Students serve community through philanthropy

Georgia Tech’s campus location in midtown Atlanta has forever allowed the good works of the Institute’s attendees to make an impact in an urban environment with help to food clinics, planting trees for Trees Atlanta and innumerable amounts of volunteer work around the community.

However, these may not be the most difficult to accomplish individually, but the organizations at Tech offer a touch of wisdom and efficiency when dealing with these projects.

TEAM Buzz is prominent in Tech philanthropy. Their moniker Tech Enhancing Atlanta Metropolitan is simplified to the mnemonic device of TEAM, and they work students, faculty, alumni and staff to collectively corrobate in community service events.

The call is out now for even more members to join up. Volunteering as a project coordinator starts next week, and group and individual registration begins later after Sept. 14 to reach the goal of 2000 participants in 35 different service venues.

A group like TEAM Buzz works through delegation and bureaucracy to be successful. Chair of Project Coordinators Marleen Kanagawa explained that delegation and organization within the process gently eases the students into a loose association allowing them to work on projects based on preference.

The project coordinators are required to attend only one orientation to go over the necessary steps and needed motivation.

Of course, the light touch TEAM Buzz specializes in leaves much individual motivation necessary to accomplish the goals.

Project coordinators must facilitate direct contact with the outside event and become acquainted with the event’s location.

This event often combined with directing and transporting their fellow volunteers may seem a daunting task, but there are many who would laud their experiences as remarkably rewarding.

“I had a great time, a lot of fun,” said Graham Miller, a second-year Building Construction major, “The last thing we want to do is throw everything in the same pot and cook it till it’s just brown mush. That’s not the idea at all... Our goal is to see how we can make [each field] stronger; identifying what is core to them and making it stronger, then seeing what is not there, and bringing that to the table as well.”

“Have a great time, have a lot of fun,” said Varun Kothari, the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education and the one spearheading the current happenings.

One student fear—the College will move to a generic B.S. in Design—may even be a non-issue.

“The B.S. in Design is one possible solution; we’re not [necessarily] going that direction. We’re starting with a review of the core disciplines, and making them sharper... We understand the panic—no one wants their degree to go away—but there’s truly nothing to worry about,” said Teri Nagel, the Communications Officer for the College of Architecture.

Khan again explained that each of the three areas of study will remain intact.

The majority of the changes being made are designed to provide students with the chance to study more specialized, interdisciplinary topics.

Student will have the option of studying strings of cross-discipline, problem-based classes in fields like energy usage, sustainability and material studies—topics currently only available at the graduate level—providing opportunities for students to work with other specialties within the college and even with experts from other colleges.

When asked about the reasons behind the change, Khan and Nagel said that, aside from providing students with several administration

tive benefits (like shared opportunities for scholarships and internships and a more streamlined advising process), the program aims to make Tech students stand out in their respective fields.

The question is, are we going to graduate [someone] who looks just like someone from [any other university]? Or are we going to graduate someone with the core competencies, [who also has] the added pluses that can only happen at a technological research institution with dozens of other disciplines?” Kahn said.

Alumni in general have had their interest piqued by the program, both positively and negatively.

Students and architecture students in studio discuss upcoming projects. Students have expressed concern about the rumors of curriculum revisions within the school that could combine major options.

Students haul and dump branches, leaves and debris in campus beautification efforts with TEAM Buzz. Volunteer opportunities range from childcare and tutoring to yard work and food-service.

As a point of fact, Tech Beautification Day is but one of the

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Portable technology promotes obnoxious behavior

By Hamza Hasan
Asst. Layout Editor

While technology tends to enable its users to integrate and better their lives, it also yields second hand effects that make life more difficult for others.

In social situations, people tend to follow a certain etiquette, but when technology and sociality mingle, the effects are less than desirable.

This week we’ll look at the top ten annoying things people do with technology.

1. Texting too much

Texting is a light way to carry on a conversation or to simply get a quick message across.

Some people, however, tend to have entire conversations through text messaging, even when it’s possible to call the other person and talk to them more quickly and normally.

The most unreasonable thing people do is have a conversation in person and then pick up their phones and cut off the outside world while responding to a text.

It isn’t that difficult to text, so people need to stop cutting off real life conversations to write barely coherent messages to someone who can’t even bother to call.

2. Unreadable english

Whether it’s all caps, “leet” speak or unnecessarily abbreviated words, it can be difficult to discern what people are saying and how they’re saying it.

