



ETS Customer Service Team Focus Group Project Final Report

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ETS Customer Service Team Focus Group Project

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ETS Customer Service Team Focus Group Project

Executive Summary

The ETS Customer Service Team was charged by Vice President, Jeff Bartkovich to report on the strengths and weaknesses of customer service in the Educational Technology Division of Monroe Community College. To accomplish this, the team conducted a series of focus groups in April and May of 2003. The goal of the research was to better understand the college perceptions of the division and reveal the customer service attitudes, professionalism and courtesy of ETS Staff when assisting in the delivery of services. To encourage candid focus group participation the team chose a member of the Academic Services Division facilitate the discussions.

Our findings indicate that the campus has been very pleased with the services and the innovations offered by ETS. The changes that the division undertook in the last few years have made a very positive impact. The team also noted that perceptions of ETS's responsibilities are influenced by the campus environment and by the larger developments of technology in our society. Yesterday's "excellent" will be today's "good" so continual improvements in service must be made in order for ETS to keep up with the increase in customer expectations. In evaluating customer service attitudes, the division offers two types of services: services that must be used and services that are used selectively. The services that must be used, such as network services or telecommunications, face the largest customer service challenge by providing front line support. The majority of the selected services that the division offers impact the skills of the individual.

The major themes uncovered in evaluating the participant transcripts were issues with communication between ETS and the campus. Whether it focused on the individual, or re-publicizing services offered, it remains one area where customer service could be improved. Though the team did make specific recommendations for individual departments, most of the information gathered refers to the division as a whole.

ETS Customer Service Team

Focus Group Project: Final Recommendations

Division Recommendations

The following recommendations were approved or suggested by the team for the division. Though ETS has implemented many enhancements in the following areas, the team felt that the feedback from the Focus Groups indicated these were areas that could be improved. The team also emphasizes that these improvements should be applied to both DCC and Brighton. Specific departmental recommendations made by the focus groups are at the end of the recommendations.

1.1 Improve communications to individual users.

Each ETS area should work to improve communications with individual users. Even though some departments are specifically identified as having minor communication problems, the team felt that the overall theme of focus group commentary was related to issues around communication. All areas should be sure to evaluate the effectiveness of how the individual user is contacted.

Examples: Individual users felt that they did not receive enough communication about the status of their individual job requests or about their computer program that was in the queue for development. Others found scheduling support at DCC was more difficult than at the Brighton Campus, because the user did not know where to leave a message for the technician. At times, the DCC personnel went through administrative personnel to learn the status of their requests. Others felt that they were not notified about their Print Shop orders.

1.2 Improve communications to members of ETS.

The team recognized that everyone in ETS has the potential to be ambassadors of information. In the course of everyday interactions, the ETS staff may have the ability to either update information or direct users to the appropriate person about our services. However, services or up-coming projects are not always communicated to the division outside the campus announcement or informational updates at the retreats. The team felt a regular update to the division of ETS projects would empower members of ETS to know more about their division. The update can also include reminders about services offered.

Example: The Libraries now offers E-Reserves user accounts to Committee and Department Chairs.

1.3 Improve communications on campus decisions.

The local campus environment often identifies ETS as the decision maker in prioritizing and funding technology. In part, this is true, but other divisions of the college are participants in the process and this is not always communicated to the different levels of MCC staff. The team recommends more communication with the college community.

- 1.3.1 Update and publicize the technology projects and funding decisions. Perhaps the ETS Technology Plan Project Status Report or another mechanism can be utilized. As the college has added personnel not everyone is informed about the process for technology funding on the campus. The team believes that the college community should know what projects are being funded and the projected completion date such as diverting resources to implement Banner.
 - 1.3.2 Post and publicize minimum levels of equipment and software. At times users are not even aware that the campus has moved forward and that ETS recommends updates.
 - 1.3.3 Post and publicize a schedule of classroom/lab updates including the long range plans to add smart classrooms.
- 1.4 Publicize existing services.
- Reoccurring comments in the focus groups were, "I didn't know I could do that." As the college has grown and changed, communication about existing services should be advertised. The division should develop a way to reach out to the college community about existing services, such as Eprint or the Library Research Form. Individuals may have missed the initial announcement or have since developed a need to use the service.
- 2.1 Develop a method or training track to advertise services for specific populations.
- The ETS Technical Training already reaches out to the college community with such tracks as, Technology Training for New Employees. The team felt the division should target specific services, such as Services for Departmental Secretaries or Technology Services for Faculty that brings all ETS Services for the targeted population under one umbrella.
- 3.1 Continue to increase personnel to extend coverage beyond the traditional operating hours.
- The team recognized that within the current limitations the division did an exceptional job of providing services but that support before 8:00 am or after 5:00 pm was not as good as the service offered during the standard operational hours. The team felt the division should continue to expand to provide the same service for employees that start at 6:00 am or operate during the 5:00 pm-10:00 pm hours.
- 4.1 Research ways to acknowledge and assist in managing technology stress which individuals may go through in learning new skills. Without the addition of training to deal with the emotional stress brought on by technology, the campus division between technology users and technology non-users will widen. This training should have a strong outreach component.

- 5.1 Provide a color printer and a color copier for students to make quality class presentations.
- 6.1 The team recommends that the ETS Executive Team read the Focus Group Report and discuss the Focus Group Transcripts with Vice President Bartkovich. The transcripts are broken into three areas: Technology Defined, Campus Cultural Environment and ETS. Though this report summarizes the information, the content is too vast to be included in this report in its entirety.

