

December 2023

Office of the Chief Information Officer Update

Windows 11 pilot is successful in preparation for the future rollout of the newest operating system at Northeastern, which will provide important security, productivity, and usability benefits to PC users: ITS successfully piloted a Windows 11 upgrade this month in advance of planning a wider rollout to the university. Windows 11 has been thoroughly tested by the Northeastern IT team and the new operating system provides significant benefits for usability, productivity, performance, and security. Microsoft will continue to support Windows 10, the current standard at Northeastern, until 2025, but upgrading to a new OS is important for security and compatibility reasons as new software is released for Windows 11. The redesign and other benefits also make the OS more enjoyable and easy to use. As part of the pilot, ITS staff were provided the opportunity to install the upgrade at their convenience during a seven-day window, after which the new operating system was automatically installed and forced a reboot of the computer. Communication and support resources were developed and distributed, ensuring a smooth upgrade experience for staff. This library of resources will provide a playbook that can be used when the rest of the university is ready to transition. Additionally, beginning in January, all new computers purchased for Northeastern use will come pre-installed with Windows 11.

Family Hub launch plan on track to introduce the newest digital experience to the family and parent community in January 2024, enabling the retirement of legacy platform that hosts the myNortheastern portal: Following the development of the Family Hub earlier this year, efforts are underway to prepare the newest product powered by the Global Digital Platform for launch to the parent and family community in January 2024. Staff in ITS presented the Family Hub to the Parent Communications Advisory Council on December 14 where the Hub was welcomed with very positive reviews. Ongoing feedback from parents and families will help fuel future enhancements and updates to the Hub after the initial launch. The Family Hub has also been socialized earlier this fall with family-facing Northeastern stakeholders and departments, including staff from the Student Financial Services, Registrar, Housing, Office of the Chancellor, University Communications, and Student Life teams. The Family Hub, a centralized online hub for parents and families of Northeastern undergraduate students, will replace and expand upon the Parent myNortheastern portal which will be retired at the end of March 2024. The Hub will offer a personalized view and relevant resources to make it easier than ever to navigate the university and support students throughout their Northeastern careers.

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The IT Service Desk and other front-line IT teams and staff supported the Northeastern global community in record numbers in 2023, including support through consultations and self-service options: IT Services had a banner year when it came to providing service and support to the global university community with troubleshooting help, consulting services, and self-service options. For example, the IT Service Desk saw a record number of interactions with the Northeastern community in 2023, with 145,488 users supported. This is an increase of 26% from 2022. This month the Oakland Tech Bar, the newest of ITS's two walk-up, in-person support locations across the global network, celebrated its 2,000th customer being supported. The Tech Knowledge Base, which saw its second-most views ever this past year, has also proven to be a valuable resource to the community, both directly via self-service and indirectly through use by IT staff. Consultation services by IT teams also grew in numbers, assisting the community with selecting the right digital tools and training to meet their business or teaching needs in engaging, efficient, and modern ways. More highlights and numbers to demonstrate the scope of ITS support include:

- Academic Technologies provided expertise to 1,000+ faculty this year (including 425 in the fall semester) through consultations and drop-in services provided by AT staff as well as students in the AT Apprenticeship Program.
- The Digital University Solutions team handled over 2,000 requests and consultations from the university community in 2023.
- Service Desk chat traffic alone increased by 64% during the year, surpassing inbound email inquiries for the very first time.
- The knowledge base, which includes over 1,000 helpful articles, had 432,712 views this year, its second-most ever. (The top five articles by views were highlighted [in this blog post](#)).
- Knowledge articles were used 9,216 times by IT staff to respond to interactions and inquiries.

Hundreds of spaces powered by Microsoft Teams technology came online in 2023, bringing global mobility and consistency to more teaching, learning, and collaborative work across the global campus system: ITS brought 244 new Microsoft Teams rooms and physical spaces online in 2023. The Teams technology, part of Northeastern's new audio-visual standards and the vision for modern collaboration is now in 663 spaces across Northeastern's campuses. This year's progress included the addition of 159 collaboration spaces, 65 classrooms (including 12 teaching labs), and 20 Microsoft Surface Hubs. As the university brings this new and easier-to-use technology to more spaces, the closer it gets to the goal of global mobility and a consistent experience for faculty, students, and staff as they move across the university's global campus network.

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