

# UNF Web surfing on ultra high-speed LambdaRail

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**SOUTHSIDE** — University of North Florida is reaping the academic benefits of the Florida LambdaRail, an unparalleled high-speed Internet service that connects UNF with nine other Florida universities as well as institutions worldwide through the National LambdaRail.

The network's primary benefit is that it can transmit extremely large bodies of information up to 100 times faster than ordinary cable Internet service, said Lance Taylor, UNF's chief information officer and an FLR board member. "It enables researchers to share high volumes of data in seconds, rather than days."

Patrick Welsh, executive director of the Advanced Weather Information Systems Laboratory at UNF, can now create atmospheric computer models for the entire state of Florida, instead of separate regional models, almost simultaneously, trading information with researchers across the country and the world.

The increased bandwidth of FLR has allowed Welsh and other UNF faculty members to transmit large amounts of information in seconds. In fact, Welsh can access information from an institution across the country on the NLR faster than an institution next door in Florida that is not connected.

"It makes a whole lot more things possible," Welsh said. "The level of science that we can do with our collaborators in

far distance places is dramatically easier and the science is better."

The FLR runs on fiber-optic cable that FLR LLC has leased from BellSouth Corp. for 10 years.

Because UNF is hooked up to FLR, Internet is automatically provided to the entire campus at the same instantaneous speed. A user does not need any software or computer modifications to be connected to FLR. If they are plugged into a cable network on campus, they are automatically connected to the system.

"It's used by people everyday, whether they realize it or not," Taylor said.

But it's not free. UNF foots the bill for their FLR use, which is \$150,000 more per year than what they were previously paying for Internet service.

Taylor said it is worth the price as researchers, faculty and companies looking for university partners are more apt to choose one with this type of Internet capability.

"When we were contemplating doing this we said 'if we build it, they will come,'" Taylor said, "and we firmly believe that."



Welsh



Taylor