When someone writes in all caps they say, it either sounds angry or really important.

Most of the time, it isn’t much of either. “Leet” speak, the meme involving the replacement of letters with numbers, is unbearable, since it’s easier to type letters than numbers.

By far, the worst of electronic communications is the use of abbreviations and intentional misspellings, such as the replacement of “s” with “z”.

Most people think they might be hip or cool by typing as if though they can barely type, but the end result is that the receiver can barely read the message.

3. Inopportune Conversations

Sometimes phone calls are important, like those relating to classes, home or work.

It’s always annoying when a good conversation or intimate moments are marred by a lengthy, fun conversation when the real fun should be with hanging out with friends in person.

A good example is when a friend is driving another friend, and the passenger picks up his phone to chat away, while useful moments in real life trickle away.

In this case, technology warps a person’s priorities.

4. Facebook Invite

Facebook can be a useful tool to network and socialize, and is considered the best social networking device.

However, Facebook has been corrupted by invites not only to useless groups and events that pertain to nothing in which a person has no interest, but to the doom of worthless Facebook applications.

Though the Facebook layout has improved, it can still be difficult to parse a person’s page without running into annoying games, quizzes or simply stupid things (like the LOLcats app).

“Every time I get an invite for something stupid, I respect that person a little less,” says Josh Adair, a 3rd Year ME.

It might be easy to block the invites, but occasionally it can be a catch 22 to drop someone that’s needed as well as annoying.

5. Facebook Stalking

Again, Facebook has been corrupted by recklessness. Facebook stalking is not only a waste of time, but also detrimental to a person’s socializing ability.

It’s easy to read a list of a person’s interests, but much harder to interact with the person in real life and learn common interests.

Though it’s a challenging task to talk about real topics with real people, it’s one of those things that’s worth the effort.

Not only is it worth the effort but it also saves you from looking like a true stalker when you speak to people in person.

6. Inappropriate use

Technology in classrooms is a double-edged sword.

While reading along in lecture with a personal copy of the presentation is helpful, people abuse the system by going to class to not pay attention.

“If you’re going to class to do that, then don’t come,” says Katie Brawsell, a 2nd Year Architecture major. Sitting in on a mid-level CS class, it’s very possible to find people not paying attention by playing World of Warcraft.

Though that’s an extreme example, chatting on AIM and Google Chat tend to distract the student from the importance of class.

Most harmful is Facebook surfing. Stephen Crouse, a 2nd Year Architecture major, explains that “It is really distracting when people get on Facebook during class”. Facebook’s addictive nature draws in more than the first-hand surfer, with one screen distracting many students.

Other annoying forms of technology during class are the use of cell phones and even portable gaming devices, both of which can click the nearby attentive student to madness.

7. Obnoxious ringtones

At their most frustrating when they go off in class, phones can very easily ruin a calm, productive moment in real life.

Students texting on campus for communication is useful, but can be taken too far. Issues such as texting or chatting in class and even serious problems like cyber-stalking detract from education.
Everything you need in a cell phone without a contract.

Remove the useless contracts. Replaced it with $500 yr in savings.

Use the savings for pizza and, well, you know...

The economy sucks.

Free pizza rations on Tuesdays.

7 p.m., Flag 137, Technique

www.nique.net
Gun control debate continues

By Chris Russell
Staff Writer

How would you feel if the person sitting next to you right now had a gun in their lap? I’m not talking about a madman armed with an assault rifle here, just an average student, surfing Facebook next to you in lecture, with a holstered pistol (may- be a small Beretta or Colt) on his belt. Would you be terrified? Or just shrug it off? The right to carry a firearm on campus is an incredibly conten- tious topic, with activists on both sides of the debate arguing that campus would be safer if things went their way.

With events like Virginia Tech fresh on students’ minds, the de-bate has only increased with time. The recent crime wave and near Tech’s campus has the student population looking into new ways to deter crime and defend themselves. Current law on Tech’s campus is that a person carrying a firearm (or any other weapon) who is found to be in possession of a firearm within 1000 feet of any campus would be made a weapon-

able by a fine of up to $10,000 and 2-10 years in prison.

The right to carry a firearm on any other weapon listed in the code section as re- stricted) will be charged accord- ingly,” said Officer Ian Mayberry of the GTPD.

However, some, both on and off campus, are pushing for a change here. Some gun-rights ad- vocates argue that current laws en- courage crime on campus, that an area where students carrying valuables are guaranteed to exist and weaponry is guaranteed not to is an irresponsible target.

