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Major Articles

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NIH Data Center Tours

CIT offers scheduled tours of its NIH Data Center, a multi-system federal data center located in Building 12 on the NIH campus, on the **first Wednesday** of every month from **9 am to 10 am**. (Additional tours can be coordinated at other times as needed.) Sign up at http://training.cit.nih.gov/ (under "CIT Services" in Courses by Category).

Articles

NIH VideoCasting Service: Second Generation

In an effort to improve our service and offer the best technology, we have transformed NIH VideoCast into VideoCast 2.0—the next generation of streaming video at NIH. The service now offers a variety of new features, including a better video player, powerful search functions, improved visuals, and a YouTube channel.

H.264 Adobe Flash now on VideoCast

The first hurdle to move NIH VideoCast into the second generation was to identify a technology to replace our old Real Networks player, which wasn't easily available to all users. Our goal was to find a solution that "just works" without requiring users to install a separate player application.

Screen capture of a streaming video presentation on NIH VideoCast

The Adobe Flash player suggested itself as a possible solution, since it is already installed on a majority of computers. After a successful Flash trial program, we chose the H.264 codec with video hardware acceleration built into the player for its sharper picture and smoother video at full screen.

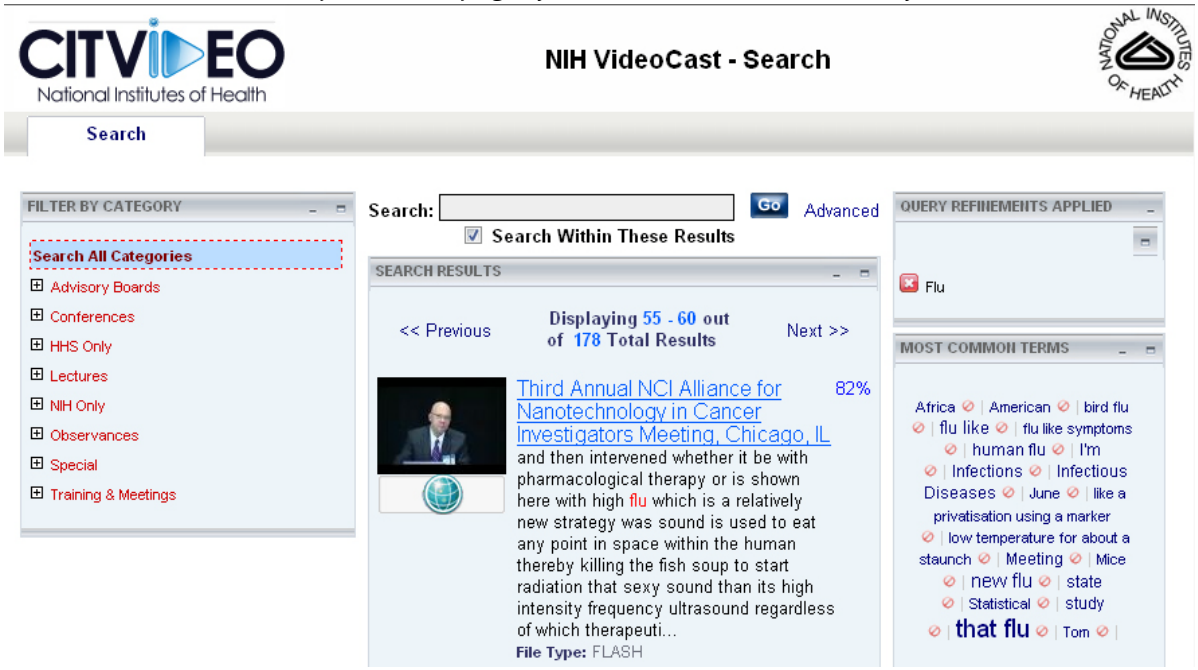
Because the player is already on 99% of our users' computers, support calls have decreased and comments from customers have been favorable. The new VideoCast player incorporates alternate bitrates to support the widest group possible, from mobile to high-speed broadband.

Intelligent search and concept clouds

CIT has been video streaming world-class seminars to a world-wide audience for more than a decade. We stream hundreds of live events each year, and make them available for viewers to watch at their convenience as on-demand or video-to-go podcasts. Unfortunately, this continuous creation of content made accessing specific information a daunting task for users. Without an easier way to quickly and efficiently sift through hours of video on various subject matters, crucial information stored in our VideoCast archives could remain essentially unavailable to the research community.