Departmental Recommendations

The Customer Service Team has a few recommendations for individual departments:

- 7.1.1 CNS: Evaluate and improve the CNS Liaison Program. The team believes that the CNS Liaison Program should be evaluated for its effectiveness. Often focus group members did not know that the program existed or appeared to have very little information communicated to them from their liaison contact.
- 7.1.2 CNS: Review form procedures, when electronic forms for new services are issued, to be sure the form is distributed to all departments.
- 7.1.3 CNS: Increase publicity of the telephone directory.
- 8.1.1 Computing: Review procedures on notifying users of the status of jobs in a queue.
- 8.1.2 Computing: Provide new mainframe operators with an overview of programs.
- 8.1.3 Computing: Publicize faculty web requirements. Previous standards have changed but not everyone is aware of this.
- 9.1.1 IT: Publicize the software, services, location and hours of the FIC.
- 9.1.2 IT: Print Shop - Notify users when jobs are completed.
- 9.1.3 IT: Print Shop - Work with the mailroom to produce postal ready mailings.
- 9.1.4 IT: Post and publicize the availability of classroom software, such as smart carts.
- 10.1.1 Libraries: Investigate color copier that can make transparencies.
- 10.1.2 Libraries: Continue to develop the Library Liaison Program. The library program is received positive commentary but the team recognized the importance of outreach to the community.

ETS Customer Service Team Focus Group Project Report

I. Introduction

Founded in 1961, Monroe Community College in Rochester is part of the State University of New York (SUNY) System, and is one of the 30 community colleges that are geographically dispersed throughout the state. The SUNY community college system was designed to provide technical and Para-professional “job ready” preparation and/or transfer opportunities to four-year programs. The first class of 720 has now grown to more than 34,000 full- and part-time students. The Middle States Association of College and Secondary Schools accredit MCC. Curricula are registered and approved by the New York State Department of Education. (History) The College is one of 20 community colleges chosen from the more than 1,200 in the United States and Canada to be a member of the League for Innovation in the Community College. (About)

MCC Mission

The Mission of Monroe Community College is to provide a high quality learning environment to a diverse community. In offering education and training opportunities, student success is the College's highest priority; as such, the College is committed to access, teaching excellence, comprehensiveness, lifelong learning, partnership building and economic development. (Mission)

In support of the College Mission Statement, Educational Technology Services (ETS) works with the other divisions of the college to deliver services that enhance and support the educational process. In 1996, when technology demands and technology costs were exponentially increasing, ETS recognized that to improve service to the institution there had to be a better way to manage and fund technology. MCC/ETS was one of the first institutions to develop a strategic plan for technology spending. The plan, now updated annually by the College’s President and Vice Presidents determine long range planning, funding and prioritizing of projects on campus.

Uniquely designed, ETS serves all populations on the campus, students/faculty/staff/administrators in a variety of areas bringing together a diverse group of services in support of the ETS Mission Statement.

ETS Mission Statement

Educational Technology Services combines the College's information, communication, and technology resources into a team with a commitment to facilitate the teaching and learning processes at MCC, through the implementation, advancement, and support of technology.

Educational Technology Services has four main components:

ETS: Communications and Network Services

- *Equipment Services:* PC Hardware and Software Services.
- *Mail Services:* Incoming/Outgoing Services, Mail Preparation.
- *PC & Network Services:* Server Applications, Network Printing, Email Services, Outlook Support, General Office Support.
- *Telecommunications:* Telephone and Voice Mail Applications.

ETS: Computing

- *End User Support/Help Desk:* Software Help Desk Support, Administrative Help Desk Support.
- *Program Development:* Computer Programming and Development.
- *Technical Support:* Administrative Operations.
- *Web Development:* Web Development.

ETS: Instructional Technologies

- *Distance Learning:* Instruction Development and Support.
- *Instructional Technologies:* Graphic Services, Faculty Innovation Center (FIC), Instructional Development, Multimedia Production, Technology Training.
- *Learning Resources:* Classroom Technology Support, Electronic Learning Center (ELC).
- *Printing Services:* Copy Centers, Print Shop, Word Processing

ETS: Libraries

- *Leroy v. Good Library (Brighton):* Cataloging, Circulation/Reserve, Collection Development, Instruction, Reference, Serials.

- *Damon City Campus Library*: Circulation/Reserve, Collection Development, Instruction, Reference.
- *Archives and Records Management*: College Records, Microfilming, College Archives.
- *Special Collections*: *AIDS Resource Library*, Holocaust and Human Rights Center.
- *SUNY Student Resource Center*: Cooperative with SUNY and Rochester Public Library.

II. ETS Customer Service Team

The ETS Customer Service Team, which represents all four major areas of the division, was charged by MCC Vice President Jeffrey Bartkovich to promote unparalleled customer service. In Fall 2000 and Fall 2002, the team conducted card surveys distributed by each department at the point of service which generated 693 cards with 3,131 responses. In Fall 2000 ETS services were rated 83% highly effective and in 2002 as 88% highly effective. In June 2003, a web survey card was added to the division's home page. In Spring 2002, the team produced service guidelines based on the principles of Appreciation, Respect, Communication and Help (ARCH). The division was asked to model these principles in both customer and employee relationships. It is important to treat colleagues and customers with the same decorum and provide service to the college community in a caring, friendly environment.

The motivation for unparalleled customer service in the educational environment or non-profit is nothing new but is based in the foundation of public education. With the financial support that public institutions receive, it is unlikely that students will find more affordable quality-based education elsewhere. So then, why promote positive relationships and seek to deliver unparalleled service? Maricopa Community College answered this question; all students are taxpayers and potential voters whose support is needed to continue to provide a quality public education. Our future is in the hands of the voters and our concern for a quality-based product should be a model for public education. In 2003, residents of New York State rallied their legislators to veto the Governor's Budget that had slashed educational funding across the state. Also, at a time when accountability, delivery and service have become everyday expectations in

many segments of society, ETS should not be any different. The reasons to perform quality service could be nothing more than an individual's statement to perform a quality job, but as a government funded educational institution, the personal statement is further mandated when the institution accepts public funding.(O'Neil) The division's desire should be not only to perform services, but also to perform them well.(O'Neil) The alternative is to be viewed as a self-serving institution, complacent and insensitive in the duties we perform.