It’s quite possible the idea of armed students would deter poten- tial criminals, but it’s also en- tirely possible that the presence of weapons on campus would make a fatal run- in more likely.

With the stakes so high, many students feel that risking the change simply wouldn’t be worth it. Nicole Bond, a third-year Computer Science major, feels that these policies should stay the way they are: sans guns. “I just wouldn’t feel safe with guns on campus,” said Bond.

Not all students feel the same way, though. Evan Wise, a four-

th-year Mechanical Engineering major believes that the right to carry a weapon would make campus safer. “People are always going to have guns, so when you take a specific area like a college and say ‘We don’t think anyone should have guns here’, you’re just chang- ing the behavior of people who want to obey the law,” said Wise. Wise argues that the possibility of running into an armed student would, at the very least, make criminals think twice before coming to Tech’s campus.

According to the website, concealedcampus.com, an activist group aiming to legalize con- cealed weapons on college cam-
puses, “College campuses, though typically safe, do play host to every type of violent crime found in the rest of society, from assault to rape to murder. Recent high-profile shootings and armed abductions on college campuses clearly dem- onstrate that ‘gun free zones’ serve to disarm only those law-abiding citizens who might otherwise be able to protect themselves.”

Still, it seems as if the majority of students are still uncomfortable with the idea of firearms on cam-
pus, yet many are dead against guns on campus.

Many, including Bond, seemed unconvinced that allowing students to carry a concealed weapon would do anything to increase se-

curity. Concern for an increased possibility of a fatal encounter seemed to balance out any extra feeling of safety the presence of firearms on campus might offer.

Organizations like the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Va-

lence cite evidence that this might well be a valid concern.

According to their site, “The number of crime victims who successfully use firearms to de- fend themselves is quite small.” According to the FBI Uniform Crime Reports and the Centers for Disease Control, out of 36,694 Americans who died by gunfire in 2006, only 192 were shot in justifiable homicides by private citi-

zens with firearms.

Police officers know that the very thought of a gun in an escala-
tion situation, so that instead of simply losing your wallet, you can lose your life.

That’s why many law enforce-

ment organization – including the International Brotherhood of Po-

tice Officers and the International Association of Chiefs of Police – opposes the weakening of CCW laws.

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atmosphere.

With the advent of personal ringtone software, users can now employ the most desirable songs from the 80s to drive everyone else insane.

Text alerts are guilty as well. A piece of advice to those who question ringtone use: the phone one.

No one wants to hear that the same song form middle school in the middle of trying to concentrate in class.

8. Remove head
dphones

Hitting pause is easy enough, and so is taking off one’s head-

phones. Even though they may be cheap and easy to hear through, it’s still rude, as if through the lis-
tener has to deal with someone who’s ruining his or her music break.

This type of behavior makes other people believe that you do not wish to make the time for them and do not have the respect enough for them to make a simple movement and remove your head-
phones.

Though others might be used to it, those who are not usually feel disrespected and belittled.

9. Hogging computers

The library is for class work. While the Macs are wonderful and the PCs sometimes have more than one screen, they are for pro-
ductivity, not awesome Youtube viewing or speedy Facebook surf-
ing.

Even if the use of the computer isn’t school related but provides some sort of productive service to the user, it’s much better than having to wait in line because someone needs to catch up with the last episode of South Park that he or she missed.

It is also rude to leave the com-
puter locked while you go and run errands for 30 minutes while other people are waiting.

10. Flash games

Flash games can be played in private, but honestly, college is about reaching out and experienc-
ing more of the real world.

Especially in an urban en-

vironment like Atlanta, no one should have to spend all day play-

ing cheaply made games in his or her room.

Other people generally can not play and it distracts that per-
son from making friends, playing sports or doing a number of useful things because they are busy play-

ing useless games.

Though the occasional flash game is appropriate, most people turn it into an obsession, and an-

noy the rest of the community by playing in class, posting games on Facebook and then inviting oth-

ers to it and simply staying inside, sacrificing precious real world time for the virtual world.

Though this list could easily be extended, it identifies some of the major problems with abuses of technology.

A person simply needs to be considerate and set his or her pri-

orities straight to avoid technolo-

gical and social clashes.

For those who are surprised by something on this list, perhaps those persons should consider ex-

tra research in the area to make sure that they are not committing technology faux pas.