Computing Services - Helpdesk

This document contains an agreement between "Computing Services" (CS) and Faculty, Staff, and Students (FSS) about the variety and quality of services provided by CS at Stephen M. Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan.

Service Philosophy and Agreement

The Ross community can expect the highest level of service and courtesy from representatives of CS Helpdesk, who are expected to have a thorough working knowledge of all supported hardware and software. Helpdesk staff can answer technical questions, report systemic problems, and handle service or purchase requests. Inquiries unrelated to the computing environment will be responded to professionally, and staff will identify and route your call to the necessary department or personnel.

When a technological problem arises, upon initial telephone contact a CS technician will offer probable solutions if the problem is easily diagnosed. If the technician is not able to provide prompt resolution to the problem, they will enter your details into a queue system for triage and follow-up. Your call will then be attended to when resources allow, with priority given first to the highest level calls with standard system configurations.

Helpdesk Hours and Procedures

The Helpdesk will maintain the following operating hours. The Ross community will be notified in advance if this schedule changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>2:00 pm to 11:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday - Thursday</td>
<td>7:00 am to 11:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>7:00 am to 6:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00 am to 7:00 pm</td>
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Network services are monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week using an on-call schedule. If a network problem should occur after scheduled Helpdesk hours, the on-call technician is notified automatically, and will stay involved until the issue is resolved.

CS may provide support after hours provided a request is received with ample time to arrange scheduling and find a qualified staff person.

Prioritized Services

If a service request cannot be promptly resolved by CS staff, your call will be entered into a queue system and given a prioritization according to the severity of the problem or outage. The next available CS staff member will attend to the call as resources allow, with priority given first to the highest level calls with standard system configurations.
High priority calls involve the complete or partial breakdown of supported, standard configuration computers or software such that it prevents the completion of time-sensitive work or relates to systemic problems or network outages. These problems will typically be resolved the same day they are reported, and staff or resources may be taken away from medium or low priority calls as needed.

Medium priority calls involve the complete or partial breakdown of supported computers or software such that the completion of related work is delayed but not necessarily of immediate concern, or of non-standard configurations. Medium priority calls entered into the queue system will typically be resolved and closed within three business days.

Low priority calls involve hardware or software on order, hardware or software issues that may be resolved as time allows, such as consultation requests, and installation of hardware or software that is not required for time-sensitive work. Custom hardware or hardware/software supported on a “best effort” basis may also be given low priority status.

With any level call entered into the queue system, the concerned party will be periodically updated on the progress of the call. Such updates may come in the form of phone calls, e-mails, or automated notices sent by the queue system, which Helpdesk staff use to maintain a log of all progress.

Standard Configuration

As stated, top priority will be given to standard configuration computers and software. Standard configuration equipment is pre-selected by CS and will be the first thing recommended for use by FSS. A standard configuration system will meet the needs of the FSS’s daily computing tasks and will have been identified by CS staff as being the best option for the most efficient and timely service, should it be required. See the Technology web site for the most up-to-date list of standard, fully supported equipment specifications. (Most often it will be Dell hardware and Microsoft software.)

CS recommends standard equipment above all else, for the following reasons.

- Anything identified as standard by CS is likely widely tested and used, and will have a large base of knowledge to draw from in the event troubleshooting is required.
- If support is needed, CS Helpdesk technicians are Dell certified and can request parts from the manufacturer with little turnaround, generally one business day. Service from other manufacturers may take significantly longer.
- If CS Helpdesk technicians require the assistance of Dell technicians to solve a problem, they receive tier 1 support from Dell that may not be available to the individual consumer.
- Dell equipment ordered by CS comes with a 3-year warranty for parts and services, so repairs within that window will not be subject to charge.

Hardware

Hardware includes desktop and laptop computers, and accessories. CS recognizes one (1) desktop and one (1) laptop as the primary system for a user. Any system in addition to these, such as a second or third laptop, will be handled on a ‘best effort’ basis. CS maintains a staff with Dell certifications and as such is able to provide full, on-site support for Dell systems with minimal turnaround time in the event repair is required. CS also maintains and supports networked Xerox printers throughout the school, but does not support personal office printers. Systems other than the standard Dell may be fully supported, provided they:

- are the user’s primary desktop or laptop computer
- are purchased with the help of CS
- are wholly manufactured by the vendor including all components
- are manufactured by Dell or HP. Apple computer support is limited to faculty only.