The new VideoCast search engine takes a big step towards solving the problem of finding specific items from a vast pool of video and audio content. With the new search engine's search and voice recognition technology, users can now search not just textual elements such as VideoCast titles or event summaries but the actual audio portions from videos in the database. Researchers can go to the VideoCast web page (http://videocast.nih.gov), search the video archives for the occurrence of scientific terms, and locate those within specific segments of the video. The specific search results will take users to the exact part in the video where the searched term is used.

A sample results page of the NIH VideoCast Search function

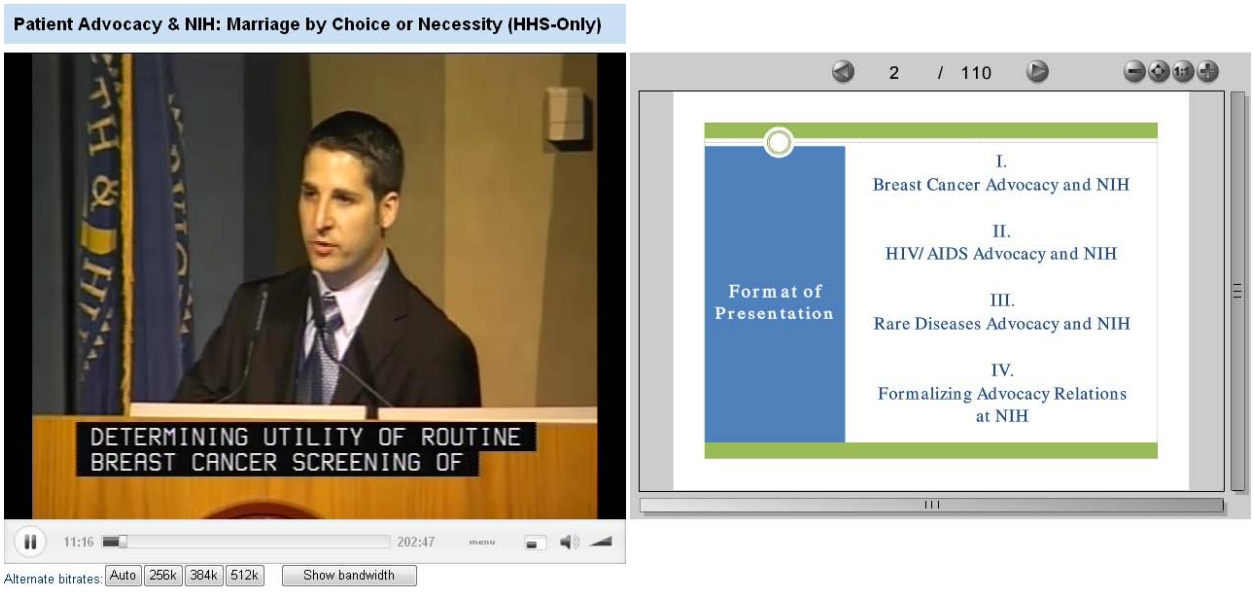


Apart from in-video searching, another key enhancement to VideoCast search is the concept cloud. It provides visitors with a graphical representation of main search topics. Concepts related to the search are listed alphabetically with their font size indicating importance or relevance to the topic. Users can see at a glance which related topics are most relevant to their search term, and will be better able to extract targeted information from the video content.

Example of an NIH VideoCast Search concept cloud

High definition side-by-side slides

In an effort to respond to user feedback and make the research content of the VideoCasts more accessible visually, CIT has added high-definition slides next to the video window. Having slides in a higher resolution helps users see material in a higher contrast and makes the slides easier to read. The addition of sharper images to our VideoCasts has brought positive reviews and comments from the research community.



VideoCast with high definition side-by-side slide window

Slides, agendas, and supplemental materials can be added to both live and on-demand VideoCasts. And because the images are converted to an Adobe SWF file, there is no helper program or plug-in required for users to install. Images look great and work seamlessly with the video program already installed on Windows and Mac computers.

Closed Captions

In the area of 508 compliance, we listened to feedback from viewers regarding closed captions (CC) and responded with a new prototype system to move captions away from the video.

The new closed caption pod appears below the video window

A new "CC" pod allows text to be displayed in its own window so it no longer interferes with presentations. Caption text can be edited to fix a misspelled word without the need to change the video file. Users can also download caption text and convert it to transcripts if needed.

