



News Release

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TSM Student Awarded “Best Undergraduate Paper” at International Conference

Murray State University’s (MSU) Program of Distinction in Telecommunications Systems Management (TSM) continues to excel and remains one of the outstanding programs MSU has to offer. Exceptional students, such as senior Vincent Waniel, represent the Program of Distinction well. Waniel was recently honored with the Best Undergraduate Paper at the International Telecommunications Education and Research Association (ITERA) conference in Indianapolis, IN that took place April 8-10. The paper was titled, “Online Privacy: Is use of a public terminal private and secure?”

“It was neat to receive the award and only validated that the research that I have been working on was a legitimate research topic and was interesting and relevant,” commented Waniel.

The TSM senior was designated as an URSA Research Scholar Fellowship winner this past fall. This huge honor came along with the help of faculty sponsor of the project Associate Professor, Dr. Michael Bowman. Waniel submitted an URSA research proposal in September and received the announcement October 8th. After receiving approval from Murray State’s Chief Information Officer, Linda Miller and a legal review where he had to sign a contract and a non-disclosure agreement, Waniel was able to begin his work.

The research proposal enabled Waniel to periodically inspect and collect data from public access computer terminals at MSU and in the community to see if users have inadvertently left personal information (like user ID’s and passwords) on these terminals. He randomly selected terminals in places on campus such as the Waterfield Library, Business Building, Wellness Center and Sparks Hall. Waniel commented on the data that could be left behind, “Individuals surf the internet and leave things behind without realizing that their personal information could fall into the wrong hands. Visiting websites such as online banking, ordering products online, or sites with passwords can put someone at risk.”

ITERA was a good venue to present the research project and Waniel was able to discuss the process used to obtain the information and how he collected the data. He is currently working on an in-depth analysis of the data and hopes to make recommendations to users and system administrators on how best to protect personal information on these systems.