IT Report for Nov 2016 Board Meeting

Firewall and Security Project Update

The IT department has been anticipating the need to upgrade our internal firewalls and network security. The real threat of accidentally clicking on the wrong website and innocently getting your computer infected with a virus is a real and constant threat. There have already been times when staff at IHLS have had pop-ups on their computers asking them to call a number or click a link to "get support". When IT staff is available we immediately forcibly close the offending software and start security scans on the computer for a multitude of infections. Most of the time, nothing is detected.

The IT staff has already taken a major step in keeping these programs from doing harm, by turning off the ability of our end-users to install new software. However, this isn't enough. A new product that has come to our attention will help us take our security to a much richer state. The WatchGuard firewall, which is currently being loaned to us, is much more sophisticated than anything we have now.

The firewall looks "deep" into the network traffic to detect virus, malware, and websites that have a low reputation. Low reputation websites are kept track of using online databases. WatchGuard blocks common typing errors, like going to a .com address instead of the correct .net address for a well-known website. The low reputation website might be trying to trick you into thinking you went to the correct site.

The project will include all three IHLS offices and also the co-location facility for SHARE servers. At this point, the estimated cost for the project us just under $13k. Once we have a better idea of the performance we will get final sizing for the co-location facility.

IHLS feels strongly that protecting the internal network of IHLS also protects our member libraries. This upgrade was marked as a priority because the information that our libraries trust us with on our servers is very valuable and IHLS is committed to doing everything we can, considering our financial situation, to protect that data.

The demo unit at the Edwardsville office expires on Dec 10. When we choose to finalize the order, we will keep the unit that we have now.

Respectfully submitted,

Troy Brown, IT Director