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**Agricultural Research Service
Administrative and
Financial Management
Information Technology Division**

Tech Times

Technology Tidbits From Your Help Desk Staff

New PCs

AFM is purchasing 200 new computers that will be delivered and begin being installed by December. These new PCs will be used to replace equipment that is three years old and older. The Gateway 133 and E-3000 models will be replaced throughout AFM.

For the people who enjoy the technical details, the standard equipment for the new PCs will be:

800Mhz Pentium III

128 MB RAM

20 GB hard drive

Windows 98

There is not a significant difference between Windows 95 and Windows 98. Training for Windows 98 is available on Element K. This year's purchase represents a significant shift in the AFM PC replacement strategy. In order to keep up with the rapid advance in technologies, PCs will be replaced every three years instead of the previous four.

My Screensaver Ate My Hard Drive!

No, that never really happens, but there are programs that have been installed by customers that can cause real problems for computers. Programs downloaded from the Internet, such as Webshots, Spinner, RealAudio, software brought in from home, or even joke programs that arrive in e-mail can all cause technical nightmares for you as well as Help Desk staff called in to assist. The problems can easily range from simple program "conflicts" to much more serious computer viruses or malicious trojan

horse programs designed to damage your data or compromise network security.

The Help Desk staff is trained and ready to assist with any problems related to the standard AFM applications. The standard AFM applications are those that are provided with your computer or installed by Help Desk staff. However, the Help Desk staff is not able to provide support and assistance for non-standard applications. In fact, if a problem is reported with a standard application or with Windows, a technician may be forced to remove non-standard software from a computer if they feel it may be causing or contributing to the problem.



Sending Internet Messages

When sending messages to Internet addresses, the best format to use is:

inet:jdoe@ars.usda.gov

Network Upgrade Project

Things are winding down for the folks who have been busy working since the end of February to upgrade the AFM network services. Their major accomplishments have been to upgrade our network operating system to Novell Netware 5.x and our e-mail system to GroupWise 5.5. As part of this upgrade project, several members of the Help Desk, along with Angelia Fleming of PPD and Erwin Miller of ITD, provided formal training on AFM e-mail correspondence guidelines and an overview of the new e-mail system. Additional in-depth training was also made available through Element K, our on-line training resource.

Another part of this project was the introduction of ZENworks. ZENworks, a Novell product, can be used to install applications remotely onto your PC. ZENworks has been used successfully to install GroupWise 5.5 as well as NS Elite. While some desktop visits were still required in limited cases, there was no need for a technician to visit each and every computer used within AFM. This greatly sped up the installation of these programs.

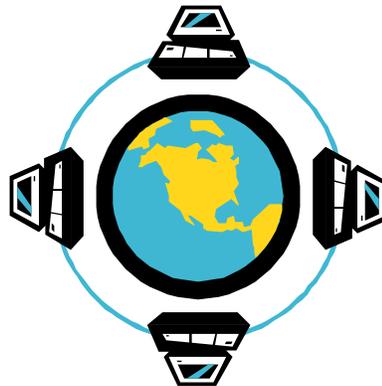
We are currently testing WebAccess, a new feature of GroupWise 5.5. With GroupWise WebAccess you can use your own Web browser to access your mailbox. You can access information, check your calendar, perform searches, and send and retrieve e-mail, attachments, appointments, tasks, and documents from anywhere on the Internet. To make it easy to access your mailbox using a Web browser, GroupWise WebAccess creates an intuitive browser interface that is virtually identical in functionality to the GroupWise desktop environment. With WebAccess you can also create and delete folders, access your personal address book,

and accept shared folders. We expect to make Web Access available to all users by October 13.

Also, as a part of the upgrade project we will be implementing a new printing technology which will provide ease of setup, administration and use of networked printers.

Another change in the network is a change in the basic philosophy of how the network will be administered. Each Help Desk technician, after receiving training and demonstrating their proficiency, will be given the ability to perform many administrative functions related to network and GroupWise administration. Resetting passwords, creating new accounts, updating e-mail public groups and many other related tasks will not need to be passed to a specific technician but will be able to be performed by all Help Desk staff. This will greatly speed up our ability to perform these tasks.

These changes, while significant, are already paying significant rewards. We now have a more stable network, a more robust and feature-rich e-mail system, and powerful new tools for providing the services and programs that all AFM customers need to do their jobs. The Customer Support Branch would like to thank each of you for your cooperation, support and patience while we've made these changes to the network systems.



