Five-Year Plan

Objectives of the WPI Assistive Technology Resource Center

As established through the ATRC Mission Statement and Directors

- To provide students with projects valuable to their academic experience.
- To disseminate technical information regarding Assistive Technology.
- To provide technical engineering knowledge and services to the Assistive Technology community.

Goals of the WPI ATRC

As realized to ensure the successful attainment of stated objectives

- Improve management of facilities in terms of storage and organization as well as centralized databasing of all items handled by the ATRC.
- Improve the Visual Identity of the ATRC through action toward increased and improved outreach and marketing.
- Improve operations and workload levels of ATRC staff through defined roles and consideration of increased personnel.
- Ensure sufficient funding for all projects and Center operations.
- Ensure both continual and periodic reviews of practices occur to assess the ongoing operations of the ATRC.

Priorities for the next five years

Targets to be completed by end of year; based on a typical A,B,C,D,E term year.

Year 1: The 2008 to 2009 Academic Year

- Development of basic operations and physical plant. These tasks are selected in priority to provide a firm basis for the continued development of the ATRC over the next five years.
  - Updated website meeting W3C guidelines for internet content. Design should also be simple enough to permit any ATRC staff member to update.
Create sufficient documentation on how to update the various pages of the website. - Task sufficient for IQP or ISP work.

- Formulation of databases for maintaining universal contact lists, previous student list\(^1\), newsletter recipient list, press-release contacts. Also, database of existing projects in both physical and hardcopy should be created. - Task sufficient for IQP or staff.\(^2\)

- Updated formatting of newsletter to include not only recent projects but information regarding the recent sponsors/clients. When the sponsor/client permits, distribute with information regarding their operations. - Task sufficient for any staff member of Center.

- Updated pamphlet, with design capable of being updated on an annual basis so as to provide recent project examples to the recipients. An example design is included\(^3\) within this report. - Task is sufficient for any staff member of the Center.

- Organization of the physical plant should be completed, with specific marked locations for high-use items, low-use items stored away in non-intrusive locations, and items of general interest given locations viewable through the South, glass-door entrance of the lab. This applies to not only devices, but also books, documents, posters, tools and supplies. Visual representations and lists matching items to location are key to the success of organization on this scale. - Task is sufficient for staff or as part of IQP.

- Contact previous year’s clients to survey satisfaction of completed projects. - Task suited for any staff member.

**Year 2: The 2009 to 2010 Academic Year**

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\(^1\) Example simple database for Previous Students may be found on submitted Compact Disc.

\(^2\) Staff includes work-study positions for qualified students, graduate student, or general hired staff member.

\(^3\) The example pamphlet may also be found in template form on the submitted CD.
• Definition of Roles and Decision on Expansion of Center. With the previous year's tasks completed, the focus of this year is to develop an understanding of the direction the ATRC is to go.

  o Perform a review of the roles of every individual working for the ATRC. Focus on division of work, investigating areas of overlap in search of simplification. Determine work load to determine the need for additional staff. - Task is ideally suited to a hired staff member.

  o At this point, a decision should be made on whether or not it is desirable to expand the Center. Expansion would presumably consist of bringing on additional advisors, as well as at least one staff member, an operations manager, to handle day to day operations of the Center; additional funding through a sponsorship, or shared resources through a direct affiliation should be considered. - Task should be discussed between directors and then department and other interested faculty.

  o Develop a current contact list consisting of clinical, educational, governmental and social service organizations that the Center may contact to offer services. - Task is suited to any staff or as part of IQP.

  o Review and critique website, database, newsletter and organizational methods, making any necessary adjustments. It is predicted that the organizational methods will undergo several changes before a suitably static solution is realized. As part of the review, ensure that regular updates of website and databases have occurred. - Task is suited to staff.

  o Perform the annual update on pamphlet and website project pages, archiving the previous year's projects. - Task suited for any staff member of the ATRC.

  o Contact previous year's clients to survey satisfaction of completed projects. - Task suited for any staff member.