YouTube

As part of our outreach to the wider community, and to help connect NIH research with a bigger audience, CIT recently published the NIH VideoCast channel on YouTube. There are over 40 videos available on this channel now, with more to follow.

The NIH VideoCast YouTube Channel

Working with the HHS new media group, VideoCast is branded under the HHS YouTube umbrella. CIT collaborated with other NIH offices to share ideas for implementing social media at NIH. One of the goals was to reach more users and support more devices such as the Apple iPad and iPhone. With these additions to VideoCast and plans for further enhancements in the future, CIT is always looking for ways to better serve the NIH community.

More information

If you haven't already, visit the CIT Video Services group at http://video.nih.gov to see what's new and watch some VideoCasts.

The NIH Data Center Upgrades its Power Source

Efficient data center electrical power management is a key component of the greening goals established for the NIH Data Center. Having reliable, redundant, stable, and secure power that can adjust to evolving needs allows the NIH Data Center to maintain and grow its operations while reducing both the environmental footprint and the rising costs of energy use.

In an effort to advance greening goals, CIT, in conjunction with the NIH's Office of Research Facilities (ORF), is in the process of upgrading the uninterruptible power supply (UPS) emergency power system in the NIH Data Center from a diesel generator/battery and rotary system to a totally new rotary-based UPS/Continuous Power System (CPS). This rotary-based system is much more cost effective and power efficient, and will meet the immediate goals required by our CIT customers.

Initial delivery of one of the new CPS Rotary Emergency UPS Power Units by crane

The current power system, which was designed, constructed, and implemented in cooperation with NIH's OD and ORF, is based on 1990 power requirements, and is near end-of-life and becoming increasingly unreliable and costly to maintain and operate. The new UPS/CPS will give the NIH Data Center greater power redundancy and will allow required power system maintenance to be performed without adversely affecting Data Center operations and electrical loads. Once the rotary-based UPS/CPS is in place and thoroughly tested, CIT will begin migrating Data Center equipment to the new power system in mid to late July 2011.

Benefits of the new UPS/CPS

In addition to increased reliability, power redundancy, and less downtime for required maintenance, the new UPS/CPS is built to accommodate the power requirements of newer and more powerful computing equipment such as Cloud, Cluster, and Blade type servers. With the new power system, the NIH Data Center will be better able to adapt as IT technologies evolve, ensuring that customers have a stable and efficient power source for their cutting-edge equipment.

Upgrading our power system is also an important part of CIT's greening goals, in line with NIH, HHS, EPA, and OMB Greening Initiative and Environmental Policy. The new rotary system fulfills the requirements of our efficient energy management plan because it requires 112 KVA less commercial power to deliver the same amount of protected power, with 100% redundancy, something the old UPS could not provide.

Furthermore, the old power system required cooling to maintain tolerable temperatures; the new rotary system does not need this cooling and therefore returns even further load savings. In general, the new rotary system requires approximately 175 KVA (112 KVA+ 63 KVA) less power than the old UPS, while providing redundancy to the 1200 KVA load.

Installation of the first two of the four new CPS Rotary Emergency UPS Power Units

Migrating to the new power system

CIT will begin to migrate servers, data storage devices, and equipment housed at the NIH Data Center located in building 12 on the NIH Main Campus, to the new UPS/CPS in phases during nonpeak usage periods. Migrations are currently scheduled to take place during the following months:

- July 2011 through September 2011
- Break for end of federal fiscal year processing
- Mid-October 2011 through January 2012

To make transitions as smooth and seamless as possible, CIT will work with customers and data center power specialists to verify the electrical connectivity of customer equipment. Additionally, CIT will send email reminders and updates to customers as we near the implementation date and as the migration progresses.

Questions?

CIT will send email updates to affected customers as we near the implementation date and as the migration progresses. If you have questions or concerns about the NIH Data Center power system migration, please contact the CIT DCSS Service Management Office at the following email address: CITDCSSSLMCustomerCoordinationTeam@mail.nih.gov.

Two of the four new CPS Rotary Emergency UPS Power Units installed.

New Look for the NIH Home Page

Visitors to the NIH home page, which is hosted by CIT, might not recognize the familiar site after April 7, 2011. Assuming all goes as planned, that is the day that http://www.nih.gov/, the public's online access point to the NIH community and its research, debuts its fresh look.

