

Review of short stay PCs in the Library

In February 2012 the Library undertook a trial of short stay PCs to address the issue of continual high demand for PC access within the building. A group of three PCs near the information and enquiry desk on level 3 were identified for the trial. The PCs were installed with software developed by the Library Systems team that logged a user off after 20 minutes and didn't allow them back on to the same PC for another hour. The PCs also had their hard disks replaced with solid state drives to reduce boot times.

The trial ran for 16 weeks from 18th February to 8th June.

Promotion

The short stay PCs were advertised to potential users via the following channels:

- Feature box on Library website
- Ad Lib (Library blog)
- Plasma screen near Cafe
- Library Facebook page
- Library twitter account
- Signage on and around the three PCs

Usage

Based upon usage data (appendix a) collected during the trial, the short stay PCs are used on average 23 times per (Mon-Fri) day each. During the four month trial the short stay PCs have been used by 2,791 different users with 1,310 of these using the PCs on multiple occasions. This means that approximately one in six of all students at the University have used one of the three short stay PCs in the Library.

In addition to the usage data a short survey of users was undertaken in May and received 20 responses (see appendix b). Almost all the respondent used the PCs for printing, with checking email the next most popular activity. All of the responses were very positive about the service with the main comments relating to:

- i) the time limit (as always contradictory, some wanted longer, some shorter)
- ii) having a few more short stay PCs, perhaps some on each level of the Library

and according to one respondent the short stay PCs have "saved their life" several times!

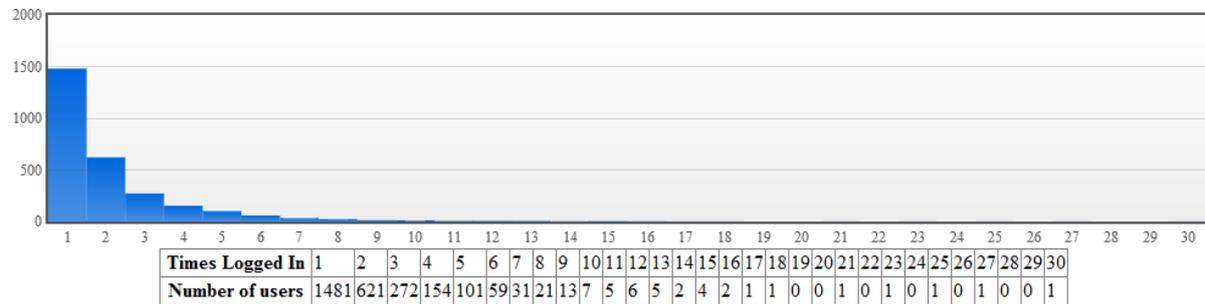
Recommendations

1. That the Library should continue to provide short stay PCs
2. Consideration should be given to increasing the number of short stay PCs
3. That the Building Development Group should consider how the short stay PCs can be more prominently located/displayed

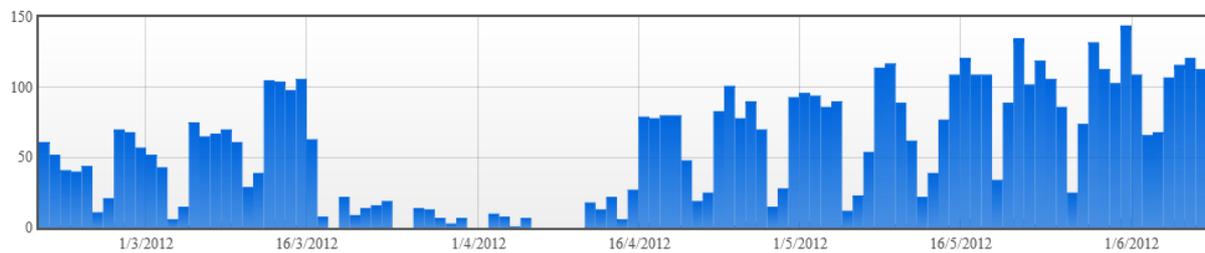
Gary Brewerton and Matt Cunningham
June 2012

