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OU, OSU GENERATE $3.7 MILLION IN COST EFFICIENCIES THROUGH COLLABORATION

The University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University have collaborated to create $3.7 million in cost efficiencies as a result of a commitment by OU President David Boren and OSU President Burns Hargis to share technology services.

The largest portion of the figure came from jointly renegotiating a five-year key contract with Microsoft to provide licensed Microsoft Windows and Office software for students.

“Through the leadership of Presidents Boren and Hargis, we have saved students across both institutions on the purchase of essential productivity software,” said Loretta Early, OU Vice President for Information Technology. “Each download of this software reduces student education costs by more than $100.”

The two Universities also negotiated a contract with Tegrity to share lecture capture services, and they consolidated network equipment by co-locating devices at OSU-Tulsa.

OU and OSU joined forces again last month to create a series of cyber security awareness bulletins and videos, which were distributed via email on both campuses throughout October. The campaign, titled Bedlam Battle: Security Edition, encouraged recipients to watch the videos by adding an element of competition: the school with the highest percentage of video views—which was OSU—won. The schools were able to save money and resources by producing a single program to be used by both institutions.

“Since information security is an integral part of protecting our students, faculty, and staff, we chose to promote awareness of this important topic while engaging in a friendly bedlam competition with OSU,” said Early.

In addition to cost economies, the knowledge sharing and relationship building achievements of the two schools include developing a common Service Catalog to provide a framework for identifying collaboration targets, publishing a joint white paper to further their commitment to work together and share IT resources, and enabling the ability to access each other’s computing resources.
“Although this collaboration was borne out of a need to create cost efficiencies, we have reaped the additional benefit of forging ongoing relationships with our counterparts from institutions across the state,” said David Horton, OU Associate Vice President for Shared Services.

OU’s initiative for shared technology services across its campuses, combined with this collaboration with OSU, is projected to generate approximately $15 to $18 million in cost containment and savings over five years. The two schools plan to negotiate additional key technology contracts, share technology training across their campuses and continue to work closely with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education CIO and OneNet, Oklahoma’s educational and research network, to enhance the interconnection between their institutions for future shared services.

“We have come a long way in the past eight months, and we look forward to continuing our momentum through further collaboration with the University of Oklahoma and OneNet,” said Darlene Hightower, OSU–Stillwater Chief Information Officer. “It’s encouraging to see what we can accomplish when we work together. We particularly want to thank the OU Students in the IT Communications Department for the wonderful animation and work they did on the bedlam security awareness campaign.”

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