GroupWise Training Events

Come and learn how to make the most of GroupWise and the tips and secrets to make it even more powerful. These brown bag sessions will provide in-depth training on short, specific topics. *Bring your lunch and your questions!*

September 26
Noon, Portals Training Room
-or-

September 27
Noon, GWCC Training Room
Archiving in GroupWise 5.5

Learn how to tame your GroupWise archives. Discover the easy methods for keeping what you **need!**

October 17
Noon, Portals Training Room
-or-

October 18
Noon, GWCC Training Room
Addressing the Address Book / Surfing Through Your E-mail with WebAccess

Explore the new functions available within the GroupWise 5.5 address book. Create and share address books, personal groups and add addresses. Also, see a demonstration of WebAccess and find out how easily you can use e-mail without GroupWise software.

When Applications Lock Up

When your PC locks up, press Ctrl-Alt-Delete to open the Close Program dialog box. Select the task that caused the problem (it should say "not responding" in parentheses) and click the End Task button. After a few seconds, an End Task dialog box will appear, explaining that the program is not responding. Click End Task again, and with any luck, Windows will close just that program.

Sending E-mail using Netscape

Many PCs installed throughout AFM have a version of Netscape that includes a lightweight e-mail program called Netscape Messenger. Browsing the web, you may find some links that are designed to send e-mail to a specific person. For instance, on the AFM website is a link to send a message to the AFM Webmaster. If this link is "clicked", Netscape may launch



Messenger and create an outgoing message for you. If you try to send this message, it will appear to be sent, but you may then receive a system generated message in your

GroupWise mailbox saying that your message was undeliverable. Because there is no server for handling Netscape

Messenger e-mail, this kind of "browser mail" will not work. If you need to send messages to these "Web" addresses, make sure that you are using GroupWise to send the message.

If you need to send messages to these "Web" addresses, slide your mouse to the left of the e-mail link until the pointing hand icon becomes a vertical bar. At that point you can click the mouse and drag it right to highlight the link. Once the mail link is highlighted you can use pull-down menus or the Tips and Tricks shortcut in this newsletter to cut and paste the address into GroupWise.

Opening vs. Viewing Attachments

When you open an attached file, GroupWise tries to determine the correct application to open the file in. You can accept the suggested application, or you can type the path and filename to another application. If you just want to scan the contents of the attachment, you can view it

instead of open it.

To view an attached file, Right-click the attachment | click View Attachment.

To open an attached file, Open the item containing the attachment | Right-click the attachment | Click Open double-click a program. Double-clicking a program may not be necessary if the correct application is already listed.

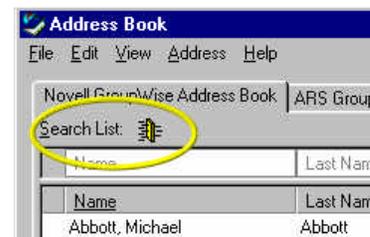
Opening an attachment can lock up your PC if GW cannot determine the application. Viewing attachments is quicker. If you want to set your preferences to either open or view go to Tools| Options| Environment | on the general tab make your selection in the lower right hand corner.

GroupWise Address Book

Have addresses disappeared from your address book? First check your display name format. To check this setting, go to your address book, click view, select name format, and in the display name format box select "Show Last name Then First", click ok.

-- Or --

Check to see if your filter is turned on. To determine if you filter is turned on look at the picture below. If the icon next to the Search list is yellow, your filter is turned on. To turn it off, select View | Filter off.



Questions, comments and suggestions are encouraged. This newsletter is for you and we want to provide the information you need. Please contact the Help Desk with any comments or recommendations you have.

Tips and Tricks

Fan your paper

Use your thumb to loosen individual sheets, this will help prevent paper jams in your printer.

Ejecting your CD-Rom.

You can eject your CD-ROM by right clicking on the CD-ROM drive icon in My Computer and select the Eject command from the shortcut menu.

Take a shortcut.

Speed up your editing using [Ctrl] X for cutting, [Ctrl] C for copying, [Ctrl] V for pasting, and [Ctrl] Z for undoing any operation.

Playing music CD's without CD Player.

You can avoid wasting system resources by configuring Windows 95 CD Player (Not Real Player, Spinner, etc) to continue playing music CDs after you close it. To do so, once you have CD Player up and running, pull down the Options menu and select the Preferences command. When you see the Preferences dialog box, clear the Stop CD Playing on Exit check box.

Scrolling through long Web pages.

You can use the [spacebar] to scroll down a page and [shift] [spacebar] to scroll up the page.

-or-

If you have a mouse with a wheel, you can use the wheel.