

Illinois Media Services Operational Proposal

Illinois Media Services is a proposed new model for addressing the needs of our community by making multimedia a core service of the University. The initiative will connect the infrastructure of the University with the entrepreneurship of individual colleges and units by creating service teams with campus stakeholders. This document, a supplement to the December 2011 proposal, "Multimedia Matters," outlines proposed resource needs and relationships to other units.

Proposed Illinois Media Services Charge:

- Architect and implement a roadmap for multimedia efficiencies and growth at the University of Illinois
- Deploy and maintain a scalable system-wide media catalog that is available to faculty, staff, students and the general public at *multimedia.illinois.edu*
- Create and maintain a service model for multimedia that supports the strategic plans of the University
- Develop common documentation, training, and educational resources for multimedia tools and services
- Discover new technologies and methodologies to support rich media
- Integrate multimedia resources from external service providers, central IT, and units into a cohesive and scalable framework
- Partner with stakeholders across disciplines and units
- Engage and connect with external partners and vendors.

Staffing

The initial plan for Illinois Media Services (IMS) proposes a modest staff in the initial stages. As the demand for services and media creation expertise increases, expansion in staffing will need to be considered.

Initial Minimum Staffing

To launch IMS, we propose the following staffing for the first 12-18 months:

- Program Coordinator (1 FTE)
 - Direct IMS and staff
 - Coordinate with IT Governance and campus leaders
 - Develop internal (colleges, units, IT) and external partnerships (vendors, CIC schools, other Illinois campuses)
 - Align with University strategic plans
- Technical Service Manager (1- 2 FTE)
 - Coordinate multimedia services and documentation
 - Manage multimedia services with service teams consisting of central IT and units
- Media Programmer (1 FTE)

- Develop and maintain tools related to multimedia workflow, including ingestion, transcoding, and distribution
- Web developer/Database Programmer (1 FTE)
 - Create and maintain a media content catalog and user documentation
 - Develop and maintain services related to media infrastructure
- Additional considerations
 - Access to ½ FTE project management support for the first 1-2 years
 - Ability to contract for additional services and programmer time as required by projects
 - Access to shared business, clerical, and IT resources
 - Short term joint appointments of ¼ to ½ buy-out time for subject matter experts and programmers to assist with projects
 - Joint appointments to share key staff resources between colleges and IMS

We believe the future will lead to growth in the area of multimedia support, but at this time we cannot predict what form this may take. We can envision efficiencies by combining resources that have traditionally resided at the unit or college levels, particularly in the area of media creation services. New positions, joint appointments, and consolidation of services are all options to increase the staff of IMS.

Resources

The services coordinated by IMS will be a combination of existing services, resources scaled up or integrated from college units, and those outsourced or purchased. Overall we estimate a \$500,000 - \$600,000 budget to support:

- Staffing (outlined above)
- General computing equipment and conference expenses
- Sandbox of virtual machines to support development and experimentation
- Software licenses related to cataloging tools and media streaming servers

Enterprise level resources not included in the estimated budget will be required:

- Long term storage solution for short-term and archival storage (in progress with the Storage task force)
- Greater support for accessibility efforts, including captioning and audio description tools and processes
- Server infrastructure and systems administrators to support enterprise level applications and development servers. IMS cannot, nor should not be system administrators.

Additional system resources will be required following discussions on the initial scope to be covered by IMS. These resources, either computing or monetary, might cover campus or system level streaming solutions, lecture/presentation capture tools, and media equipment and software to support content creation.

There are existing services on the Urbana campus upon which to build, both in expertise and resources. As most of these projects are managed by CME members, the knowledge to fulfill the promise of the IMS already exists. A sampling of existing resources and opportunities for integration and scaling includes:

- A prototype media ingestion workflow partially funded by a 2011 Library-IT proposal is in progress. This work will serve as the test bed for the workflow diagrammed in “Multimedia Matters.”
- OCE-ATLAS, with funding from the Library-IT fee, has been developing a fully accessible media player to meet ADA requirements.
- The Colleges of Engineering, Business, and Veterinary Medicine have years of experience deploying lecture/presentation capture systems.
- Over the past year, CME working groups have begun the process of developing best practices and training materials related to Accessibility and Captioning, Copyright, Media Preservation, and Cataloging Standards.

The foundation for Illinois Media Services is present in the resources and experiences of our colleges and their subject matter experts. IMS staff would focus these efforts and resources on a larger scale.

Service Teams

Multimedia stakeholders and projects span the boundaries of administrative, instructional, research and outreach missions. For this reason it will be imperative for IMS to form cross-disciplinary service teams to deploy and support multimedia services on campus. IMS service managers will lead a defined team of experts to run the operation with an advisory team providing guidance and critical assessment, with ties to existing governance units and the Center for Multimedia Excellence (CME).

For instance, a master catalog of multimedia content at Illinois will provide a mechanism by which patrons can access content. Consisting of open-source tools, existing databases and search engines, cataloging tools, and a branded web interface, this service will be a highly visible public site that will require the coordination of several units. The development and management of the service will require a project team and a stakeholder advisory team that may look like this:

- | Service Team | Stakeholder Advisory Team |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMS staff Service Manager • IMS staff web programmer/database admin • Public Affairs representation • Central IT service manager and staff representation • Involvement of Illinois webmaster staff • Library expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IMS staff Service Manager • IMS staff web programmer/database admin • Representation from Web@Illinois team • Public Affairs representation • Library involvement • Subject matter experts on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cataloging & Data Management ○ Web design ○ Use-ability ○ Accessibility to advise and participate • Faculty subject matter experts as needed |

Relationship to CME Volunteers

The Center for Multimedia Excellence (CME) was created to better coordinate common efforts and resources related to multimedia at Illinois. A cross-disciplinary, user-driven organization consisting of IT

professionals, campus communicators, educational technology experts, webmasters, and multimedia experts, the CME has developed campus standards, created working groups and policies, and deployed service prototypes.