**Year 3: The 2010 to 2011 Academic Year**

• Outreach to Potential Clients and Publicizing of ATRC. After reviewing the basic operations of the ATRC, determining the desired direction of future operations, and developing a list of potential new clients, it is the time to

  o Based on desired future size of the Center, a varying number of organizations should be contacted to develop additional relationships. The potential of clinical, educational, governmental and social service organizations in terms
of project ideas is large. It may be necessary to prioritize additional project ideas, in which case a database should be created identifying the client, idea, and perceived priority. - Task is best suited to hired staff due to the time consuming nature.

- Publicizing the Center's recent projects through various local and regional media outlets, as well as device-relevant journal publications. The process should be recorded and contacts made with the media elements so as to permit regular publicity exposures. Internal marketing, as through the WPI student newspaper and internal newsletter Transformations, should also be performed. - Task is best suited to combined effort of directors with the WPI Marketing and Communications Division.

- Review basic operations, ensuring website, database, newsletter and organizational methods remain effective in achieving goals. It is likely that any necessary changes to these elements will be small in nature. Ensure posted "relevant links" on webpage are working and update with any new organizations. - Task is suited to any staff member of the ATRC.

- Perform the annual update on pamphlet and website project pages, archiving the previous year's projects. - Task suited for any staff member of the ATRC.

- Contact previous year's clients to survey the level of satisfaction of completed projects. - Task suited for any staff member.

**Year 4: The 2011 to 2012 Academic Year**

- Grant Development and Funding. At this time, it would be advisable for the ATRC to seek external funding for large scale projects and general operational funding. With the previous year developing project ideas and contacts, the necessary platform for establishing financial need will be available.

  - Attempts should be made to discuss the operations of other similar university based centers, in particular Hampshire College's Lemelson Program and UMass Lowell's Assistive Technology Program. Discussion of operational procedures, monetary investments and management resources will provide a deeper understanding of the current - Task is suited to an operations manager or directors.

  - The Center should identify the anticipated income and expenditures on a weekly, monthly and yearly basis, indicating the cash flow. From here, a
Budget forecast may be made to determine the need for funding. - Task is best suited for center directors.

- A list of possible grants should be developed, and decision made on which may be applicable to the current activities of the ATRC. The development of a top-quality grant proposal is highly pertinent to the application process. This task is well suited for cooperation between a reference librarian, the WPI office of Research Administration and ATRC staff.

- Continue to provide focus on contacting organizations related to the Assistive Technology field. - Task is suited for any ATRC staff.

- Continue to provide focus on publicizing the Center. - Task is suited to an operations manager or directors.

- Review basic operations, ensuring website, database, newsletter and organizational methods remain effective in achieving goals. It is likely that any necessary changes to these elements will be small in nature. Ensure posted "relevant links" on webpage are working and update with any new organizations. - Task is suited to any staff member of the ATRC.

- Perform the annual update on pamphlet and website project pages, archiving the previous year's projects. - Task suited for any staff member of the ATRC.

- Contact previous year's clients to survey the level of satisfaction of completed projects. - Task suited for any staff member.

**Year 5: The 2012 to 2013 Academic Year**

- Review and Continued Development. With the previous tasks having been completed, the ATRC should be in a position to again decide on the intended direction of the Center.

- It is suggested that at this time an IQP or MQP for a Management major be planned for the review of the developed operations of the ATRC. All areas should again fall under scrutiny, with an increased focus on the financial side of the operations - the basic groundwork laid out through the previous four years should provide a sufficient platform for the development of a financial assessment along with a long-term Business Plan for the ATRC.

- An area of focus should continue to be the contacting organizations related to the Assistive Technology field. - Task is suited for any ATRC staff.
o An area of focus should continue to be publicizing the Center. - Task is suited to an operations manager or directors.

o Review basic operations, ensuring website, database, newsletter and organizational methods remain effective in achieving goals. It is likely that any necessary changes to these elements will be small in nature. Ensure posted "relevant links" on webpage are working and update with any new organizations. - Task is suited to any staff member of the ATRC.

o Perform the annual update on pamphlet and website project pages, archiving the previous year’s projects. - Task suited for any staff member of the ATRC.

o Contact previous year's clients to survey the level of satisfaction of completed projects. - Task suited for any staff member.