Using Dynamic DNS on MIT net as a substitute for a static IP address

Using Dynamic DNS on MIT net as a substitute for a static IP address

In some circumstances static IP addresses cannot be used. One key example is the upgraded (Cisco LWAP) wireless network.

What use is a Dynamic DNS service?

Static IP addresses and hostnames can be used for a number of scenarios where you need to be able to contact your computer at the same internet address. Typical uses include:

- Connecting to your computer via Remote Desktop or VNC
- Serving web pages on your computer
- Using your computer to store files that can be accessed remotely

Static IP addresses cannot always be used. An alternative is to use a **Dynamic DNS** service.

How does Dynamic DNS work?

Dynamic DNS is designed to work with computers configured via DHCP rather than with a static IP address. This means that they can direct a specific hostname to your computer even after the IP address has changed.

To accomplish this, DDNS providers update their DNS records to point your unique hostname to your current IP address whenever your IP changes by installing an application on your computer that notifies the service provider of your IP address.

Can I use a Dynamic DNS service with my computer?

Most DDNS service providers offer clients that work on Windows, Mac OS X and Linux. You should check with the service provider that you're setting up an account through.

Can I use a Dynamic DNS service with my printer or other network hardware?

This depends on the hardware manufacturer and the software that is installed on it. A very limited number of devices support specific Dynamic DNS services. This question can only be answered by your hardware manufacturer and is usually described in the hardware manual or online documentation.

How can I set this up to work with my computer?

Each service provider has strong user-oriented documentation to describe how to setup the service and get it working on your computer. IS&T does not support such services and can't recommend any particular company; however, you may find here a list of service providers.