


7\*24 cover  
Getting what you want



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# Introduction



- ⌘ The requirement
- ⌘ Who pays?
- ⌘ The requirement again
- ⌘ SLD
- ⌘ Building a team
- ⌘ Equipping a team
- ⌘ Rules of the house
- ⌘ The requirement yet again!
- ⌘ In the real world

# The requirement



- ⌘ We live in an increasingly 7x24 society.
- ⌘ On line learning can be used at any time.
- ⌘ Widening access to HE means providing learning at new times and in new places.
- ⌘ Course are being delivered internationally across time zones.

# The requirement



- ⌘ HEIs want to “leverage” their space,
  - ☑ Using facilities for longer hours.
- ⌘ More off-campus use of IT services.
- ⌘ SLA for an RPAN
  - ☑ Contractual obligation
- ⌘ Reliability problems?
  - ☑ Better to fix them

# The requirement



## ⌘ What do you want to do?

- ☑ Disaster recovery?
- ☑ System failures & line faults?
- ☑ User support?

## ⌘ Response Level

- ☑ Proactive or Reactive?
- ☑ Respond or Restore?
- ☑ Home or away?

# Defining what you want



⌘ Extend specific support services for activities operated for longer than a normal working day

⌘ At weekends?

☑ Not all support may need to be provided at all times.

# Defining what you want



⌘ Ask the right questions,

☑ users will say that they want everything all the time, which is not practical or affordable.

⌘ Priorities need to be identified.

⌘ What sort of users require out of hours support -

☑ are they IT literate?

# Things to trip you up



## ⌘ What about third party involvement?

- ☑ Maintenance

- ☑ Telcos

- ☒ the overall service is only as good as its weakest link.

## ⌘ Does it make sense?

- ☑ Other parts of your institution may not be geared up for 7x24 operation.

# The Colour of Money



- ⌘ Everybody needs to understand that:
  - ☑ Additional support will require additional funding.
  - ☑ How the project is funded
    - ☑ Top slice?
    - ☑ Opt-in?
    - ☑ All part of the service?
  - ☑ How much it could cost?
    - ☑ 15% of staff salaries plus
  - ☑ "WHO PAYS, WINS!"

# The requirement again



- ⌘ Do we really need this?
- ⌘ Reduce the requirements for 7x24 support
  - ☑ Improve the design of the services
  - ☑ Introduce resilience

# The requirement again



⌘ "Can't pay, Won't pay!"

☑ Sex and Travel

⌘ "Can Pay, will pay"

☑ Let the game commence

⌘ Single tier system

☑ Approx 15% of staff costs

☑ Plus costs of messaging centre, hardware, ISDN charges etc.

# SLD



## ⌘ Service Level Definition

- ☑ What is provided
- ☑ What is NOT provided
- ☑ Hours covered
- ☑ Type of cover required

⌘ "Flight envelope" for user expectations

⌘ Job description for those on call

⌘ Limit possibility of scope creep

# Who does it?



## ⌘ Contract out

- ☑ Your technical people may want to keep control of their own systems

  - ☒ No dual key management

- ☑ There is a need for local knowledge to diagnose and fix problems.

  - ☒ Very difficult for a third party to obtain

  - ☒ Meticulous documentation and change control required

  - ☒ Lack of control

# Who does it?



## ⌘ DIY

- ☑ Need to build a team which is committed
- ☑ Team must be able to handle most problems
- ☑ Money talks
  - ☒ But only for so long if things get out of hand

# Building a team



- ⌘ Define duties and responsibilities from SLD
- ⌘ Any volunteers?
- ⌘ Have you got enough volunteers?
- ⌘ What's in it for me?
- ⌘ Enthusiasm & flexibility

# Building a team



- ⌘ Current informal systems depended on good will.
  - ☑ maintain incentives for staff in replacement formal system.
- ⌘ Working patterns need to be well structured
- ⌘ Staff locations need to be considered.

# Building a team



## ⌘ Lack of senior staff

- ☑ Two tier system is may be needed.

## ⌘ Institutions may find it difficult to make additional payments academic related staff

- ☑ Find a precedence, there is bound to be one

# Equipping a team



⌘ Mobile phones v Pagers v SMS

⌘ Pagers

☑ Set to a group so a page to one number gets whoever is on call with the pager on

⌘ Mobile Phones

☑ Needed so that people on call are not under house arrest

# Equipping a team

## ⌘ SMS

- ☒ Short audible alert for SMS text arriving that aint gonna wake me up in the night.
- ☒ Call Desks could not tell me if they could a broadcast text message to all mobiles .... if not, same problems then about which mobile the call desk rings.
- ☒ It's not clear the SMS network service is that reliable (yet)

## ⌘ PCs at home or lap-tops?

## ⌘ ADSL v ISDN v Dial-up

# Rules of the house



- ⌘ Rates of pay
- ⌘ Hours to be covered
- ⌘ How often am I on call?
- ⌘ Response time
- ⌘ What happens if I have to go in to work?
- ⌘ Time off in lieu

# Rules of the house (2)



⌘ Direct contact or via third party?

⌘ Who reports problems?

Filtering

Priority

⌘ Holiday cover?

Bank Holidays?

University holidays?

Easter, Christmas, New Year?

# The requirement yet again!



- ⌘ Review the SLD
- ⌘ Agree the funding
- ⌘ Pilot
- ⌘ Are the users happy?
- ⌘ Are your staff happy?
- ⌘ Is it necessary, cost effective, sustainable?

# The real world



## ⌘ Initial service to UKERNA/DANTE

- ☑ 7x24 response

- ☑ Only advertised to Computing Service staff

- ☑ Will try to fix or defer to next working day

- ☑ Simple filter, is it urgent or not?

- ☑ 10 staff on the rota

- ☑ Cover 18:00 to 08:00 Mon-Sun 08:00 to 18:00 Sat, Sun and Holidays

The real world 2



# Stable Operational Network

# The real world 3



## ⌘ Scope creep

- ☑ Fix it, don't just respond
- ☑ Development and last minute panics

## ⌘ Technical ability

- ☑ Some staff lack necessary skills
  - ☒ Could not cope, dropped out

## ⌘ Staffing crisis

- ☑ Minimum level of cover

# The real world 3



⌘ Victim of it's own success

☑ Too many calls

☑ Too high service expectation

⌘ Restrictions on staff working patterns

☑ Need to be at home when on-call, not on a train

☑ Can't get in early or go home late

⌘ Now use two tier system

# Reality strikes



⌘ The Telco book of excuses

☑ Parking

⌘ Maintenance contracts

⌘ Security

⌘ Health & Safety

⌘ Sickness

# Summary



- ⌘ How do I fund it?
- ⌘ What level of cover can I provide and when?
- ⌘ How do I get volunteers?
- ⌘ How do I satisfy user expectations?
  - ☑ Without alienating the staff on call
  - ☑ Within budget
- ⌘ Is the service cost effective?

# More questions than answers



⌘ What is right for you?

⌘ What can you learn from elsewhere?

⌘ Outsourcing?

# Questions?

