Texas A&M University System announces IT Audit Report Results

COLLEGE STATION, Texas—John Sharp, chancellor of The Texas A&M University System, today announced that Deloitte Consulting, LLP has completed their study of Information Technology (IT) infrastructure throughout the A&M System. The study included 29 detailed recommendations with anticipated savings of $200 million over the next ten years or $20 million per year if infrastructure changes are implemented.

“As soon as I started this job, our auditor reported that the rising costs of IT at the A&M System were unsustainable, therefore we initiated a review of IT immediately utilizing Deloitte,” said Sharp. “There is no way to have an efficient operation of any kind without a first-class IT department. We will immediately begin implementing these recommendations, which will not only save money, but will enable us to have the best IT department in the state.”

The report covers all A&M System members. It points out a lack of unified vision at the system-level, while structural and funding challenges have forced members to be self-sufficient with limited opportunities for cooperation. The result has been an inefficient structure that presents challenges in attracting, hiring and retaining qualified IT staff. However, some system members, including Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX), Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Texas A&M International University, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, Texas A&M University – Kingsville, Texas A&M Transportation Institute and West Texas A&M University have well developed and highly functioning IT leadership.

There was no immediate timing discussed for a rollout of the suggested changes, but given the potential savings and opportunity to improve both the quality and efficiency of the IT infrastructure, the chancellor assures the project will be a high priority.

“This set of recommendations has been delivered to each CEO of the system,” said Sharp. “It has been developed with strong grassroots IT support throughout the system, and I believe will be implemented in its entirety.”

Information on the current status of Texas A&M System IT infrastructure is available here: http://news.tamus.edu/it-faqs.

Statements from Texas A&M University System members:

Texas A&M University
"I was briefed Monday afternoon about the Deloitte IT study and am taking their recommendations under advisement. My goal is to always strive to improve efficiencies and services that support excellent teaching, research and outreach at Texas A&M University," said Dr. Mark Hussey, interim president of Texas A&M University.
West Texas A&M University
“I believe we have been able to make great progress at West Texas A&M University over the past several years in containing costs while at the same time keeping pace with technology and enhancing IT services for student learning and student and faculty research. I look forward to implementing the Deloitte recommendations which will allow us to provide even better IT programs and services to our faculty, staff, and students,” said Dr. Pat O’Brien, president of WTAMU.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville
“This report and its mention of our campus show that our efforts are recognized, but we know there is more that can be done. We look forward to working with our A&M System partners to continue making improvements and building a more collaborative and cohesive environment,” said Dr. Steven H. Tallant, president of A&M-Kingsville.

Texas A&M University-Texarkana
“Recommendations in the report will allow a relatively small campus such as A&M-Texarkana to leverage the resources of the A&M System to develop and maintain state-of-the-art IT services—an achievement that would be difficult, if not impossible, for us to obtain on our own,” said Dr. Emily Cutrer, president of A&M-Texarkana.

Texas A&M University-Central Texas
"As a new institution, Texas A&M University-Central Texas is well-positioned to incorporate the beneficial changes in IT envisioned by Chancellor Sharp and the Deloitte report,” said Dr. Marc Nigliazzo, president of A&M-Central Texas. “The university is already building its IT capability in a cost-efficient, outsourcing agreement with the Ellucian corporation for the implementation of the Banner student information system, while simultaneously undergoing audit review by the A&M System to define pathways to future excellence. Support from the A&M System has proved invaluable and promises even greater efficiency and effectiveness through planned collaboration with other A&M System universities.”

Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service
"The recommendations in this report will help TEEX to better serve our customers while maintaining our commitment as good stewards of state resources,” said Gary Sera, director of Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service.

Texas A&M Transportation Institute
“The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) has worked hard to provide a quality IT system and effective IT services for our employees, and we are pleased that the audit recognizes our efforts,” said TTI Director Dennis Christiansen. “We look forward to working with the A&M System going forward to implement the recommendations of the study.”

About the A&M System
The A&M System is one of the largest systems of higher education in the nation, with a budget of $3.8 billion. Through a statewide network of 11 universities, seven state agencies, two service units and a comprehensive health science center, the A&M System educates more than 131,000 students and makes more than 22 million additional educational contacts through service and outreach programs each year. Externally funded research expenditures exceed $820 million and help drive the state’s economy.

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