

IT department shows team spirit on Open Days

The IT department played a big role in the success of the CERN Open Days held on 5–6 April. CERN opened its doors to 23 000 visitors on the Saturday, which was a day for family of CERN staff to visit. More than 53 000 visitors came on the Sunday when the general public were welcome. The event was billed as the last chance to see the LHC before its scheduled start-up this summer, and the record numbers for such an open-day event show that the public were keen not to miss the chance.

A team of more than 70 volunteers from IT worked hard to show as many people around the computing centre as possible, and to present Grid and computing technology in a Grid Café expo in Restaurant 2. More than 1000 visitors passed through the Computer Centre on the Sunday and about 500 on the Saturday. Several thousand people are estimated to have visited the Grid Café during the event.

In addition, the IT staff helped out with visits at many other visit points, including several of the LHC underground access points and an outdoor children's activity – the human beam dump – which proved very popular. IT staff developed a flow-management system that ensured that visitors had up-to-date information about where queues were the shortest, and an interactive public website that helped visitors to plan their tours in advance. Behind the scenes, many people in the department worked long hours prior to and during the Open Days, to ensure that all of



Fig. 1. (left) Maria Girona at the Grid Café presenting computing technology to the public. Fig. 2. (right) An image from the new multimedia history of the CERN Computer Centre.



the network and computing infrastructure needed to manage the ambitious event worked reliably.

As part of the extensive preparations for the Open Days, the historical computing material that is on display near the entrance of Building 513 was revamped into a proper Computing Expo for visitors to enjoy. New outreach material was prepared, including a multimedia history of the CERN Computer Centre (figure 2), video tours of the computer centre and related factsheets for training guides, and posters that trace the evolution of the Web and the Grid at CERN.

This Computing Expo and the experience

that many IT staff gained from the Open Days will prove valuable in the future because the number of visitors to the Computer Centre is expected to increase substantially now that the LHC experiments are no longer accessible to the public.

The Open Days and the new Computing Expo would not have been possible without substantial sponsorship from a large number of the department's many suppliers and partners. In fact, these partners provided a large proportion of the overall sponsorship received by CERN for the event. Their generosity on this special occasion was particularly appreciated.

Francois Grey and Rosy Mondardini, IT-DI

openlab offers Intel software

Thanks to openlab's collaboration with Intel, a range of their software products for developers is available site-wide at CERN free of charge. One of the most prominent products in Intel's software tools line is the Intel C compiler (with debugger), which, among many features, introduces advanced optimization for the x86 and ia64 architectures. The Math Kernel Library and Integrated Performance Primitives packages are also available. In addition, the Intel Fortran compiler is on offer in the two most recent major versions. Those in need of performance gains will be happy to hear that Intel's optimization products have been published as well. The VTune environment is an advanced performance-tuning suite for Windows and Linux. It comes with Intel Thread Checker and Intel Thread Profiler – two products aimed at developers of threaded software. Both tools support pthreads and OpenMP.

All of the packages are available for Windows and x86 or ia64 Linux. Linux

users can use most of the software without installation from the AFS location. Windows users, however, need to copy the installation files from AFS to their local computers and install the software on their own. Instructions for installation are available in the AFS directory.

Depending on the tool, a site-wide simultaneous operation of 10 or 15 instances of a software product is possible. All mentioned programs require a local CERN network connection for operation because the licences are stored and managed in IT. openlab does not provide direct technical support for the published products but is willing to pass issues on to Intel. Also note that the products might be upgraded to newer versions in the future.

Useful links

AFS location: [/afs/cern.ch/sw/IntelSoftware](http://afs/cern.ch/sw/IntelSoftware).
openlab: <http://cern.ch/openlab>.
Andrzej Nowak, IT-DI (openlab)

Move signals change at the CERN Printshop

The Printshop has moved to 510-R-007, opposite the former office in a much smaller area. This is in response to the decrease in the number of pages printed here, which went down from 17 million in 2004 to 7 million in 2007. The Printshop personnel have been reduced to one operator provided by an outside company.

The old offset and finishing equipment, which for the most part had been at CERN for more than 30 years, has been sold. This was needed in the early 1980s when the Printshop was producing more than 70 million pages per year.

We have done our best to ensure that this change has minimal impact on the user community. In particular we have negotiated a contract with a printing company to take care of jobs that can no longer be handled in house.

More information is available at <http://cern.ch/desktop-publishing/printshop.asp>.
Michel Goossens, IT-UDS