Team Goals: (Gruhn 1)

Develop a Customer Service Plan including:

1. Report on current strengths and weakness
2. Recommendations for improvement
3. Process for evaluating departmental procedures
4. Standard evaluation form for client feedback of ETS Services

Team definition of Customer Service (Gruhn 1)

Customer Service is the commitment to providing value aided services to external and internal customers, including attitude knowledge, technical support and quality of service in a timely manner.

III. Focus Group Project

A. Purpose

The primary purpose of the ETS Customer Service Focus Groups was to obtain feedback and input from the college community regarding the services delivered by ETS. Focus groups would expand on the information gathered in the card surveys and engage members of the community in a dynamic conversation about ETS services. The team would extrapolate information, provide analysis and create a more in-depth evaluation. The information gathered by these groups will be used only by the ETS Customer Service Team to evaluate and improve the quality of its services to the college.

B. Objectives

The objectives, distributed to all the focus groups, were to obtain feedback and suggestions from the college community concerning ETS:

1. Understand the general perception of what is technology at MCC.
2. Reveal the customer service attitudes, professionalism and courtesy by ETS Staff when assisting in the delivery of services.
3. Identify the satisfaction level with the task performed related to timeliness, efficiency and results.
4. Recognize the technological expectations of the MCC Community and the accessibility of services.

C. Participant Demographics

Four groups of participants divided by the categories of: Faculty, Professional Staff/Faculty, Support Staff, and DCC Faculty/Staff were selected. The ETS/Customer Service Team chose the participants across all MCC Departments. The groups were designed to include “familiar users” and members of the community who did not regularly interact with departments. The participants selected could conceivably interact quite regularly with one area of the division but not another. The goal was to include a wide variety of users with a wide variety of experience and skills. Of the 58 invites, 44 attended.

D. Methodology

Each focus group of 10 – 17 participants were to be contacted by the Vice President of ETS and asked to participate. The groups were conducted on March 25, 26 and April 1, 3, 2003. The meetings were scheduled for college hour (1 hour) with food and beverages. After the initial invitation, the Customer Service Team was responsible for contacting participants and sending reminder notices. In addition to the invitation, the team included information on the Purpose, Objectives and Methods with an ETS Departmental list. Participants were asked to notify a member of the team if they could not attend. As the team’s goal was to have at least 10-12 participants, if a participant declined, a replacement was not planned unless it appeared as if the focus group was below the targeted number of participants. After reviewing the literature on focus groups, it was determined that a member from another MCC Division should facilitate to

encourage participation. Kimberly Canfield, a member of the Academic Services Division, successfully conducted the groups that were audio taped. The goal of the facilitator was to elicit opinions and obtain possible suggestions. In an attempt to assist in this process, the focus group questions were designed with probes for reflective listening. A flip chart was also used to facilitate interaction. After the groups were conducted, a member of the team created transcripts from the audiotapes.

IV. Focus Group Participant Summary

A. General Technology Perceptions

In an attempt to define the ETS Services used by the focus groups, the facilitator opened each session with a list of ETS Departments and a general question defining technology. The different groups described technology as everything from the business day desktop to classroom delivery systems with a variety of answers ranging from the esoteric to the practical. Some felt it could be defined as man-made tools or everything that does not work when the power goes off. One member characterized technology as anything that made our lives easier or enhanced productivity.

Individuals focusing on the hardware depiction of technology referred to specific campus systems such as SIS, FRS, Outlook, phone service, image services, software packages, smart classrooms, copiers, and audio/visual support in the classroom. Technology was the electronics and equipment that made it all work. It was the tool that generated course materials, produced grades, maintained records, delivered library services or research from websites. With technology, you could acquire, analyze and interpret data or demonstrate the information in the textbook while other participants took the philosophical view that technology was ubiquitous. Technology was viewed as the way we communicate between campuses and as the support structure for internal and external communication. It was emailing and interfacing or the way folks deal with students, customers, colleagues and co-workers.

As the groups talked about their definitions, personal preferences of the users and non-users of technology emerged. Subtly at first, the definitions included personal stories and stances on technology, including how it was integrated into the MCC campus culture. Participants recognized that there was competition in the student population

between those that used technology at home and those that used it only at school. The same competitive element was evident between MCC staff. Some participants expressed concern that they were viewed as antiquated or dinosaurs if they did not use technology readily. Some faculty felt that their focus on teaching was not necessarily best done through a new delivery system and they should not be pressured to use technology where it was inappropriate. Others wanted to push the envelope and find what the newest development would be and expressed concern that the college did not yet have a wireless network. But even those that wanted new developments recognized that technology was always in flux and to continue to use it effectively, new technology must be developed with a purpose. Faculty especially felt that “need” should drive our technology choices and not the opposite: technology driving our needs. For the younger students, technology was such a part of their lives that faculty felt it had no significant impact on the learning environment. One member actually found that the students were enthusiastic about using the chalkboard because in their realm of experience it was a novelty. Other students with less IT exposure were first “WOW”ed but then quickly grew accustomed.

In asking for definitions about technology the team uncovered varied and different descriptions of what participants perceived technology to be. When planned it seemed to be an ice-breaking question. However, in the end, it was revealed to be a valuable question which uncovered a deeper foundation of how both cultural and environmental factors could influence the viewpoints of ETS.