For fully supported computer hardware, CS makes the following agreements:
- to recommend and handle the purchase of new equipment, peripherals and components; the cost(s) of acquiring such equipment, if not for a primary stock machine, are the responsibility of the person or department making the request
- notify the user of the ordered item’s arrival
- set up the machine with pre-configured CS software and connect all hardware to the network as soon as it is ready to be deployed
- provide telephone support via the Helpdesk during scheduled hours
- diagnose any malfunctioning equipment (Note: Apple computers are repaired off-site)
- install new or replaced ‘supported’ components or software

When non-standard equipment is requested, CS will make every effort to find a supported system that meets the user’s needs. If one cannot be found, **custom** hardware may be ordered with the understanding that CS Helpdesk staff can only offer **best effort support**, defined as a 1 to 2 hour first look at the equipment to try to diagnose the problem and restore the system. Any work beyond that will be done after calls in the queue for fully supported machines are completed. For such equipment, CS agrees to:
- handle the purchase of new equipment, peripherals and components, the cost(s) of which being the responsibility of the person or department making the request
- install supported software, if the hardware and operating system are compatible
- provide service on a “best effort” basis
- provide assistance in identifying service options or replacement parts from the manufacturer or through local vendors, while repair and other costs are the responsibility of the individual

**Software**

CS will provide general assistance and training for a list of supported software, applications and operating systems. All supported software should be installed either by the vendor or a representative of CS. This is necessary to enforce site licenses, lower our support costs, and provide a standard computing environment. Although most software is available via the network, each faculty and staff desktop is also loaded with the latest version of the Microsoft Office suite of products (Word, Excel and PowerPoint).

For **supported** application software, CS agrees to
- provide telephone support for software during scheduled hours
- provide one-on-one training by appointment
- participate in orientation sessions for all new employees or students
- maintain a list of approved/scheduled changes, as well as proposed and planned changes, to the supported software environment
- inform users as CS makes new versions of software available on the network
- provide for an adequate training period (at least 90 days) before a previous version is completely upgraded
- select new supported software or drop out-of-date software from supported-status to keep up with the evolving needs of the Ross community, announcing any changes to the community by e-mail or the Technology portion of the Ross website

For **custom (course-related and other) software:**
- purchase costs and support are the responsibility of the individual faculty member or department
- CS agrees to provide service on a "best effort" basis only
- CS agrees to identify outside means of support in the event CS cannot
- all software must be compatible with existing, supported operating systems and hardware
- the software must not conflict with the network
- the software must be licensed (software whose license cannot be verified will not be installed on a local computer or on the network)
Home Computers

For home computers that are the property of the University, CS will perform any services only if the equipment is brought to the school by the concerned FSS. CS will not make any house calls. Support for this equipment is best effort, as time allows. Due to liability, software, and licensing issues, CS will not service any non-University or personally owned equipment.

Computer Upgrades

CS maintains a general upgrade cycle. Computers that are 4 or more years old will be first considered for an upgrade, with the deciding factor being whether or not the computer still meets the demands of the current workload, the condition of existing hardware, the availability of sufficient stock, and the rate of technological change. Classroom and public terminals may be upgraded on a shorter cycle as needed due to higher use and wear. CS will make every effort to re-use as much as possible, and as such an “upgrade” does not necessarily imply brand-new hardware, but may involve the rotation of stock to be better suited to other use. In addition, computer monitors are not included in a standard upgrade process unless they are inoperable.

CS receives a yearly budget that allows for the replacement or upgrade of 125-140 computers, including public and classroom terminals. With this budget in mind, a pre-selected “stock” machine is chosen as the new, replacement desktop computer that year and is ordered as needed. This budget allocation encompasses all computers in the school, and as such, in a year where classroom and public computers need to be replaced, less money would be left over for other computers, such as those used by faculty and staff.

If faculty or staff who are eligible for an upgrade request and choose a recommended laptop computer as their school-allocated primary computer instead of the stock desktop computer, CS may be able to allocate the cost of the pre-selected stock machine toward that purchase. The availability of assistance funds depends on whether or not the budget for upgrades has already been depleted for that year. The faculty or staff member would be responsible for paying the difference. Those who choose a laptop as the primary computer will still be subject to the 4+ year upgrade schedule. If a replacement is needed sooner the cost will be the responsibility of the user or department.

Unusual or Non-Standard Hardware & Software

There are circumstances where CS Helpdesk is unable to offer any support (no support). CS stays knowledgeable and current with the most widely used, standard systems, and therefore cannot offer an all-encompassing skill set. Hardware and software that is so old that it is unsupported by the original manufacturer (Windows 2000, as an example) will go unsupported. Non-typical or extremely specialized hardware or software (RAID arrays or Linux distributions, as examples) will go unsupported. In all unsupported cases, a call for help will be answered with a recommendation to use a supported or alternative solution.

New Faculty and Staff

All new faculty and staff will be provided the current supported hardware. Any additions to the basic configuration may cause it to become custom hardware. CS will help the new faculty and staff in determining the implications of adding components to their system.

Faculty, Staff, and Students
To enable CS to achieve its goal of providing excellent service in a prompt and courteous fashion, as members of the Business School community, FSS recognize the importance of the following:

- Promptly report all computer related problems
- Be available to identify the problem to a CS representative and, if necessary, work with him/her
- Contact CS before making any changes to hardware or software
- Keep yourself informed about the schedule of all planned network, hardware, and software changes
- Take responsibility for educating yourself on a continuing basis about basic computer related skills.
- Maintain an updated version of virus protection software on your system by following the guidelines provided by CS, and not interfering with the operation of pre-configured anti-virus and anti-malware software