

The Changing Face of IT at the University of Alberta

Speaker: Dr. Jonathan Schaeffer, Professor of Computing Science, University of Alberta

Speaker Profile

Jonathan Schaeffer is a Professor of Computing Science at the University of Alberta. His research interests are primarily in the field of Artificial Intelligence. Since 2008, he has been the Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Information Technology at the University of Alberta. Some of his accomplishments include:

- Author of the program [Chinook](#), the World Man-Machine Checkers Champion. *Chinook* has been recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records as the first computer to win a human world championship in any game. In 2007, we announced that checkers was solved: perfect play leads to a draw.
- We have developed strong poker-playing programs as part of our research into decision making in imperfect information domains. The work has been commercialize (Poker Academy -- [poker](#)).
- General game playing (a program that can learn to play a game well, given only the set of rules).

Dr. Schaeffer is currently involved in transitioning the University of Alberta's PeopleSoft outsourcing contracts to new service providers. There are four projects underway that will prepare the University of Alberta for the new PeopleSoft support service model that will involve multiple service providers and offshore delivery of some services.

Presentation Overview

At the University of Alberta, IT has become mission critical for administration, research and teaching. Unfortunately, being a large institution, it is hard to be nimble and make significant changes in a timely fashion. Yet IT is under enormous pressure that demands radical changes. The sources for this pressure include the Auditor General (a control framework), students (new technologies), and financial (do more for less). This talk will discuss the current state of affairs and future plans for change at the University of Alberta. Emphasis will be placed on discussing outsourcing, security, and addressing audit concerns.