B. Campus and Cultural Environment

In evaluating the information extrapolated from the ETS Customer Service Focus Groups, the team determined that there are uncontrollable factors related to the college community which ETS has no ability to control. Some of these factors are cultural, relating to the higher education environment and some are campus driven. Each department or campus has traditions that are important to the functioning of the organization and where customer services are concerned, these factors could affect the qualitative evaluation of what was said. Understanding this, a few are noted here. With the expansive view of how the focus groups described what technology is, there would be no way for ETS to meet everyone’s needs. In addition, the larger backdrop of how technology is viewed in society influences the opinions of the community ETS serves. At

the same time, the higher education world and the local community leaders view vigorous use of technology as a key indicator in the progressiveness of an institution. (Kobulnicky) The progressiveness influences positive political and voter support, as well as the college's membership in the League of Innovations. Whether or not our constituents accept this as a key indicator would also be a factor in the gathered commentary.

First, there are the local perceptions of technology either accepting or damning. Among the participants, there are those who choose not to rely on technology or ETS. A reoccurring comment was that organizations should not function in a "Field of Dreams" environment thinking, "if you build it, they will come." Some things were simply done better without technology. Some teaching is done better without technology. Having students concentrate on email or the internet is viewed by some as a waste of technical resources but reflects more on the philosophical differences of what is deemed important to be taught. Focusing on efficiency, one felt it counter productive to have individual students print materials from the web or the M Drive and felt it more time effective to have the faculty member make all the copies. Is one person at the copy machine vs. thirty students at the printers more efficient? Counterbalanced by the group who were less involved in technology were the members that wanted the glitzy, newest technology on the market. This group felt that using new technologies were productive time-enhancing ways to improve us as educators. With either viewpoint, the team had to balance and interpret comments that may have been influenced by the underlying attitudes about technology that expressed no information on customer service. Just as there is academic respect across the campus for individuals to find their own strengths in teaching, we have to accept the varied campus opinions of ETS services because the technology need levels or skill degrees may radically differ. There are the technology "haves" and the "have-nots" for a variety of reasons, yet ETS has to remain aware of the difficulty in learning new technologies for the "have-nots". Although ETS offers a wide variety of excellent training opportunities, they may want to explore other avenues in order to assist populations with less technology experience. Whether there are local departmental issues or larger cultural issues that influence who uses what technology, these issues will still influence the view of the division.

Second, there are larger organizational issues. Some participants did not know how funding and technology decisions were made at the college. They felt that technology should be evaluated and then introduced (or introduced and then evaluated)

for the most appropriate use. Both scenarios express concerns that focused on the lack of evaluation of what and how technology was used. Focus group participants questioned why certain projects were funded and wondered if the college should be making more choices about what is funded. Others felt that small-scale testing would be helpful or felt that the college moved the campus forward to new versions of software while others were still trying to master versions behind. One member claimed that [academic] departments received less funding of departmental initiatives because money was diverted to ETS. Other participants held the division responsible for the lack of communication of campus projects such as moving to Banner. Some felt that often the college administration assumed that the community knew what was ahead when, in fact, they felt left in the dark. Here, again, organizational issues affect the view of ETS.

Lastly, the larger cultural and sociological pressures of modern society influenced opinions of ETS. Technology could be the cutting edge but could also be the edge that pushes others away. Faculty and staff, stressed by the 24/7 pressures from students and the college administration, are asking if the quality of life has diminished with your office now in your living room. Has the American work ethic been replaced by the overwork ethic where work has become an accepted part of our private lives? (Caudron) Participants wondered whether the constant pressure to perform had actually diminished effectiveness on the duties we perform. There is the tendency everywhere to blame part of the work culture pressures on technology providers because they are the ones that provide the services and hardware that create, for some, pressure to learn more. Participants claimed that technology folks always thought that they were helpful when they introduced new services when, in reality, the help was not requested nor was it necessarily welcome. As service providers to the campus, there is no way to accept responsibility for larger societal issues, but the division should remember that the larger background influences individuals' acceptance of technology.

This information gathered, though informative, initially does not seem to have any direct reflection on the customer service of ETS. Focus groups do not measure, but are a qualitative research methodology used to help illuminate and identify improvements that the division could undertake. Like the broad definition of technology, it demonstrates that there are viewpoints on campus that believe ETS is responsible for almost all of the decisions, funding of, uses of, and stresses of technology use. Though members of the division are always at the decision-making table because of the support the division provides, we are not the sole deciders. This understanding, though

disseminated, does not always trickle down to all levels of the campus. The opinions gathered also represent the varied personal cultures where ETS functions. Where one member might believe it is an advancement to have the M Drive or easy access to Electronic Reserves in the library, others might perceive it as a drawback. Therefore, as we are trying to “sell” our services through Brown Bags, Training Classes, Niche Training or the MCC Tribune announcements, the division needs to look at the populations not being reached and evaluate if there is one more method of delivery we have not tried. The division also needs to ask if there are other “soft skills,” surrounding technology that ETS should consider adding to the vast array of class offerings, such as a training module related to “Stress and Learning XP”. Mostly, the Customer Service Team recognized that there are larger influences when one discusses technology but that the service provider, in this case ETS, should not be faulted.

C. Educational Technology Services Division

The Educational Technology Services Division is an extraordinary division as it serves all campus populations. With the exception of a few departments, such as Facilities, Health Services or Public Safety, ETS is the only division that has the core responsibility of providing services to everyone. As a result, the breadth and range of customer services must be able to deal with a wide range of skill levels and experience from students to staff. It is also a division that offers services that must be used and services that are selected. Some areas, such as the Communication and Network Services, Mail Services, or Telecommunications, must be used. Other services, such as Printing Services, the Libraries, the FIC, or the Electronic Learning Center are selected. While selected service areas should strive for the best possible grades in customer service, they are not always in the line of fire. As a result, the services that must be used were often referred to the most.