The goal of the site's redesign is to make the philosophy of open, participatory government concrete by creating an accessible and user-friendly online interface for public health information.

The new design

To enhance the user experience, the new design:

- has a human-centric mood with overtones that reflect science and medicine,
- is easy to read, with an uncluttered look, and
- incorporates a strong presence for the NIH logo and banner.

Look for the new "mega" drop-down menus. Accessible from the navigation tabs across the top, they provide additional functionality while minimizing page clutter. For example, you can browse or search for health topics without leaving the page you're on.

Since http://www.nih.gov is a high-traffic federal website, the new design is sure to have a big impact.

Introducing the CIT Services Seminar Series

Do you have questions about CIT services that go beyond the information in the CIT Service Catalog? CIT is pleased to introduce our new CIT Services Seminar Series, a great opportunity to learn more about the tools and solutions we offer.

About the seminars

CIT Services Seminars will be held on a quarterly schedule, starting this March. At each meeting our focus will be on CIT's diverse technology service offerings currently available to the NIH community. We may also take the opportunity provided by the seminars to introduce future services.

These seminars are intended for current and potential CIT customers and are geared towards managers or technical leads. This is a great chance to get answers to your questions about any of CIT's service offerings. Potential topics for future seminars include: zLinux Hosting, Unix Hosting, Co-Location Services, and Maximizing your Service Desk Investment.

The first seminar: Telework Technologies

The first CIT Service Seminar took place on March 15, 2011, and focused on telework technologies. Telework has become a challenge at NIH due to the Telework Enhancement Act of 2010, which encourages telework throughout government. Telework is a useful model—it can help you attract and retain the best qualified employees, provide your staff with uninterrupted blocks of time to work on key projects, and give your organization a way of functioning more effectively during crisis situations and other business interruptions. Having the right tools can make a telework program extremely successful and easy to manage.

The March CIT seminar (see the description on the Training program site at http://training.cit.nih.gov/coursedescription.aspx?courseId=CS0000000001415),

demonstrated the tools CIT offers to help build a strong and effective telework program. The seminar included information about Enhanced Voicemail, NIH Central Fax, Virtual Private Network (VPN), Office Communicator Service (OCS), and Web Collaboration (Adobe Connect). The information covered in this seminar would be most useful for those managing a telework program and for the technical support for the program.

Relationship Managers

The CIT Services Seminar Series is sponsored by the CIT Relationship Managers (RM). RMs are dedicated to creating close working partnerships between CIT and its customers and will be available at the seminars to answer questions. For more information, go to: http://cit.nih.gov/Support/RelationshipManagers/. If you have suggestions for future CIT Services Seminar topics, please contact your RM at http://support.cit.nih.gov/rm/.

How to sign up

Visit http://cit.nih.gov/Support/RelationshipManagers/ServicesSeminar.htm for announcements about future CIT Service Seminars and sign up through the CIT Training website located at http://training.cit.nih.gov/Default.aspx.

Focus Your Google Searches with Dynamic Result Clusters

CIT Google Search Service now offers more effective searching with dynamic result clusters. You can use dynamic result clusters to narrow search results and focus only on the information that is most relevant to your particular search topic.

How does it work?

A regular Google search often returns a long list of results that is too broad and unwieldy. You might have to search through several pages of listed results to find the specific sub-topic. However, if you are on a search page that has dynamic result clusters enabled, the top section of the search results will show a bunch of different topics closely related to the search term. This can help you narrow your focus and hone in on your target more quickly, with better results.

An example

If you search for the term "cancer" on the NIH home page (http://www.nih.gov/), you will see dynamic cluster results in action. Instead of getting a long list of links to every page that mentions cancer, at the top of your results page, under the heading "Narrow your search," you get a list of related sub-topics to help you search more effectively.

To see the narrowed search results for one of the suggested related topics from the dynamic cluster result, just click on the relevant link, and the targeted search result set will open.

