

Memorandum – Technical Panel Action Requested

To: Technical Panel of the NITC

From: Michael F. Beach
Nebraska Educational Telecommunications

Subject: Network Standards Workgroup of the NITC Technical Panel

At the November 2000 meeting of the Technical Panel, I was asked to form and chair a new subcommittee of the Technical Panel. This workgroup was to determine the next video standard for the distance learning networks of the state of Nebraska. This document is the proposed basis for that workgroup. I am asking that the Technical Panel ratify the workgroup as outlined below.

Membership of Workgroup

The following individuals are recommended as workgroup members. Each has been contacted and has agreed to serve in this group if approved by the Technical Panel.

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Goals

The initial goal of the Standards Workgroup is to recommend a statewide standard for video / audio on state distance learning networks. The intent is to achieve interoperability of current systems, and to establish a standard for all constituents who will use the state distance learning networks in the future.

The second goal is to develop an implementation and migration strategy to allow for smooth transition of existing networks to the new standard.

Implementation

The workgroup will establish the specific process for accomplishing the goals. The process should include the following steps:

- Establish criteria on which to judge the possible competing standards.
- List all possible standards to be considered.
- Initially eliminate any system which will not improve efficiencies or meet current and projected needs.
- Conduct in-depth research and setup demonstrations and comparisons of remaining options.
- Draw conclusions based on criteria.
- Create a detailed report and give appropriate demonstrations to the Technical Panel and Education Council.
- Create a migration / implementation plan to include the following:
 - How to integrate new systems using the new standard into the current system as they come on line.
 - How to integrate existing systems into the new standard until replaced or upgraded.
 - How to migrate when the existing system is upgraded to the new standard.
 - Identify the financial impact and ways to minimize it.

Proposed Schedule

Due Date	Deliverable
Jan 2001	Present goals & participants to Tech Panel for approval.
Feb 2001	Engineering and economic criteria established and standards to be considered established.
Mar 2001	Less efficient standards eliminated and short list for detailed study determined.
Apr 2001	Individual spreadsheets on each standard and its status relating to established criteria. Select finalists.
May 2001	Demonstrations of finalists.
Jun 2001	Present findings to Technical Panel for approval. Give demonstrations.
Jul 2001	Create migration / implementation plan and present to Technical Panel for approval.

It is the intent of this workgroup to also keep the Education Council of the NITC informed on its progress.