

## Mainframe Reports Go Electronic

The Higher Education Computer Network (HECN) is implementing new software that will revolutionize the way administrative batch reports are distributed on campus, saving a few trees in the process. This software, called PageCenter, will be making its debut at NDSU and UND the first week of February, when a few, previously selected, month-end reports are adapted to make use of this new program.

PageCenter is a report management system that has its own web page where it maintains a mailbox for each department that is accessible with a web browser. Currently Netscape Navigator 4.07, Netscape Communicator 4.7 and Internet Explorer 5.0 (or higher) are supported.

Reports are delivered electronically to a department's mailbox instantaneously upon completion of the mainframe processing. They can then be viewed, searched, copied to an electronic spreadsheet, printed, or even stored for later use. This alone would be a terrific time savings if that were all that it did, but PageCenter will also decollate and distribute the various parts of a report to the appropriate departments!

Some of the other advantages to having the information delivered electronically include:

1. Ability to import the data from reports into a spreadsheet for analysis.
2. Electronic searches of data
3. Quick retrieval of archived data
4. Capacity to view multiple reports at the same time
5. Ability to access the data from almost anywhere
6. Capability of simultaneous viewing of reports by persons separated by long distances
7. Printing only the parts of a report that are needed

Department mailboxes will be secured by our present RACF security system as well as Page Center's own internal security. A user will be required to have a current CICS or TSO user id and password as well as prior authorization to access a department's mailbox. The mailboxes and access are being set up now and should be ready for the first production run in February.

Two Open Forums have been set up to demonstrate PageCenter and answer questions related to PageCenter or the completion of the Security Access Form. The first forum will be held on Wednesday, February 9, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. in the University Chambers Room in the Memorial Union. The second forum will take place on Thursday, February 10, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. in FLC 319. Department Security Access Forms were sent to department heads last week. If your department has not received its form, it is available at: <http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/accounting/csforms/forms/pagecenter.pdf>.

Training for PageCenter has been arranged for the last week in February and the first week in March. Time and locations will be announced at the Open Forums.

The acquisition of this software is the result of efforts by the NDSU Administrative Print Committee to explore options for impact printing. The committee, convened last Spring, is co-chaired by Rosi Kloberdanz, Information Technology Services and Jean Ostrom-Blonigen, Internal Audit. It is comprised of members representing both the student and financial systems. All of you have seen the result of moving W-2's, fringe benefit information reports and flexible compensation reports from the impact printer to a laser printer. The second type of impact form is green bar paper reports. It is these reports that will now be moved to PageCenter for electronic distribution.

PageCenter will not be going into effect overnight, but will be phased in as quickly as possible. For this to happen, we need your support. Each department that will be receiving reports through PageCenter will, at first, continue to receive a printed copy, as well as the electronic distribution. This will allow persons to become familiar with PageCenter and see the correlation between the printed copies and the PageCenter representation. Eventually printed copies will be eliminated, saving people time, department and University resources, and a few more trees.