

Laundry goes cyber

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A new Internet tool called LaundryView lets students monitor campus laundry equipment and receive e-mail notifications for availability and cycle completion.

Today's college students are among the most connected people on earth. Their WiFi-networked laptop computers, cell phones, and PDAs keep them in constant contact with each other and the world around them. However, there has been at least one place they could not connect with until recently: the campus laundry room, the Mac-Gray Corp. noted in a Tuesday news release.

Mac-Gray, a large supplier of card and coin-operated laundry facilities management in North America, developed the system. LaundryView provides a way for college students to communicate with washers and dryers in campus laundry rooms.

Typical student reactions to the system frequently include the word "awesome," the company said. The LaundryView eMonitoring system is a huge time saver for busy college students who can't afford to wait in the laundry room for machines to become available. Now they can check online from anywhere on campus, Mac-Gray added.

Through the LaundryView Web page, students can arrange to be notified when a washer or dryer is available, or when their own washing or drying cycle is complete. They can specify how they want to be notified, either by e-mail, cell-phone message or wireless PDA message.

In addition to keeping students connected to their laundry rooms, LaundryView also keeps Mac-Gray informed if there is a problem with one of its machines. Should a malfunction occur, the machine automatically notifies the local branch office and within minutes a service order is delivered to the appropriate service technician. By keeping more machines available more of the time, the LaundryView eMonitoring system makes it easier than ever for students to manage one of their least favorite activities.

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