

Appendix F



California State University, Chico
Office of the Vice Provost for Information Resources

Desktop Computer Refresh Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Desktop Computer Refresh Plan

Desktop computers are an integral and essential part of the campus environment. The university needs to actively plan for the ongoing refresh of desktop computing equipment. The strategic importance of desktop computer refreshes is reflected in all levels of technology planning:

- The CSU system-wide Integrated Technology Strategy shows current desktop computers as a “baseline” item.
- The CSU, Chico Strategic Plan, Priority 3, states “Assure all students, faculty, and staff have access to appropriate information and instructional technology...”
- The CSU, Chico IT Strategic Plan, Theme C states “Guarantee faculty ... and staff access to secure and maintainable networked personal computing devices.”

Proposed Action: Implement a Desktop Computer Refresh Plan

The current Academic Affairs desktop computer refresh program should become a base budget program with desktop computers purchased and installed each year in a time frame that best supports the campus business needs. This computer refresh model should be extended beyond Academic Affairs to the other campus divisions.

Computer Refresh Program Costs

Estimated costs are based on AY 06/07 FTE faculty and staff, cost of computers and installation, and four year replacement cycle. Computer costs have remained relatively stable so no increase is shown. Increases in FTE faculty and staff will escalate the scope and cost of the program.

VP Area	FTE	AY 06/07	AY 07/08	AY 08/09	AY 10/11	AY 11/12
AA	1230	\$ 354,000	\$ 354,000	\$ 354,000	\$ 354,000	\$ 354,000
BA	257	\$ 74,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 74,000	\$ 74,000
PRS	10	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800
SA	190	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 55,000
UA	10	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,800
Total	1698	\$ 488,600	\$ 488,600	\$ 488,600	\$ 488,600	\$ 488,600

Benefits of Centralized Desktop Computer Refresh Plan:

1. Assured access for all faculty to computing and online resources
2. Cost savings achieved through bulk purchasing
3. Improved departmental budgeting/planning
4. Compliance with best practices and campus desktop standards
5. Labor efficiencies realized based on bulk procurement and distribution
6. Improved desktop management with fewer service requests

Background:

The Provost Office provided funding for the first centralized refresh of a significant number of faculty desktop computers (FCP-Faculty Computing Program) in 1997. The program continued with Provost funding for five years until it was canceled in AY 02-03 due to campus wide budget cutbacks.

The desktop refresh program was funded again in AY 04-05 and expanded to include desktop computer refreshes for Academic Affairs staff (SCP-Staff Computing Program) as well as faculty. During the AY 05-06 the desktop computer procurement program was opened to voluntary participation by Student Affairs and Business Affairs. Student Affairs participated in the program in '05-06 and refreshed a significant percentage of their computers but choose not to participate in '06-07. Business Affairs has so far not chosen to participate in the program in any significant quantities.

The desktop refresh program in Academic Affairs (FCP/SCP) has been generally acknowledged to be very successful in the years that it has been implemented. The major drawbacks of the current program are

1. Funding is not assured
2. The program only covers Academic Affairs staff (including faculty)
3. Approximately 30% of the campus staff are not included and their desktops are not refreshed consistently

User Services (USRV) provides the program administration, procurement, and distribution of the coordinated desktop computer refresh.

Benefits of Centralized Campus Wide Desktop Computer Refresh Plan:

The centralized funding model for desktop computer refresh has worked very well for Academic Affairs compared with departments refreshing desktop computers from their own budgets. The centralized model has many distinct benefits that could be extended across the campus units including:

1. Assured access for all faculty to computing and online resources

In the past, some colleges and departments had adopted a higher priority for desktop computer spending, so the campus had a distinct culture of “haves” and “have-nots”. A great deal of parity in desktop computing across the academic units has been achieved through the FCP/SCP program.

2. Cost savings achieved through bulk purchasing

Approximately 18-20% discounts over standard academic pricing have been negotiated, resulting in savings of about \$50,000 per year.

3. Improved budgeting/planning

The centralized funding model has alleviated the majority of concerns at the college and department level about how to budget and plan for regular computer refreshes.

4. Meeting desktop standards

The current FCP/SCP program has achieved a slightly better than four-year refresh rate for the past three academic years. In contrast, departmental lab computers, which are not included in the refresh program, have a six to ten year refresh cycle.

5. Labor efficiencies based on bulk procurement and distribution

With a planned refresh program USRV can hire temporary student staff and effectively schedule permanent staff to roll out hundreds of desktop computers without negatively affecting other support services.

6. Improved desktop management with fewer service requests

Consistently providing refreshed computers with standardized software and up-to-date operating systems allows USRV to manage desktop computers efficiently and effectively. Data shows that Help Desk service requests spiked during the AY 02-03 and 03-04 years when the refresh program was temporarily halted due to lack of funding. Correlation exists between the procurement levels of new computers and reduced service requests.

Plan Recommendations:

1. Four-Year Refresh Cycle

The target for the existing FCP/SCP program has been to replace desktop computers every four years. Although system wide baseline standards indicate a three-year refresh cycle as best practice, the quality and reliability of both computer hardware and software has improved considerably. The recommendation for the campus is that a four-year refresh cycle continues to be a reasonable target.

