

**Texas
Cooperative
Extension**

Tips “n” Technology

January 2005

POINTS OF INTEREST:

Upcoming Learning Opportunities:

- ▶ Tues Jan 18, 1:30 pm - Windows XP Security Center
- ▶ Fri Jan 21, 9:30 am - Preparing and Leading with Centra
- ▶ Fri Feb 18, 9:30 am - Using GroupWise to Plan & Organize

More information on page 2

Don't miss Friday Online! Fridays at 9:30am in Centra

Times, dates and topics are listed at
<http://centra.tamu.edu/main/tce>

 Extension
Information
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Regional Specialists:

Bryan - Greg Thomas
Corpus Christi - Pete Flores
Lubbock - Steve Paz
Overton - Aimee Sandifeer
San Angelo - Jeffrey SoRelle
Stephenville - Weldon Floyd

**TEXAS COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

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We're on the web!
<http://eit.tamu.edu>

Bytes & Pieces

Facilitating a Successful Event with Centra Symposium By Susanna Coppernoll and Jennifer Jahedkar

Centra Symposium is a great tool for delivering educational programs, holding meetings or conducting training sessions online. Internal Training opportunities like Friday Online sessions and other programs are frequently offered and readily accessible from the Public Events link at <http://centra.tamu.edu/main/tce>. Faculty are delivering programs from their office to external clientele in other locations, and volunteers are meeting online with agents and specialists.

Planning and facilitating an event using an online tool is a bit different than putting together a face to face event, though. Here are some things to keep in mind when facilitating a successful event in Centra.

Logistics and Planning Before the Session

- ▶ Schedule the event as early as possible to allow time to prepare and time for others to enroll.
- ▶ Estimate the number of seats needed for the event, and enroll yourself as the leader
- ▶ Invite participants directly to encourage participation. Include directions on how to enroll and get help
- ▶ Confirm enrollment and explain how to attend one or two days prior to the event.
- ▶ Remind participants to do a system check a day before the event to check their computer setup

Preparing Program Materials

- ▶ Prepare a presentation to use as an agenda, as a visual for facilitating and to engage visual learners
- ▶ Prepare notes for your use in the event, paying special attention to when and how to ask questions
- ▶ Ensure interaction by building in activities and other opportunities for questions and discussion
- ▶ Prepare handouts and other materials to be shared before, during, and/or after the event
- ▶ Create evaluations and surveys for the event

Practicing

- ▶ Upload materials into Centra at least 24 hours before the event, to allow time for troubleshooting
- ▶ At least 24 hours in advance, conduct a System Check on the computer that will be used to lead,
- ▶ Test remote facilities and equipment as appropriate
- ▶ Conduct a practice session or two and run through each agenda item with a colleague

During the Session

- ▶ Minimize distractions. Close doors, turn off phones, notify others you're unavailable
- ▶ Log on 20 minutes early to get situated and be ready
- ▶ Greet participants as they join, and check their microphone availability and levels
- ▶ Be ready to tap dance. Think of what might go wrong and have a backup plan in hand
- ▶ Encourage interaction by asking open and close-ended questions
- ▶ Be the last one to log off. Thank everyone for attending and publish the recording

Logistics After the Session

- ▶ Follow-up with participants to share additional materials, answer remaining questions etc
- ▶ Download or print evaluation and attendance reports and download recording for later viewing
- ▶ Make notes of what to do differently next time. Revise presentation or agenda if appropriate
- ▶ Report any problems with the session to EIT at eitmail@tamu.edu for advice or troubleshooting

For coaching or other assistance with Centra contact Jennifer Jahedkar, jenj@tamu.edu or 979.845.2290 or Susanna Coppernoll, s-coppernoll@tamu.edu or 979.845.2250. Centra users guides and quick reference cards are available at <http://eit.tamu.edu/Centra/Centramenu.html>,