In evaluating the focus group participants’ commentary, it was obvious that the division’s customer service has improved significantly in the last few years. In addition, ETS may be enjoying the benefits of decisions made, or projects completed in the past. For example, the ETS Technology Plan started the campus systematically funding and planning technology which has helped deal with both the costs and accessibility throughout the campus. At the same time the decision was made to limit campus support to selected software, such as the Microsoft Office instead of individual packages such as WordPerfect or Report Writer. Group participants remarked on the changes

stating, “three to five years ago is about the time when resources were really stretched when they were doing so much but they didn’t have the staff to support it. “ The efforts the division has made, whether in the planning, the type of support given, or by adding personnel has paid off.

Throughout the campus, the division is recognized for identifying innovative technologies and moving the campus in that direction or as one participant put it, “motivating individuals forward.” When one contributor mentioned state-of-the-art, another group member immediately thought of the personnel of ETS who are seen as being ahead of the game. ETS was credited for knowing what was on the cutting edge and its willingness to give advice. They saw the ETS technicians as proficient and capable and who “were always willing to let you learn”. Recognizing that the college community functioned at different levels of expertise, participants felt that they were always treated with respect and were not afraid to ask any question. With one of its greatest resources being its people, ETS support is seen as moving from a reactive to a proactive approach. Others described the division as functioning with a changed attitude through more diverse personnel. ETS staff is seen as patient and receptive as they go through their explanations, especially the welcoming feeling that is given when first contacted.

The focus groups were also asked how they felt MCC stood in comparison to our colleagues from other colleges. The response was a resounding affirmation of the strengths the groups had already spoke about. MCC is seen as a flagship college when it came to the technologies. Whether it was in comparison to a local four-year institution or a community college in the state, most felt we “were ahead of the game”. In addition, participants also felt our services were better than private industries or government agencies.

As technology has expanded and campus demands increased, ETS has continued to push technology that left some focus group participants concerned about the number of projects undertaken and the prioritization of those projects. Here campus culture may have failed to communicate who sets the technology priorities for the campus. Some participants recognized the increased push for classroom technology as a good goal but then ran into scheduling difficulties when not enough smart classrooms or technology carts were available for use. Again, funding and prioritization for campus decisions are not clarified to all levels of staff.

The one area of ETS that was mentioned many times in various ways is the issue of how ETS communicates on the campus. Though the division was cited for its excellent communication when there were network problems, there still seemed to be an issue of communication with the individual users. Whether it was a personal PC, a project at Damon, or the placement of a job in a queue, individual users still felt there was room for improvement. Other areas such as the FIC or Library Services were also areas that needed to strengthen communication with the campus. While some participants knew about the ETS CNS Liaison program, others did not know it existed. Some participants blamed the division for lack of information about projects while others still struggled with the options on the help desk line. Other users did not know certain services were available. While ETS makes an effort through brown bag presentations and announcements in the MCC Daily Tribune, it was clear that participants still needed another level of communication.

D. ETS Communication and Network Services

Communication and Network Services

ETS Network Services is probably the delivery system that is the heart and hub of the division. It is one of the remarkable services providing 24/7 coverage when necessary while producing such star products as Virtual Campus. Network services are a front line service that is used by everyone on the campus at all times. This area of the division is not often mentioned by name but is most talked about area when one mentions ETS. As the focus groups evolved, much of what the participants talked about when they referred to ETS included some service by CNS. Many of the comments summarized about ETS refer to the services offered by CNS. This area of the division is always on the firing line and should be rated as one of the college's best. The comments of "innovative," "remarkable" and "state-of-the-art" most often refer to the services given by CNS whether it is the technician at the PC or the network specialists.

While services are recognized as on the cutting edge, individuals still had concerns. Staff found services stretched thin after 5:00 pm. Focus group participants expressed concern about whom to contact for resolution to their particular problem. Some group members were informed about the CNS liaison system, others were not. Other felt Damon's support system still need strengthening and operational improvements were necessary to make it easier to contact individuals.

Mail Services

The ETS Mail Services is another service on campus that everyone has to utilize, therefore, it receives a great amount of customer service exposure. It also is one of the customer service stars with an excellent A+ rating. Often the Mail Services Staff were described as wonderful because they worked with individuals to improve services and manage problems. The focus group participants were pleased with the positive customer service focus and appreciated the feedback, the larger mailbags and the management of lost materials. Even with an A+ rating, there is room for improvement and acknowledgement that some criticisms are beyond the mailroom.

Some focus group participants felt that the new delivery system or elimination of mailroom boxes for the professional staff, were problematic. Again, the campus physical environment forced this change but from the user's perspective, ETS is responsible. Others expressed concern about items being delivered to the wrong person or wrong mailbox. Some experienced delays in the creation of new mailboxes or adjunct mail folders while others felt that the Print Shop and Mail Services should work together to be sure that a job isn't printed outside the postal service standards for mail

Telecommunications

The ETS Telecommunication Services is one of the areas of ETS that serves absolutely everyone on the campus. It is not a selected service but a service that is always on the pedestal to be viewed. With this volume of users and management of many departmental phone trees, it is remarkable that it is rarely mentioned. It is to their credit that the service is so acceptable that there were no complaints about our phone service or about the intricate management of our larger phone trees. Among the small problems, participants missed the old faceplate chart that was very user friendly, or felt that the messages to their voice mailboxes sometimes arrived late. The only notable concern were there seemed to be some confusion about how often the phone directory was distributed with one respondent believing it came out only every 4 to 5 years. Others felt that electronic forms for installing services for new employees were not

always delivered to all departments when more than one department was on the distribution list.