2. FTE Formula Determines Replacement Quantities

FTE is considered the most equitable measure to use for allotment purposes. FTE numbers do not include computer refresh for Foundation or other non-state employees. The current refresh program uses full time equivalent faculty and staff state employees as targets for how many computers to purchase. Extra computers needed for additional part timers and “secondary” computers could reasonably be expected to come from other college and department funding sources.

3. Purchase Rather Than Lease

Given that Chico has been regularly refreshing the majority of its computers for a number of years and does not need a large percentage of computers replaced at once, a lease program, that spreads the initial cost over multiple years, provides only minor benefits and is not recommended.

4. UTAC Provides Program Oversight

The University Technology Advisory Committee (UTAC) is the campus representative committee that provides technology advisement to the CIO. The current desktop refresh program is managed by User Services, and overseen by UTAC. This process appears to be working well and provides campus constituency groups input on the program.

Issues to be addressed:

1. Planning and Rollout

If the current program were to be expanded to include all campus VP areas, a realistic implementation would require that the program funding be committed early in the fall semester. If USRV does not get a funding commitment until the middle of the academic year, it becomes difficult to get the computers ordered and installed, and the temporary staff hired and trained, before the academic year ends.

2. Uneven Distribution

Currently, the colleges determine which individuals will get new computers from their allotment. This method has the advantage of allowing colleges to place computers where they deem most appropriate. However, it has meant that some faculty and staff get new computers nearly every year, while others are continually getting older, trickle down computers. Although it could be possible to change to a centrally distributed distribution based on oldest computers, it would be unrealistic for USRV to manage this type of distribution and it reduces flexibility based on departmental needs. The recommendation is to leave the distribution to be decided by the departments.

3. Different Needs – one size doesn't fit all

UTAC members have discussed the differing needs among faculty for computers most effective for their jobs. This issue could carry over outside of Academic Affairs. The cost model in the plan is based on a standardized supported PC. The current FCP/SCP program allows some flexibility in the purchase of different options, including Macintosh's and laptops, but requires that the departments pay the difference in cost over the standard desktop PC. There is no recommendation within the proposed plan to provide additional funding for non-standard equipment.

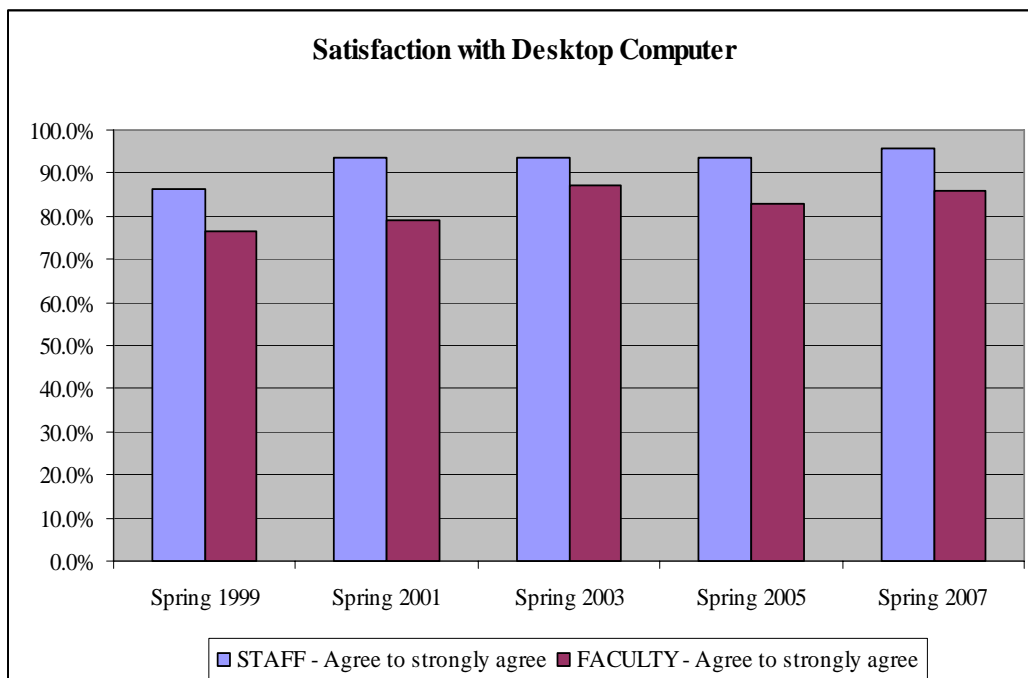
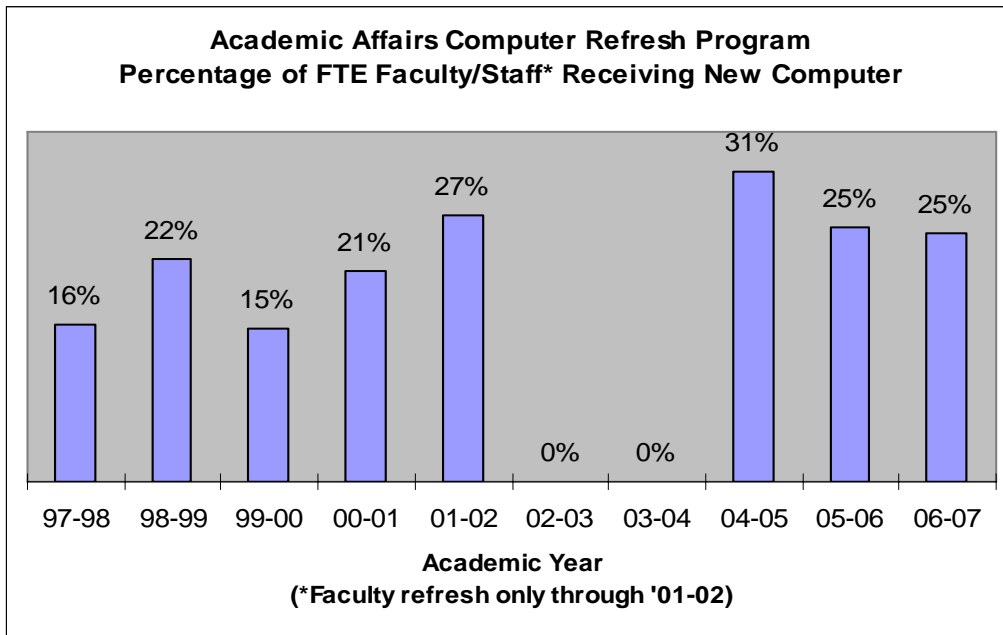
Summary

