

Information Management Committee April 2012 report

Again the committee does not have any approved terms of reference. From reading last month's IMC report, I can see a lot has changed over this past month: with respect to EBC North. I have decided to borrow the format of last month's Executive Director report.

Terms of reference

Description

Is there a point to one-man unofficial committee reports?

Review of progress made during the reporting period

- As promised in the [January Minutes](#), I have split the Information Management Committee Wiki page
- I have copied the draft terms of reference into the newly cleaned up Wiki Page
- I have asked one (1) member if they were interested in participating in the IMC

Hurdles

- E-mail is still not working, nor were my bike(s). As a result, I was not doing much social networking.
- Still have not set up a time to talk to the ED/previous chair about the assumptions he was making for the cost estimates.

Plans and next steps

- Set up meeting with Chris, via snail mail if necessary.
- Review Terms of reference and have them ready for a approval next meeting

Server Rack

Description

Not really a rack; more provision for servers.

Review of progress made during the reporting period

- It has been decided the servers be placed on the balcony of EBC North per Chris' suggestion.
- I am now planning on running most of the networking through the second floor area.
- The New parts/Specialty tool room does not have a (spare) plug. Moving the servers also solves potential cooling issues.

Hurdles

- Electrical is not yet in place upstairs.

Plans and next steps

- Due to the lack of physical security, I would like to suggest full disk encryption for the servers. This would require an operator to enter a complex pass-phrase after power cuts.
- I would also like to suggest “Temporary Location” signs for the servers (as a joke).

Network Cable

Description

Network infrastructure for EBC North.

Review of progress made during the reporting period

- Member Alex ran what I will term 'temporary' network cable at Bikeworks North.
- Network cable to Spoke computers on south wall was terminated by Peter Dartnell from the rotary club. He left the crimping tool so that I could terminate the break in the cable he was not expecting (done).
- Clarified with land-lord that the 'purple' phone line does not have to be tied in to our phone line when the gas meter readers are hooked up (to our phone line).
- Purchased a 5 port Gigabit switch (open box allowed me to check for wall mounts). Tested about a week later.

Hurdles

- Alex was outraged when I reworked his handi-work on the south wall to install a Gigabit switch. He may have been upset about other things as well, with the switch being symbolic of a waste of time and money.
- I later removed the switch when it was decided that only two Spoke computers would go on the south wall. I replaced it with a \$5 coupler to avoid running new cable. The switch is now stored in the box for the router.
- The 500 foot box of network cable was fraudulently labeled 24 AWG, when it was in fact 26 AWG. Somebody saved about 37% on copper. If is possible the Cat5e designation was also fraudulent IFF 24 AWG is required by the standard. Because I don't know where the cable was purchased, I was unable to return it. I tried e-mailing Peter Dartnell about it, but received no response. I decided to keep the 26 AWG cable since: A) we don't plan on using Power over Ethernet (PoE), B) The existing Cat3 (3 pair) cable is also 26 AWG, and C) Two of the 'Cat5e' patch cords dropped off by Steve Anderson are stamped 26 AWG.
- The punch-down tool I purchased has an integrated cutter and appears to be the wrong type for the telephone terminal blocks. I was hoping it would make hooking the ATCO gas line to our phone line trivial. It should work for the keystone jacks I purchased for upstairs and near the phone on the ground floor.

Plans and next steps

- I plan on running network cable upstairs in plastic conduit. The cable run to the south wall will still be bare cable. A volunteer should be able to run the conduit if I draw a better diagram.
- I plan on installing keystone ethernet jacks upstairs and by the phone downstairs. I plan on colour coding them with nail polish applied to the plastic. Free ends may be colour coded with plastic tape.
- I plan on running telephone for upstairs and ethernet for the 'welcome' computer on the same cable (but using two jacks). This will not impact performance since the welcome computer has only a 100Mbps NIC (using only 2 of 4 wire pairs).
- I plan on mailing a sample of the fraudulent cable to the manufacturer on the off-chance they were unaware of the switch.

Spoke Computers

Description

Fancy 23" touchscreen computers donated for Spoke use.

Review of progress made during the reporting period

- I found the instructions for removing the base on the HP website. You essentially snap off a plastic cover. This allowed us to install the wall mount plate (stored in the base).
- Two Spoke computers are now mounted on the south wall. A third is on a table near the entrance. An alternate proposed location is between the parts washer and welcome computer. While not wall mounted, the 3rd computer may be vulnerable to opportunistic theft.
- On the third computer I installed a 4GB USB key so that I could install CentOS (the same OS we plan on using for the servers) without clobbering MS Windows. Getting Windows back simply involves removing the USB key.
- All Spoke computers use the same 8 character administrator password with about 48 bits of entropy. I suspect it can be brute-forced in about 4 hours using the same computers.

Hurdles

- Upon boot the Spoke computers demand you agree to a pair of EULAs. Having a Free software bias, I am of course concerned about the legal liability involved.
- If the computers are running Windows, they should have an antivirus installed and/or state preserving software such as Microsoft Steady State or Norton Ghost.
- If the computers are running GNU/Linux, /etc (settings) and /usr (program files) should be mounted read-only (with the exception of a maintenance mode for running updates). /home (user files) should be mounted -x (program execution prohibited).
- The Gnome On-screen Keyboard (gok) does not appear to support sticky keys for 'direct' (pointer device) input. This is a problem since the touch screens are not multi-touch capable. I wanted to try the Florence on-screen keyboard, but CentOS appears to have no ready-made package for it. (compiling from sources should not be too difficult).

- I had nothing but trouble installing CentOS on the USB key. It may be a serious installer bug.

Plans and next steps

- I plan on configuring the GNU/Linux computer as a pilot to make sure it works with whatever activities the Spoke program demands. If it works well, we may want to consider moving more computers to Gnu/Linx. If it does not work well, we should consider pulling the USB key and using Windows.
- I plan on trying to reproduce the installer bug with another USB key with the upstream distro, Fedora (from RedHat).