

Trying to demystify the IT field

Research

University of Wollongong researcher **Darko Radiceski** is working on new Microsoft technologies in collaboration with HATCH consulting engineers in Wollongong. He is also working to promote the IT field to young people through his involvement in Students in Free Enterprise.

As part of a third-year project at the University of Wollongong, in conjunction with HATCH consulting engineers in Wollongong, I am involved in research work on new technologies from Microsoft including software development and databases with the latest information technology (IT) tools.

Dr Nik Nikolovski and his team (Steve Mitchell and Peter Spaseski) from HATCH are responsible for the initiation and finding of the applications concepts which our group is developing further, which will be known as e-Inspector.WEB by HATCH.

This is a task-management software package which integrates the portability of mobile devices (personal digital assistants, smart phones, tablets) to provide a highly effective communication solution combined with secure and reliable data storage.

e-Inspector.WEB by HATCH makes on-site data collection less problematic by providing a task "check-out/check-in" feature.

Furthermore, this product increases the efficiency of time-consuming and error-prone business tasks by utilising automated analysis tools and

administrative tools.

It uses a Field Force Automation application on mobile devices to collect and transmit data from remote locations. A maintenance worker is able to enter data about equipment condition on location; subsequently this data is synchronised back to a central location.

The overall goal of the development process is to produce software that is scalable, contains no data discrepancies, is highly portable, easy to use, secure and highly maintainable.

The second major research work I am actively involved in is with an organisation called Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE).

SIFE is a global non-profit organisation active in more than 40 countries, working in partnership with business and higher education.

SIFE establishes student teams on university campuses. SIFE@UOW, the group at the University of Wollongong in which I am involved and president, consists of multi-disciplinary undergraduate and postgraduate students dedicated to making a positive difference in our community.

Through our diversity, we aim to create and deliver education and entrepreneurship programs that are professionally supported and sustainable, and are able to inspire communities to reach their goals through free enterprise.

The projects we develop are from different areas with the main goal to reach SIFE's five main educational topics: market economics, success skills, entrepreneurship, financial literacy and business ethics.

The project to popularise IT to young people within SIFE would have not begun without a great deal of help from UOW's Faculty of Informatics and Professor Phillip Ogunbona.



Darko Radiceski is helping developing e-Inspector.WEB by HATCH, a task-management software package which integrates the portability of mobile devices to provide effective communication solutions. Picture: KEN ROBERTSON

Our objective is to curb the misunderstandings about the IT field to both males and females by generating interest through hands-on learning experiences.

The idea is to simulate a mock IT environment. IT has many characteristics that can not be understood except through practical demonstration of an IT surrounding.

But the venture doesn't stop there. After consultation with high school principals we came to the idea that learning modules can be created not only for IT but for a variety of areas as

learning aids for students.

The overall project goal is to help popularise IT among young people and help make the Illawarra region the envisioned IT corridor of NSW.

Darko Radiceski is a student at the University of Wollongong and a part-time teaching academic with the School of Information Technology and Computer Science. He also works as a research assistant in the Informatics Faculty office and is a graduate programmer for AAM HATCH software (www.uow.edu.au/~cs321ds6/).

Q&A

Will it save the world? No, but I certainly hope that it will improve the future and raise the motivation of young people to be creative and push their limits.

Time spent trying: 12 months.

Are you getting anywhere?

Yes, our process is evolving and dynamic.

Best part of your research?

The rewarding nature of social interaction with young people and the constructive purpose of the projects/outcomes.

Funniest moment: When one

of our team members kicked the \$600 PDA (personal digital assistant) across the room because his foot got caught on the cable. But the funny thing was that he just continued walking across the room with the PDA dragging behind him.

Ugliest moment: We had to pay for the PDA.

Have you had a true "Eureka! I've found it!" experience?

No, not yet.

Has it made you rich? No, not yet at least.

What did you want to be when you were a kid? I can remember that one of my first dream professions was to be an astronaut. Ever since I got my hands on a computer that goal was modified a bit, but still at the back of my mind there is that astronaut wish.

Has your career followed a straight line? I am in my last semester of study and hoping to start off a career.

What would you change? Nothing.

Advice for young researchers: Be positive in life, take initiative, have faith in yourself and what you can achieve, and always strive for your goals. That is the only way you will become the best you can be because each one of us has the potential.

Next adventure: Looking for further opportunities in my field.

Website: www.uow.edu.au/~cs321ds6 and clubs.uow.edu.au/websites/sife/

Work for the dole is quick on the draw

The Wollongong City Employment Training (WCET) work for the dole program has donated 10 easels to Thirroul Life Drawing.

Thirroul Life Drawing is a non-profit organisation, founded in 1992. It provides many artists a chance to improve their skills in life drawing.

The organisation offers networking opportunities for both professionals and beginners alike.

"Many small non-profit organisations can't afford to upgrade equipment or resources and WCET's work for the dole program provides an excellent alternative," group

founder Roseleen Healy said.

"Considering Thirroul Life Drawing does not own any easels and we normally use flat tables, I thought it would be a great project."

The participants took only five days to construct the easels and learnt fine woodwork skills,

carpentry and joinery along the way.

"The participants have worked extremely hard to finish the easels in such a short amount of time and they are very proud of their work. We used recyclable material for the easels and we are extremely happy to be involved in this important

community project," WCET's Lyn Watkins said.

Not-for-profit organisations and community groups may be eligible for free help from WCET in areas such as renovating, landscaping, construction or even marketing. Contact Lyn Watkins, 4227 1715.



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