The university has benefited from a successful, though limited, computer refresh program for many years. Although there are some minor concerns with the current refresh model, overall the program has been improved over the years to work efficiently for Academic Affairs and user satisfaction has been high. The current program could readily become the basis of a campus wide computer refresh program through a regularized funding model, which would cost the university approximately \$488,600 per year. Without such a program, the campus risks decreased overall productivity of faculty and staff, increased division between those areas that budget for refresh and those that do not, and increased support costs as desktops age and maintenance becomes more difficult

Attachment

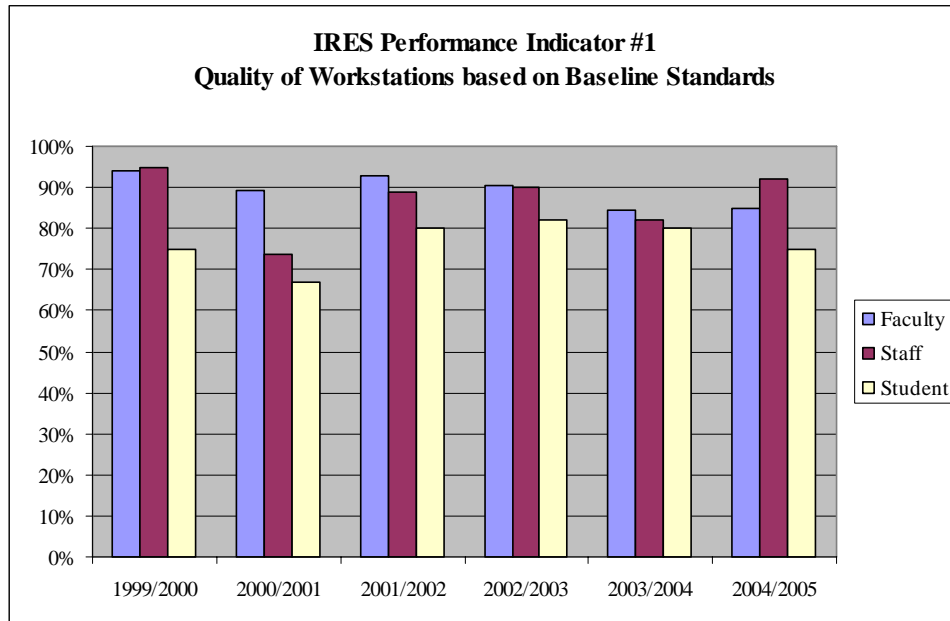
Academic Affairs Refresh Program

The chart below shows the percentage of FTE faculty ('97 through '02) and percentage of faculty and AA staff ('04-'07) who received a new computer as part of the program. Note that these percentages are based on full time equivalent positions and not actual head counts. Satisfaction with desktop computers dropped for faculty after the refresh program was cancelled but is rising again since the program has been reestablished.



Improved Desktop Management and Fewer Service Requests

Consistently providing refreshed computers with standardized software and up-to-date operating systems allows User Services to manage desktop computers effectively. Removing the oldest campus computers reduces the number of service and support-prone machines, decreasing service requests and service costs. The chart below indicates the quality (based on age and memory standards set by the Chancellor's Office) of the computers managed by User Services



Note in the chart below that service requests spiked highest during the AY 02-03 and 03-04 years where the refresh program was temporarily halted due to lack of funding. The fact that service requests dropped significantly in subsequent years shows a correlation between the procurement levels of new computers and reduced service requests.