An example of a search result with dynamic result cluster

Cost

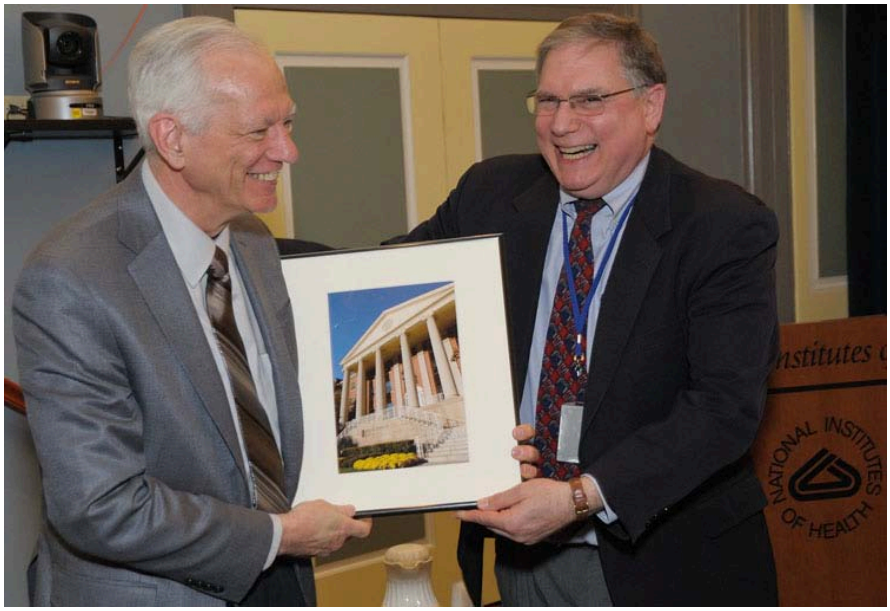
This search feature is available to Google Search Services customers upon request. There will be a one-time-only charge for the set-up of this feature.

More information

To request Dynamic Result Clusters for your Google Search page, or if you have any questions about CIT's Google Search service, please contact the NIH IT Service Desk at http://itservicedesk.nih.gov/support or call 301-496-4357, 301-496-8294 (TTY) or toll free at 866-319-4357.

CIT Notes Retirement of Dr. John F. "Jack" Jones, Jr., NIH CIO and Acting Director, CIT

Colleagues, friends, and family recently gathered in Wilson Hall, NIH Building 1, for a retirement reception in honor of Dr. John F. "Jack" Jones, Jr., NIH Chief Information Officer and Acting Director, NIH Center for Information Technology (CIT).



After his remarks, Lawrence A. (Larry) Tabak, Principal Deputy Director, NIH, presented John F. (Jack) Jones (left) with an NIH memento.

Moving on from NIH

After nine years of dedicated federal service to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Dr. Jack Jones is moving on to the next leg of his career journey. He has accepted a position in the private sector.

As an avid pilot in his spare time, Jack learned that pre-flight checks of all components are critical to staying whole among the clouds, and he applied this ethos to the applications and infrastructure that drive the NIH enterprise because he understood that it is the parts that create the whole.

He brought a wealth of technology management and science experience to the mission of NIH and successfully navigated working with several major stakeholders to improve NIH's governance, business processes, and collaborative environment. With Jack's guidance, NIH is recognized as a leader in the infrastructure that supports scientific collaboration.

Dr. Jones' career at NIH

Jack joined the National Institutes of Health (NIH), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as the NIH Chief IT Architect, where he led the development of the enterprise architecture (EA). His approach has been to implement an EA that is practical, can be used daily and not become 'shelfware'. As noted by Jack, his decision to come to NIH was based on several factors: an interest in IT governance and the desire to work with smart people in a diverse, collaborative research environment.

Jack assumed additional responsibility as acting Deputy Director for NIH's Center for Information Technology (CIT) in 2003 and was named Acting Director, CIT and Acting NIH CIO in 2005. He was appointed NIH CIO in 2008.

Matching IT to the needs of science and business at NIH

One of Jack's enduring goals is to ensure that information technology is matched to the business needs and processes that it supports. His efforts have brought together disparate communities, from physician-scientists to accountants and technologists, and the results include the development of business process and conceptual data models for grants award and management, and the acceptance of business process modeling as a required part of application development.

In addition to his focus on governance and business process, Jack has valued his interactions with the science of NIH – and in particular the contribution of his own people within CIT. Jack's essential message is that our teams of scientists, engineers and administrative support staff will continue to explore promising new technology options to support and enhance the ever-evolving requirements of our NIH mission.

CIT and NIH appreciate Jack's leadership and wish him well on the next leg of his journey.

