

Project Status Report

To: Prof. C. Gibson, Allison Dolan, Evan Mamas
From: John Cloutier, Jennifer Peng
Re: Project Randomize VoIP status report
Date: March 17, 2005

The VoIP at MIT research project as originally described in our proposal is progressing nicely. We have completed several rounds of revisions and are now considering narrowing the scope of the project to accommodate the loss of one team member. The project dashboard light is yellow.

Accomplishments

Since the original version, we have gone through a rigorous revision process for our project proposal. Both Evan and Allison had an opportunity to review our proposal and suggest changes. The collaboration added quite a bit of value to the project because there were several drastic changes to our scope and purpose.

First, we will not be looking at the infrastructure requirements for a VoIP installation. In light of the loss of one of the members of our team this will adjust the size of the project to make it better fit a two person team.

Additionally, we will be adding the selection of a location as part of the project rather than a predetermined solution. We will take into account student and faculty concerns and then select the best location for our recommendation.

Choosing the appropriate hardware was originally one of the goals of the project, but has been deleted since IS&T has already done substantial research in this area.

Issues

The main barrier that has arisen was the loss of Jose Barraza. This uncertainty had not been previously considered, but has been dealt with by the re-scoping described above. It is likely that we will need to undergo another round of final approvals before we can proceed with the newly sized project. Once this had been completed we will be able to begin work on the project.

Actions to be Taken

On Tuesday, an article was run by MIT's student newspaper, *The Tech*, regarding the decision to begin charging undergraduate dormitory residents for local telephone service. This decision is directly relevant to our project for two reasons. The first is that VoIP may be a possible alternative method of voice communication in dorms which could be provided at very little cost. Secondly, we are uniquely positioned to work with MIT on this situation as Allison is the director of telephony for IS&T. We will add discussing this with Allison to our list of tasks and consider integrating into our project.

There has been too much time spent on project revisions, so our team needs to begin getting data and interviews. We need to begin contacting various administrators and

students at MIT for our project. In addition, further research on VoIP is necessary for our team to conduct interviews. It is crucial that we present the interviewees with information and insights on how VoIP technology would benefit their lives.

Reflections and Learning

The most recently completed topic module was *Implementation and Change: "Technology is the least of our problems."* This topic is very relevant to our VoIP project because a huge hurdle is trying to convince the MIT administration and students the benefits of this technology. Allison informed us that it is unclear where and how VoIP could be best implemented on campus. Similar to the First National City Bank case, a successful implementation of VoIP would require converting a massive group of people to a new technology. There will be skeptics of VoIP, so our group needs to interview these individuals and obtain a well-rounded survey of opinions.

Our team is definitely learning a life lesson on being flexible. First we had to deal with being the smallest group, with only three people. Then we had to work around everyone's busy schedules, especially John's UA Presidency campaign. The final and most trying obstacle was Jose's unexpected medical leave, which led to a drastic re-scoping of our project. We have had more challenges than any of the other two groups combined, but we have been able to work well with each other and stay focused on the project. We've learned that being a solid team is the most important aspect of a project.