E. ETS Computing Services

ETS Computing Services is one of areas of the division that receives three cheers from the focus groups and one that is described as “thinking outside the box”. Focus group participants credited the area with taking the extra step to present solutions to observed problems. The Help Desk is viewed as responsive, innovative, welcoming and customer service friendly. Programmers were recognized for their ability to work through problems with multiple areas of the college and were praised for their ability to come up with innovative and time saving solutions. Whether projects were big or small, ETS Computing staff were considered experts. Focus group participants acknowledged the challenges the department has had to deal with, such as staff turnover, and sincerely appreciated the diligence the department has made to continue to improve services. As with CNS many of the general comments made about ETS also refer to areas of computing.

As with all areas of the college, there is always room for improvement. Though computer programmers were cited for their immediate response to problems, some felt that they needed an informational update about where their current projects were in the queue. Others felt informed by programmers so the group wondered if this was a stylistic characteristic of the programmer rather than a systemic problem. Participants also wondered who set the priorities on the actual project order, which again is related to the informational culture on the campus on the communication of priorities. Some felt the administrative help desk was not as responsive as the software help desk. Others wondered if the newer operators had a clear understanding of the programs they ran, noting that the run order sometimes affected the effectiveness of the reports. Focus group participants still struggled with the choices on the help line and were unsure whether they were requesting PC or software support. While some had difficulties with Eprint, others did not know it existed. As with other ETS areas, there were concerns about service in the early or late hours of operation.

F. ETS Instructional Technology

Electronic Learning Center and Classroom Technology Support

For focus group analysis, The Electronic Learning Center (ELC) was not significantly mentioned. As a selective service and a service outside most of the populations we interviewed this was expected. However, at a closer evaluation, it is an enormously positive statement that the focus group participants did not express student concerns. The ELC, which serves the entire student population and provides classroom support and departmental software access, is a service students would complain about to faculty if there were problems. If operational flaws existed for the students, it would have surfaced. The lack of negative commentary therefore is a positive signal. The only suggestion that the focus group participants had was that the ELC should have a color printer for the students to use on selected projects. As for classroom support, participants expressed concern about classroom support after 5:00 pm.

Faculty Innovation Center

The Instructional Technologies Faculty innovation Center (FIC) is a well-kept secret at MCC. As a selective service directed to a smaller population of the college, only those that use it would be able to comment. Though it is positive that there were FIC users among the focus group participants, the commentary was more directed to the fact that participants did not know where the FIC was located or what services it provided. The focus group project provided little evaluative information but recognized that it is a service that needs more publicity on what it does, what software is placed there, and where it is located

Graphic Services/Video Production

ETS Graphic Services is a specialized selective service used by a smaller population of the campus but a service that reaches out to almost all employees. Many focus group participants had used graphic or production services. The entire area was rated as awesome with a service quality that exemplifies a superb standard. ETS Graphic Services is a polished, customer service groomed area that produces high quality work and a staff that is seen as being creative and supportive. An A+ rating!

Professional Development

The ETS Professional Development area is another selected service that radiates with customer service. A specialized area has the ability to impact the knowledge and skills of the entire working community. The professional development staff performs an excellent service which, at times, must work with the local campus culture and the larger society issues related to technology stress. It is a jewel of empowerment and participants were not hesitant to say that it had greatly enhanced their technological skills. The focus group participants enjoyed the large selection of courses, the ability to return for a refresher, and the variety of delivery methods. They were reassured that at different skill levels they were not treated as inferior. One participant also felt that it was now easier to get into sessions due to the delivery methods, whether it was on-line, niche training, or class sessions. In the larger vision of ETS, the division was complimented on its ability to strike a balance between spending money on technology and spending money on the training services.

Printing Services

ETS Printing Services is a selective service with which almost everyone on the campus has had some experience. Another A+ customer service area, it is recognized as a user-friendly “workhorse.” From skill in paper selection to printing styles, their expertise is recognized in the development of most publications or copy services across the campus. The focus group participants applauded Printing Services for form development, quick turn around time for exam production, and their unwavering acceptance when larger print jobs are submitted. The Printing Staff are cited as being helpful and noted for going out of their way while producing professional quality items with limited resources. While the department is a customer service leader for the division, there were a few small problems to address. Some group participants felt that the notification of their completed jobs had been delayed, while others felt that the Print Shop and Mail Services should work together to be sure that a job isn’t printed outside the postal service standards for mail. Others noticed electronically submitted print jobs were sometimes altered by software when opened in the print shop.

In addition to the print shop responsibilities, printing services also has the difficult task of maintaining the copy centers located in Building 5, Building 8 and at Damon. The

focus groups were pleased with the copy service that ran between these off-site printing areas and the main location of the print shop in Building 9. Participants were also amazed by the dependability of the high-use copiers but acknowledged if difficulties came up after hours, they didn't quite know what to do. Some participants favored DCC copiers on the 4th floor while others favored the 5th floor. Others commented that there was not enough policing and student aides at times broke the copy room protocol of 50 copies per use. All of these show limitations related to resources and the standard difficulties with off-site printing.

