCWise). This can be accomplished by utilizing the extended screen option in Windows. When connected to a projector, teachers utilizing Windows 7 machines can press the "Windows key and the letter P" simultaneously to initiate various projection options.

Choosing the "Extend" option will allow users to extend their desktop. This means anything that is visible on the computer screen will only be seen by you. To display an item for the class to view, simply drag the material to the right of the screen until you see your cursor displayed on the interactive board or screen on which you are projecting.

Technology Lesson Spotlight

Each month Technology Services continues to feature lessons that teachers are implementing in their classrooms. Lessons are featured at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Take a look below at these innovative lessons that are happening throughout our county!

Elementary School

Second and third grade students in Ms. Maulden's class at New Salem Elementary collaborated on a Google Garden Presentation/ Proposal. This project effectively aligned with the Common Core standards by working with fractions, area, perimeter, plants, soil and measurements. The students covered every aspect of what it takes to build a garden and recorded their findings in a presentation. The Google Presentation slides covered detailed information ranging from specifications of the garden, tools and supplies needed, how much dirt would be needed, and what to consider if tilling the ground was necessary. Every student was assigned at least one slide to complete and many collaborated on the same slide. Students were encouraged to be creative in this assignment! They learned how to insert images from the web, or ones taken with the digital camera, and continued to personalize their designated slide. The students worked diligently on this project and are excited about the garden New Salem hopes to acquire in the near future.

Middle School

Students in Susan Williams's class at Weddington Middle School received real-world experience in product development, research, marketing and advertising. The project partnered students with Bojangles' Famous Chicken 'n Biscuits to research a new product, develop the product, and create an advertising and marketing campaign.

Mrs. Williams partnered with her Instructional Technology Facilitator, Joey Barker, to teach her students how to use Google sites for the project. Teams of students then created a Google site showcasing their new menu item and used a myriad of web 2.0 tools to make commercials, banners, fliers, and other items. At the end of the project the students presented their ideas to a board of Bojangles' employees in a mock product sales pitch. The students were rated on their presentation, thought process, research, and their website. The winning group attended the Student Showcase at NCTIES in Raleigh, on March 7th, where they showcased their project to teachers, college professors, administrators, and technology personnel from across the state.

High School

Foreign Language teachers at Marvin Ridge High School are using QR codes in a creative manner. As students continue to learn a second language the teachers have designed interactive scavenger hunts using QR codes to increase their fluency and comprehension skills. The lessons are structured so that students first scan the QR code, listen to the clue in the second language and then try to locate the next destination. This is an innovative lesson that combines technology, creativity and content.

Mrs. Williams's 8th Grade class participating in the Bojangles' project.

Weddington Middle School

Dealing with Technology Issues

Technology Services is a unified front and we are here to assist you with your computer and instructional needs. It is necessary to consult your school's Desktop Support Engineer for any issues or questions related to hardware or software on any UCPS issued device. Please understand that protocol must be followed to ensure accountability and sustainability of our technology initiatives. In an effort to comply with policy, please submit help desk tickets for your devices from the machine itself when possible.

Additionally, please be mindful that your Instructional Technology Facilitators (ITF) are at your schools to assist you in creating a blended classroom environment that best meets the needs of your students.

Please do not hesitate to contact your ITF for any Moodle, Smart, Promethean or Google needs. If you are interested in using a particular Web 2.0 tool for your classroom, your ITF will be happy to provide support and training materials.
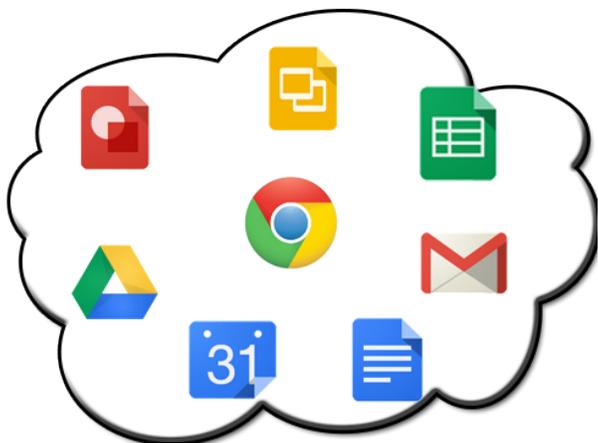
YouTube

March 1st marked the date when students in grades 6-12 acquired access to YouTube on their (UCPS issued) devices. Technology Services implemented a streamlined look of YouTube which eliminated related videos and advertisements. Currently, we are testing student access to YouTube as we continue to evaluate the amount of bandwidth our network can handle. Technology Services will continue to look into this matter and will relay information to employees as it becomes available.

Technology Reboot as a Shift in Mindset

As we move towards cloud-based computing the reliance on stand-alone software programs is diminishing. While the Technology Reboot upgrades devices and increases our overall network performance, it is also important to view this reboot as a shift in mindset. Educational resources are now readily available online in digital formats through databases, NCDPI and other web services. Saving files to the computer or flash drive will soon become obsolete for student use, therefore it's imperative we promote cloud-based saving and sharing.

http://bit.ly/rebootFAQ

NCTIES

The North Carolina Technology in Education Society (NCTIES) holds an annual technology conference. Earlier this month educators from across the state attended this conference with over 150 sessions, notable featured speakers, and vendor exhibits promoting new and exciting educational products. Union County Public Schools had representation from teachers, Media Coordinators, Instructional Technology Facilitators, Deputy Superintendents and students. This conference allows Union County educators to gain perspective as well as network and share ideas inspired by UCPS instruction.

This year, four presentations were created and delivered by UCPS employees. The presentations and presenters are listed below:

Achieving Audience - Garrett Williams and Rebecca Swiger

Are You Playing by the Rules of the Internet - Casey Rimmer and Lisa Thompson

Student Created Digital Textbooks - Michael A. O'Hagan and Tom Cunningham

Time Saving Tips for Teachers Using Google Drive - Elementary ITF Group (Gina Chisum, Ashley Dixon, Linda Helbig, Andrea Savill, Rachel Speasl, Jennifer Stoltz, and Brady Thomas)

Two UCPS middle schools displayed some of the great work being done in our county, with the aid of technology, during the student showcase. Marvin Ridge Middle School shared their school-wide anti-bullying campaign and Weddington Middle School presented Susan Williams's Bojangles' project.

The information shared by Union County employees and students is indicative of our goal in "preparing all students to succeed" and gives our county a state-wide presence with regards to instructional technology. Knowledge gained during the attended sessions will be shared throughout the county to further infuse technology in daily instruction.

Newsletter

Technology Services

Keeping Updated

Devices using Apple iOS 6.1 are consuming a large quantity of our Exchange email resources. When a user responds to a meeting invitation or calendar update from the iOS 6.1 device, it continually retries a response command. This response command, when sent repeatedly, impacts the overall company email system as it consumes Exchange resources.

Apple has released a patch to address this issue. The iOS 6.1.2 patch fixes the Exchange calendar bug that could result in increased network activity and reduced battery life due to the constant Exchange requests. If you do not choose to update, we ask that you turn off Calendar Sync in the Exchange mail settings for your account. You will still receive invites but they won't copy to the iOS Calendar app. If you choose to help us alleviate any possible issues with your phone, you can update to the most recent iOS version by navigating to Settings -> General -> Software Update and tapping on Download and Install.

(At the time of this writing iOS 6.1.3 is the current available patch and it includes the fixes listed here).

IT Matters Archive

The IT Matters Monthly newsletters will now be archived online. Those newsletters can be accessed by scanning the QR code or by clicking the hyperlink below.

IT Matters Archive

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