

# Data Center Shared Services Client Entrance & Communications Process Improvement (UIUC)

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## Business Case

After three years of operation, DCSS initiatives are missing deadlines for implementation. Current tenants express concerns about how changes are communicated, and prospective tenants are fearful of and confused by the complicated process for moving into consolidated data center space. The service has not grown as fast as expected over the first three years, and the promised gains of consolidation have not fully materialized for Urbana campus.

## Goal

Standardize the initial request process to gather reliable information to meet the needs of the customer as well as provide consistent communication to inform tenants of important information regarding Data Center services.

## Approach

Conducted a brainstorming session to identify the key issues with the client entrance and communication processes. Organized the issues list into categories for how to structure the discussion for potential improvements. Group ranked the potential solutions and determined which solutions should be implemented. Created action plan to implement the solutions.

## Outcome

Identified 6 short-term and 4 long-term recommendations. Implementing the short-term recommendations helped increase the ease for clients to request services and reduce the amount of time spent collecting information in follow up meetings. It has also improved communication to current clients about outages related to the Data Center Shared Service. The website redesign (a long-term solution) improved the efficiency of how information is provided to current and potential clients.

## Key Findings

- **Potential clients spend a lot of time filling out entrance form to then have several technical meetings discussing the needs before a plan is put in to place.**
- **Website is outdated and does not provide sufficient information for potential clients on services that DCSS offers.**
- **DCSS is not always notified of outages that may or may not affect their current tenants.**
- **There is no standard template for communicating with the current tenants.**

## Short-term Improvement Recommendations

1. **Create customer contact form** – Collect valuable information from the client up front to avoid several duplicate meetings gathering same information.
2. **Collect metrics** – Determine how and when to collect metrics to measure progress and average customer time in order to monitor and maintain performance goals.
3. **Create policy for voting on new requests** – Allow policy to take place in event a meeting cannot be held in a timely manner, reducing overall customer wait time.
4. **Standardize notification template** – Ensure communications are consistent and easy to read.
5. **Create DCSS header, signature line, and help for each notification** – Reduce client confusion around communications and the source of the communications.
6. **Add DCSS logo to Lync account** – Build awareness of DCSS.

## Long-term Improvement Recommendations

1. **Redesign Website** –Design will enable potential customers to find accurate and consistent information about services that DCSS offers more easily.
2. **Create documentation for decision matrix** – Ensure future decisions are well informed based on historical scenarios and resulting outcomes.
3. **Evaluate the use of SharePoint for email notifications** – Simplify the process for email notifications by maintaining distribution lists and initiating notifications within SharePoint.
4. **Maintain outage email distribution lists** – Design process to ensure email distribution lists are kept up to date, including a scheduled audit.

## Implementation of Recommended Improvements

All short term recommendations were implemented within a 3 week timeframe. The long term solutions are ongoing and currently in progress at the time the report was written.