G. ETS Library Services

ETS Libraries is another selected service of the division and as with the evaluation of the ELC, a large population of users, the students, was not included in the focus group participation. As with the ELC, the lack of negative commentary can be seen as a positive since if students had complaints about the library, faculty would have heard about it. Some teaching faculty participants received positive student feedback about the patience of librarians who help students with different skill levels. A few participants felt the libraries were outstanding in their recent outreach efforts, whether it was services brought to the departments or working with librarians to weed the book collection. ETS Libraries were also noted for teaching internet research skills, providing information on plagiarism and answering reference questions. One participant was awed when a question affecting the rights of a student from another country was quickly answered. However, the library, as with other areas of ETS was faulted for services beyond its control. Focus group participants cited the library for having ineffective copiers that could not produce color copies or transparencies for students preparing their class presentations. As the copiers are provided and owned by Student Services, it would not be under the control of ETS but this is not clearly communicated to the campus. The only other notable criticism of the library was one of publicity. Comments from participants expressed concern that services were not adequately advertised to the students.

V. Conclusion

As ETS supports good customer service practices the division must work to understand the broader implications of the role it undertakes at MCC. As a division that

serves the entire community, remembering that good customer service practices extrapolates out to good service to the students is imperative. As the view of ETS is integrated with both the campus environment and cultural influences, the team recommends that the division work to communicate its role locally. ETS should also explore ways to reach out to individuals that are non-technology users to help enhance and improve their skills. Though ETS should not interfere with the teaching style in the classroom, it may be able to improve functionality. A professor may choose not to use technology in his/her teaching as it is not the best style for the particular course, but faculty should be up to date on all the other uses of technology which could help manage a demanding day-to-day life. In addition, if faculty are aware of all technology resources and ETS's Instructional Development, they will make an informed choice about what technologies work in their courses. While acknowledging that not all services and functions at the college, whether in the office or in the classroom, should be served by technology, the striving forward may be an intimidating stressor for some users. Faculty and staff feel strained by the 24/7 pressure from students and the college culture to offer service at all times. Personal reactions interfere with "motivating" the campus forward.

At the same time, the division must accept that as technology develops and budgets shift during economic changes, we have a responsibility to use technology with a purpose and to communicate this purpose. The idea that we are an educational environment where funds are sometimes spent on experimentation, which can lead to great successes such as the virtual campus, should not be a surprise. Yet from focus group commentary there may be times when the larger college community does not see the value of projects and questions campus funding decisions. As innovators, technology do-ers, and great providers of information, ETS may not have been a philosophical educator. Initially this role seems out of the realm of the division. But reflecting on both the definitions of technology and campus/cultural environmental comments of the focus groups, one could argue that in order to continue to "motivate individuals forward" the division should respond by educating users on our philosophical foundation. Though training reaches out to a large majority of users easing some of the technology stress, it does not reach those that have fallen behind in their skills. For those users, ETS must supply a reason to move forward.

As a research methodology, focus groups utilize interviewing to explore underlying feelings, values and attitudes and discussion promotes an exchange of ideas

and opinions. (Moore 5) Statistically, the number of customer services focus group attendees would be considered a sizeable population with good attendance. The participation of the focus groups was primarily related to the services that everyone had to use and the team had less input on ETS selected services. The benefit of not having an ETS member facilitate the groups allowed for candor and honesty about college culture and technological directions. The information was very valuable to the division but strayed a little from the customer service focus.

For the division, the support and commentary about ETS was outstanding. The focus groups verified the service ratings ETS has received in point-of-use surveys. Being seen as innovators who share information and motivate individuals forward is an excellent customer service rating. Even though there is room for improvement as evidenced in the team's recommendations, the division should be proud and appreciative of the improvements that have been implemented and the service that it provides.

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Appendices

- B. Focus Group Participants
 - 1. Departments Invited
 - 2. Invitation Letter
 - 3. Thank You Letter
 - 4. Focus Group Purpose Distributed
- B. Focus Group Questions
- C. Focus Group Comments by Categories (VP and Team)
 - 1. Technology Defined Commentary
 - 2. Campus/ Cultural Environment Commentary
 - 3. ETS Commentary

APPENDIX A: Focus Group Participants. 1. Departments Invited

ETS/ Customer Service Focus Group Selection:

(Some departments may have more than one representative)

Faculty:

Anthro/History/Pol Sci
Applied Technologies
Athletics
Biology
Business Administration
Chem and Geosciences
Engineering/Sci/Physics
Engineering Tech
English/Philosophy
ESOL / Foreign Languages
Food Hotel Tourism
Health and Phys Ed
Health Professions
Law and Criminal Justice
Mathematics
Nursing
Office and Computer Programs.
Psychology
Transitional Studies
Visual and Performing Arts

Faculty and Professional Staff:

Admissions
Counseling and Testing
Enrollment Management
EOP
Facilities
Financial Aid
Human Resources
Institutional Research
Purchasing
Public Safety
Registration and Records
Student Center
Transfer & Placement
Work and Learn

Support Staff:

Admissions
Business Administration
Counseling and Testing
Dental Hygiene
English/Philosophy
Facilities
Financial Aid
Health Related Professions
Human Resources
Nursing
Math
Psychology
Public Affairs
Public Safety
Registration and Records
Student Center
Transfer and Placement
Visual and Performing Arts

Damon Campus Faculty, Professional Staff and Support Staff:

Academic Services
AmeriCorps
Anthropology/History/PolSci/Sociology
Campus Center
Executive Dean's Office
Experimental & Adult Learning
Human Services
Law and Criminal Justice
Rochester Works
Stage
Student Service Center
Student Services
Work and Learn
Workforce Development & Technical Education

Faculty:

Support Staff:

APPENDIX A: Focus Group Participants. 2. Invitation Letter



March 11, 2003

«ttl» «fname» «lname»
«department»

Dear «fname»:

As a valued member of our college community, our ETS Customer Service Team would like to invite you to participate in an ETS Customer Service Focus Group. It is the goal of the team to obtain feedback and input from the college community regarding the services provided by ETS. We are interested in how the college community perceives technology at MCC and whether we are meeting the needs of the community. Even if you have not used our services, your feedback is important

We would like you to participate on «date» «location» «time» Pizza and soft drinks will be provided. The session will be lead by Kimberley Canfield of Academic Services and will be 1 hour long. The sessions will be audio taped and heard only by the Customer Service Team.