Ask the NIH IT Service Desk: Knowledge Base

This article normally gives information about frequent user issues sent to the NIH IT Service Desk. We now offer a new resource to help you quickly find the information you need.

Get your IT questions answered

Want to find your solution now? The NIH IT Service Desk puts the answers to your IT questions at your finger tips. Whether you need help after hours, or just have a quick question, we now have a fast and reliable IT resource to assist you at your convenience.

The NIH IT Service Desk Knowledge Base

We are happy to introduce a new online resource, the NIH IT Service Desk Knowledge Base, available to you around the clock with up-to-date, reliable IT information. You can find it by pointing your browser to: http://itservicedesk.nih.gov/selfservice. Search the site for information on: activating a new BlackBerry, managing your Outlook mailbox, password assistance, or even finding a reference guide on "How to Search" the Knowledge Base database.

We want your feedback

We also want you to contribute to this resource. If you find a specific record you would like to comment on, select the "Feedback" button on the record. Additionally, you can rate a record by using a star-based scale (rating from 1 to 5). And, if you have information that you think should be included in the IT Service Desk Knowledge Base, please email CITDCSKMTEAM@mail.nih.gov.

As always the NIH IT Service Desk is happy to help, and we hope that this resource will enhance our ability to do so.

CIT Training Listens to You

CIT Training is pleased to announce the newest improvement to our training program. In response to your feedback, all CIT Training course evaluations can now be filled out online, and are anonymous, unless you voluntarily provide your contact information.

Evaluations

Course evaluations are an essential tool that helps us assess and adjust to our NIH community's training needs. In most cases, you will have the opportunity to evaluate your classroom experience immediately following the course. A shortcut to the evaluation form is located on the desktop of every laptop.

If your class does not use the laptops, you will be sent an email with a link to the course evaluation. We encourage you to take the time to give us your direct and constructive opinion of the class and welcome your suggestions. Your evaluation of our courses goes a long way in helping us continuously improve the Training Program.

We welcome your comments and questions at cittraining@mail.nih.gov.

Courses currently available

New Sessions
Introduction to Next-Gen Sequence Analysis on the NIH Biowulf Cluster
Introduction to Sciware
MIPAV (Medical Image Processing and Virtualization) series
On-Demand Authoring with Adobe Captivate
Microsoft SharePoint 2010 – Application Development
Configuring and Managing Microsoft System Center Essentials 2010
Implementing Data Protection Manager 2007

Grants
ECB Basic and Advanced Data Administration courses
ECB Early Concurrence Data Administration
Using SPIRES for Bibliography Reporting and Program Analysis

Seminars for Scientists and Researchers
MatLab for Scientists
AFNI Bootcamp
Statistical Analysis of Microarray Data
SPSS: Basics, ANOVA

Additional Courses
ITIL V3 Foundations
Advanced Excel 2007 - PivotTables & More
Administering a Kiwi Wiki
Office 2007 - What's New

Course costs and availability

Most courses offered are free of charge to NIH staff. If there is a charge, the cost will be listed in the tuition section. While NIH employees get first priority for classes, contractors are welcome to attend if the course registration is not restricted, space is available, the class is related to their NIH work, and they have appropriate approval.

Our instructors

The CIT Training Program strives to keep abreast of the needs of the NIH community with the help and expertise of volunteers who are willing to sharing their knowledge with their peers.

We are also able to facilitate IT training not available through our program. This includes coordinating outside training personnel, registration, and other related activities in support of training events.

More information

To view a complete list of courses, register for current 2011 classes, join our CIT Training Mailing list, and view your transcript or current application status, visit our website at http://training.cit.nih.gov.

Please visit the CIT Service Catalog for more information on CIT Training Services. Feel free to contact CIT Training at 301-594-6248 or send email to cittraining@mail.nih.gov for additional details.

Directories and Reference Information

NIH Computer Center Hardware and Software
[http://cit.nih.gov/ServiceCatalog/HardwareSoftware.htm]

Computer Services Telephone Directory
[http://cit.nih.gov/ServiceCatalog/ServicesDirectory.htm]

Online Services Directory
[http://www.cit.nih.gov/ServiceCatalog/OnlineServices.htm]

The CIT Service Catalog
[http://cit.nih.gov/ServiceCatalog/]

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DCS	Division of Customer Support
DCSS	Division of Computer System Services
OD	Office of the Director
PECO	Planning, Evaluation & Communications Office