Appendix A – Short stay statistics

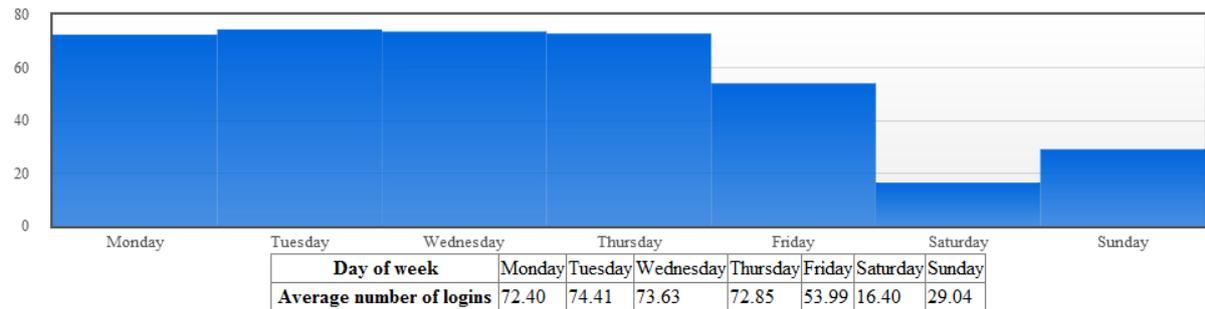
Number of users to have logged in X times



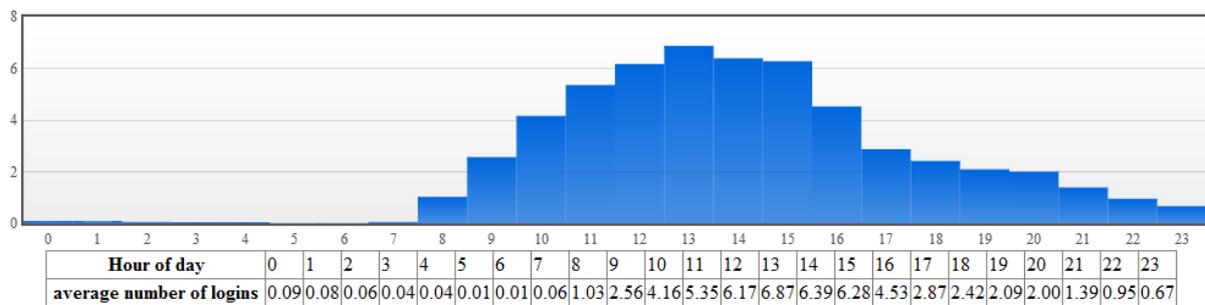
Number of logins per day



Average number of logins per day of week



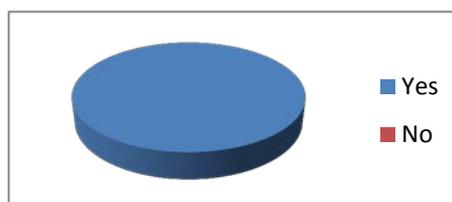
Average number of logins per hour of day



Appendix B - Short stay PCs - feedback

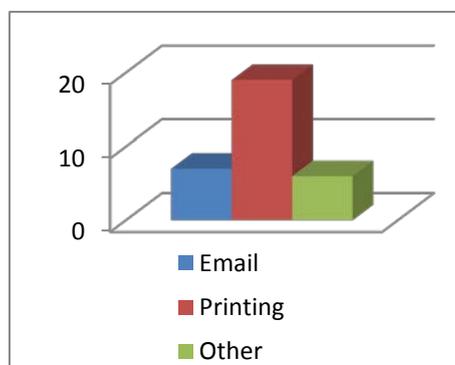
Do you think having short stay PCs is a good idea?

20 Yes
0 No



What do you use short stay PCs for?

7 Checking email
19 Printing
6 Other

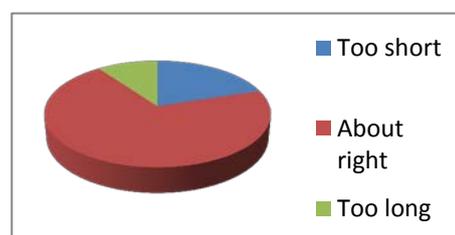


What other do you use it for?

1 Surfing
1 Checking scanned documents
1 Checking reading lists
1 Looking up books
1 Burning CDs
1 Sending CV revising draft of cover letter

What do you think about the 20 minute time limit?

4 Too short
14 About right
2 Too long



Other comments

OK if I know what to look for

It is really useful to be able to log on to the computer for 5 mins to print documents. Thanks. (There aren't usually any long stay PCs available)

I found it extremely helpful for last minute quality printing

Half an hour would be better

Brilliant idea

Note on display the remaining or elapsed time

Great idea as it's a huge struggle to locate a free computer and frustrating as you need it for such a short span of time

If they were kiosks instead of desk PCs would make them easier to get to & use

30 mins would be better

Could do with some on every level!

IT IS GREAT. This system "has saved my life" several times! THANKS

Have a couple of more short stay PCs and split them into more groups i.e. 2@10 mins 3@20 mins 1@30 mins.

V. Good idea to start this :-)

20 minutes stays are not regulated!!!

A 40 minute option would be better for me.

25 minutes would be just right