

Laurentian University Policy for Purchasing Desktop and Laptop Computers

Process:

The process that was taken which has led to this policy is the following:

The new director of Computer Services upon starting in new position in October of 2001 recognized the glaring inefficiencies of Laurentian University not having a standard desktop-computing platform. Laurentian University is the only sizable organization in the Sudbury area that does not have a desktop-computing standard. Falconbridge, INCO, Cambrian College, College Boreal, City of Greater Sudbury all have desktop computer standards. As well most Universities in Canada also have computer desktop standards. Reports from consulting firms such as GIGA demonstrate that the quality of service can be improved by 40-80% by having a computer desktop standard.

Discussions were held with all of the VP's and initial verbal support was given for creation of a computer hardware desktop standard.

A computer user group was formed which represents Faculty, Administration and students to deal with computer issues. Issues were brain stormed and ranked. The need for computer hardware standardization ranked as the top issue.

Laurentian University Purchasing and Insurance Services in July 2002 issued an RFP (request for proposal) and the results were that IBM through the Laurentian University Bookstore Microcomputer Centre was selected as the winning vendor and supplier. A purchase order for 285 IBM desktops was issued on July 17, 2002 to replace the computers in the student labs.

On July 24th the policy below will be reviewed and signed off by the Computer User Group. From there it will be reviewed and signed off by the President and the Academic and Administration VP's in order to become policy.

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RATIONALE:

A common platform is needed for: (1) improved levels of support (2) reduced cost of support and service (3) improved reliability and stability of our networks (4) economies-of-scale relevant to hardware and software procurement, (5) skills transferability required by a mobile workforce,

METHOD:

The approved manufacture for standard desktop or notebook computers for Laurentian University is IBM. All IBM purchases will be made at the Laurentian University Bookstore Microcomputer Centre. **All** purchases of non-standard desktop computers (vendors other than IBM), require approval from the Director of Computer Services before requisitions are transmitted to Purchasing. Purchasing will forward to the Director of Computer Services any requisitions that do not have appropriate authorization. The Director of Computer Services will review the justification and forward the purchase requisitions within 48 hours of their receipt to Purchasing. Therefore all purchases of desktop computers using operating and ancillary funds for all or a portion of the purchase must conform to this policy. Also all computers that are to be connected to our network must also comply with the above policy. Any exceptions must be approved by the Director of Computer Services.

RECOMMENDED STANDARD:

The standard desktop computing system at Laurentian University consists of a personal computer with an Intel processor running a 32-bit version of Microsoft Windows (Windows 98, Windows NT4, Windows 2000, Windows XP). Everyone who uses a computer for typical productivity purposes (word processing, spreadsheet, presentation development, desktop database, e-mail, WWW "browsing," desktop publishing, standard graphics applications, and other comparable applications) is encouraged to use this platform. The IBM computer system will have the following software preloaded. The University through site licenses has purchased these software applications:

- the latest supported version of Microsoft Windows
- the latest supported version of Microsoft Office
- the latest supported version of GroupWise
- the latest supported version of Norton Anti-Virus

This software will be included in the base price. The base system price also will include delivery and installation in your office and the copying of document files (My Documents directory) from your old computer to your new computer.

The 32-bit Windows platform will be supported by Computer Services and the Laurentian University Bookstore Microcomputer Centre from the perspectives of:

- network connectivity and remote network access
- help desk
- hardware support
- training and consultation
- student access to computers
- assistance with the development of software programs, WWW documents, and other information management tools and resources.

Some software applications, particularly those used in research areas, may require an alternative platform (Macintosh, various forms of UNIX, etc.) These platforms will be supported from the perspective of network connectivity.