We would greatly appreciate your participation. If you have any questions about the groups, please contact Bill Gruhn (x2520) or Ellen Mancuso (x2313), Co-Chairs of the team. If you cannot attend, please send your regrets to Bill, Ellen or Brenda Hamilton (x2576).

Sincerely,

Jeff Bartkovich
Vice President, ETS

APPENDIX A: Focus Group Participants. 3. Thank You Letter



May 9, 2003

«ttl» «fname» «lname»
«department»

Dear «fname»:

On behalf of Educational Technology Services, I would like to thank you for your recent participation in an ETS Customer Service Focus Group. Kim Canfield, our facilitator, has suggested that the feedback will be very helpful. We look forward to reviewing your input regarding the services provided by ETS. We are extremely interested in how the College community perceives technology at MCC and the services of ETS; and most importantly, whether we are meeting your needs.

We know your schedule is busy so we really appreciate your taking time to help with our research. The ETS Customer Service Team has added a new "customer satisfaction" to the divisional home page. In the next few weeks, you will see some "suggestion boxes" strategically located around the campus.

Please continue to let us know how we are doing or if you have a suggestion.

Sincerely,

Jeff Bartkovich
Vice President, ETS

**Monroe Community College
Educational Technology Services
Customer Service Team
Rochester, NY**



Purpose:

The primary purpose of the Educational Technology Services Customer Service Focus Groups are to obtain feedback and input from the college community regarding the services delivered by ETS. Charged by MCC Vice President Jeff Bartkovich to promote unparalleled customer service, the team developed Customer Service Guidelines that its members should model and demonstrate to MCC. The information gathered by these groups will be used only by ETS Customer Service Committee to evaluate and improve services to the college.

Objectives:

The objectives of our focus groups are to obtain feedback and suggestions from the college community concerning ETS

5. Understand the general perception of what is technology at MCC.
6. Reveal the customer service attitudes, professionalism and courtesy by ETS Staff when assisting in the delivery of services.
7. Identify the satisfaction level with the task performed related to timeliness, efficiency and results.
8. Recognize the technological expectations of the MCC Community and the accessibility of services.

Focus Group Methods:

Four groups of participants divided by the job categories of: Faculty, Professional Staff/Faculty, Support Staff, and DCC Faculty/Staff have been selected. Each group of 10 – 17 participants will be contacted by the Vice President of ETS and asked to participate. The meetings will be scheduled for 1 hour . The Customer Service Committee will be responsible for contacting participants and sending reminder notices. Kimberly Canfield, Academic Services, will conduct the groups which will be audio taped.

ETS Departments:

ETS: Communications and Network Services

<i>Mail Services:</i>	Incoming/Outgoing Services, Mail Preparation
<i>PC & Network Support:</i>	PC Hardware and Software Services, Network
Printing, Support	Email Services, Outlook Support, General Office
<i>Telecommunications:</i>	Telephone and Voice Mail Applications

ETS: Computing

<i>Computer Operations</i>	End User Support, Computer Operations, Technical
Development,	Support, Applications Programming and
	Web Site Development.

Instructional Technologies:

<i>Instructional Technologies:</i>	Instructional Development, Multimedia Production,
Support, (ELC)	Learning Resources, Classroom Technology
<i>Printing Services:</i>	Technology Training. Electronic Learning Center
	Copy Centers, Print Shop, Word Processing

ETS: Libraries:

<i>Library Operations:</i>	Leroy v. Good Library (Brighton), Damon city
Campus,	AIDS Resource Libraries, Archives and Records
	Management, Holocaust and Human Rights Center,
	SUNY Student Resource Center.

APPENDIX B : FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS:

**Monroe Community College
Educational Technology Services
Customer Service Team
Rochester, NY**



Focus Group Questions:	Probes:
1. How would you define technology at MCC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are you introduced to new technologies? ✓ How would you like to see technology used?
2. What is your overall opinion of ETS (Educational Technology Services)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How does the college define ETS?
3. How is ETS Customer Service?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How would users define ETS customer Service? Such as attitude, courteous, etc. Is it defined as responsive? What does the college community expect of ETS Customer Service?
4. What ETS services are the most effective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How would you evaluate what we are doing?
5. How do you use technology at MCC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How does the community define technology today? ✓ What are the primary uses on campus?
6. When you interact with ETS, how do you feel you are treated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does the person involved feel as if they are listened to? ✓ Are their needs being met?
7. Does ETS provide a means for adequate feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ETS is in the processing of installing suggestion boxes. Would you feel comfortable

	dropping off your ideas?
<p>8. Consider a time you have had a problem with technology. Were you satisfied with the:</p> <p>a) Communication b) Resolution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Was there a resolution in a timely manner? ✓ If there was no resolution, why wasn't a resolution reached? ✓ Was the communication timely? ✓ Was a follow-up necessary and if yes, what was done?
<p>9. Who do you call if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PC isn't working ✓ Question on Microsoft products ✓ Telephone is not working ✓ Mainframe request is stalled ✓ Want to use AV equipment in your class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Do folks have a clear understanding of who to call when they have a problem? ✓ Is ETS clear in communicating help desk?
<p>10. What services are in the need of improvement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are hours or locations convenient for you? ✓ Are there any suggestions for improvement?
<p>11. How do you feel technology compares to other colleges?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Does the college community have access to the right equipment? ✓ Is technology readily available to the individual?
<p>12. Is there anything else you would like to add?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Identify customer service expectations in probe.