Illinois Media Services staff will rely heavily on the guidance and feedback of the CME as a whole and build upon the group's previous work. CME volunteers will serve as members of service advisory teams and be utilized as subject matter experts to guide new technologies and services. The connection between the IMS and CME will be a critical communication channel to share information broadly between the primary stakeholders, users, and providers of multimedia tools.

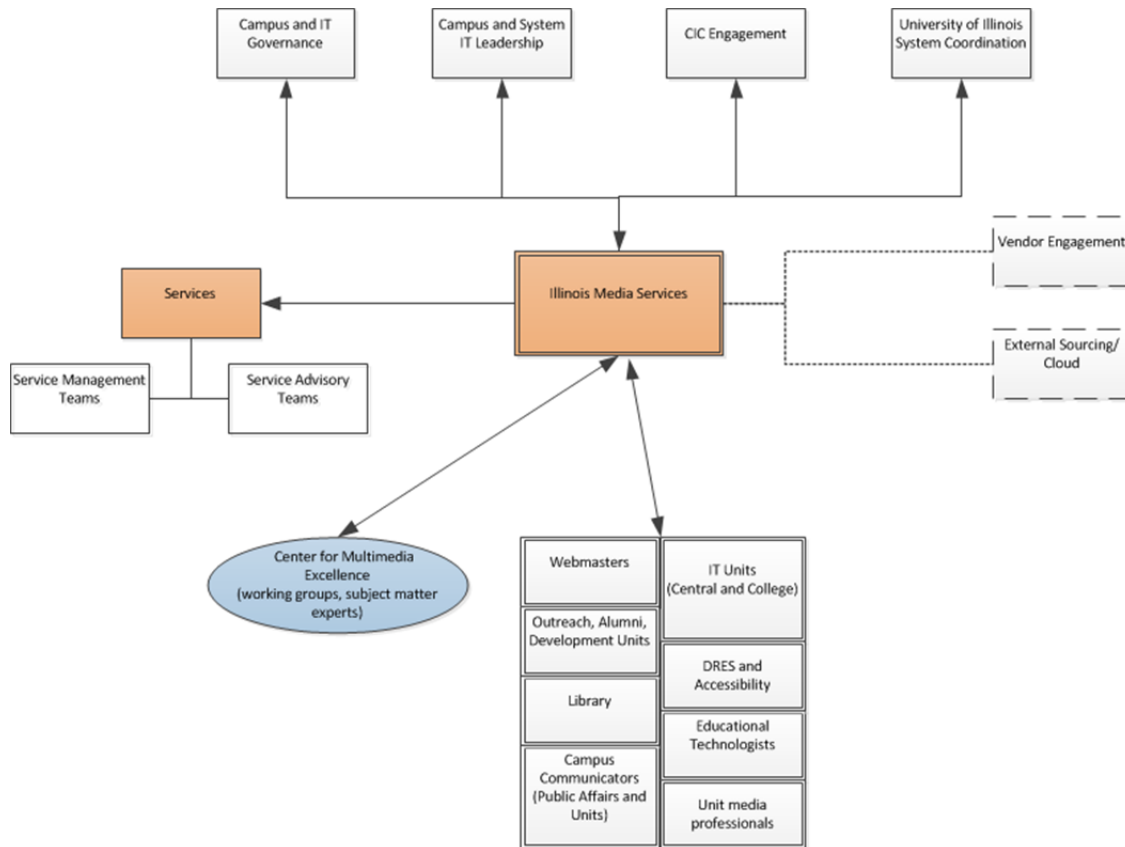
Relationship to Other Units

Beyond the collaborative nature of the CME, Illinois Media Services will need to have established working relationships with a variety of units on campus. The primary, standing relationships will be with system level IT (CITES and AITS), Public Affairs, DRES, the Library, and unit media producers.

Multimedia services are an interesting case, as IMS will be a consumer, coordinator, and provider to all of these primary relationships:

- Consumer - IMS will use IT services related to programmers, servers, and storage.
- Coordinator - Campus services run by IMS will need to manage the resources of IT, a central database catalog, and web services to deliver content. Additionally educational technologists and accessibility experts will need to be direct partners.
- Provider - IMS will provide services utilized by faculty, staff, and students, and provide new communication channels for Public Affairs, educational centers, development officers, and the Foundation. These new multimedia services also have the potential to provide researchers with new data sets and the system EDW with information that can be combined with student and faculty records.

The following diagram provides a visual representation of how Illinois Media Services will interact with various units and stakeholders. This is meant to function as a relational diagram, and not an organizational chart.



Summary

The initial work of the Illinois Media Services staff will seek to identify key areas of opportunity to scale multimedia services and address shared problems. Overall, the staff of Illinois Media Services will work with stakeholders and partners to provide a service framework, deploy efficient resources, and coordinate service life cycles to reduce inefficiencies.

With the objective to create an organization that is flexible, knowledgeable, and empowered to architect a multimedia framework for the University of Illinois, IMS will be managed in a team based setting with advisory and governance roles. Documentation and training will be created to educate the community and communication will flow through IMS between users and vendors in a coordinated manner. Resources and tools that were previously out of reach for many will now be available to faculty, staff, and students. In summary, Illinois Media Services will make connections between opportunities and resources to best meet the needs of the University of Illinois.

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