

New Year's Reception 2022

“COVID 2020-2021 Challenges for Services and Infrastructure“ | Transcript

Ulf Lepszy - Occupational Safety University of Potsdam:

When you think about the particular challenges we faced this year, it's best to talk about the whole year. Whether it was the procurement of masks, the production of disinfectant, or the establishment of our testing facilities. Organizing vaccinations was also very difficult. But because we've made it to this point, I think we're going to make it through the final spurt just fine. And I'm confident that we'll come out of the whole thing stronger.

Dirk Bußler - ZIM Infrastructure Server & Storage:

So in March 2020, it became clear to us pretty quickly that we needed to increase the bandwidths to the University of Potsdam. That's why, together with the German Research Web and EWP (local energy supplier), we increased the bandwidth tenfold, so to speak, in order to be able to cope with the surge in demand. And in a second step, Moodle, MediaUP, for example, and BoxUP – our three main services – were then more than quadrupled with servers and storage to then be able to store all the lectures and recordings. And to be able to guarantee the services of the University of Potsdam.

Thomas Kühn - ZIM Support & Service Design, AV Technology:

A big challenge was to provide a platform on which our teaching could continue in a format that was purely online. After looking at multiple services and by working with multiple teams, multiple committees, we were able to provide a service that meets the needs of our university both in terms of data protection and functionality.

Danny Specht-Eichler - ZIM Support & Service Design, AV Technology:

We were now faced with the challenge of streaming events that normally take place on site, such as the freshman welcome. And to give people who – due to COVID – would not, could not, or did not want to be present the opportunity to attend the event anyway. This required a lot of technical effort and a lot of conversions, but I think we will benefit from this in the future.

Britta van Kempen – Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Teaching and Studies:

Teaching for the beginning of April had to be organized and completely rearranged in the process. And without the teaching staff, without the non-academic staff, digital teaching could not take place. The COVID containment and handling regulations had to be implemented for teaching. It was often necessary to arrange these things between Friday and Monday, so that this is really a big challenge for our department and for me in particular.

However, the positive thing that can now certainly be seen after three semesters of COVID is that we have implemented digital teaching at the University of Potsdam. That new collaborations have emerged for our department of teaching and learning within the university, and I'm looking forward to continuing to shape this in the future.

Frank Buchholz - PUCK Service Center:

The conversations in the hallway, solving issues quickly and unbureaucratically in direct exchange

with your colleagues and all that – that's missing with COVID. One positive thing is that working from home has now been established here. Here at the PUCK service center, it doesn't work quite as well, because I have to print the cards. I can only do that here, I can't take the equipment home. But I can work on e-mails and everything else from home. That is certainly an advantage.

Antje Antoniewicz - Babelsberg University Library:

Yes, we got used to the masks and plexiglas that our craftsmen made especially for us. We also tried to provide as many workstations as possible for our students, despite all the COVID requirements. We managed to do this with a workstation booking system, which our IT colleagues installed and made for us. And so we were always there for our students.

Doris Lake - Golm University Library:

We changed our ordering system, because the library stock was not accessible in the departmental libraries. That means that you could only order online and the first place to pick up the items was the departmental library in Golm. You have to picture it: numerous boxes from the other departmental libraries were all delivered here, we printed out piles of orders, fetched media from the shelves, and our colleagues covered several kilometers every day. Tables were set up here with baskets on them and the media were then placed in the baskets ready for collection. We are proud of how far we have come with this service. We have made some changes to the lending conditions, which have also been positive, which have also been well received, and I think we will retain some of them, because they have simply become established.

Dr. Michaela Schmitz - Managing Director Collaborative Research Center 1287:

In 2021, both SFBs (collaborative research centers) were faced with the task of preparing and conducting reviews by the DFG (German Research Foundation) in an online format.

Liv Heineke - Managing Director Collaborative Research Center 1294:

This was an enormous effort. The rooms and the technology for the staff had to be organized. Many test runs were made in advance and all proposals and projects were planned down to the smallest detail. The [walk-through] under online conditions was a challenge because the time was very limited and we only had 30 minutes to present each SFB individually and one and a half hours each just for the project presentation. This means that you have to present the quality of your own projects to the reviewers and defend the entire SFB in a very short time.

Dr. Michaela Schmitz - Managing Director Collaborative Research Center 1287:

Without the good cooperation also between the SFBs and the support of various departments of the university, such a successful review would not have been possible. We are all the more proud that the two SFBs have been extended into a second funding phase.