Computer Support (PACS)

Support Options

For the quickest response to computer support issues email help@phys.washington.edu or help@astro.washington.edu for hardware and software support. Our first-tier technical support schedule is Monday-Friday, 8:00AM to 5:00PM. Currently the Help Desk is monitored by all members of the PACS team. While we try to get to all support issues within 48 hours, there are times when this is not possible. Due to projects, vacations or more pressing issues some help requests can take up to a week or longer to resolve. Currently PACS resolves 55% of our tickets within the first 48 hours.

When opening a help ticket, remember to provide as much of the following as possible:

- Your Full Name
- Your Location (Office Number / Lab)
- Contact Info (Email and Phone)
- Your Computer Name (if you know it)
- Description of the Problem

For others means of support you can try the following

- PACS WIKI - For Astro and Physics self help.
- UW IT Connect - For Help with NetID, phones, Email and many other online resources.
- Network Operations (NetOps) - (206) 221-6000
- Other Grad Students - Physics/Astronomy has a few Grad students designated to help other students with some day to day issues.

History

The Physics and Astronomy Computing Services group (aka PACS) services the departments of Physics and Astronomy as well as the Institute for Nuclear Theory (INT). This group was started in the late 90’s when these three units realized that combining funding for IT under one group provided the following benefits:

- Provided a larger-scale, managed IT environment
- Reduced overhead costs for staffing
- Combined buying power

Today PACS mission has not changed, but the goals and the execution of department strategy has.

Mission
The PACS mission is to increase the efficiency and collaborate closely in the academic, research, and administrative functions of the units we serve. PACS uses its extensive academic IT experience to execute the strategy set forth by the faculty of these units within the fields of information technology, data management, high-performance computing, software development, and business intelligence.

2018 Goals

- Provide outstanding customer support
- Driving long-term, recurring overhead costs down
- Help users transition away from Deskmail
- Move Physics Website to Arts & Science Framework
- Continue to document our systems (internal/external)
- Cross train between team members to provide better day to day support
- Keeping overhead costs down by:
  - Outsourcing to central computing services and external service providers
  - Standardizing desktop, laptop and printing platforms
  - Providing a pool of loaner equipment

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