Transcript of interview with Heiko Schröder, Head of the School of Computer Science and Information Technology at RMIT University.

Background voice:
What is unique about the School that you head?

Heiko:
There are actually quite a few things that are unique for our School. Our School is 1500 students, one of the biggest Computer Science schools in Australia and it is certainly one of the most successful ones too. Our success is based on having very strong links to industry, for example, on our industry advisory committee we have big companies like IBM, Microsoft, Hewlett Packard, Telstra, but also we have SMEs, and we even have recruitment agencies on it, and this industry advisory board always tells us what is most important for industry.

So also due to advice from industry we have introduced two major features into our programs – one is the minor streams, and one is the major streams. In the minor streams students can already learn here the area of specialisation or the area of application they want to go in when they later on look for a job, and the major stream is a specialisation in a particular area, actually in any area of computer science and IT that they choose.

Our School is one of the absolute strongest in research in Australia. Our research is of international standing and our research is actually use-inspired – our research is always in relation to what industry actually wants, and our research is supported by competitive grants in all our four disciplines. There are, worldwide, quite a few predictions that tell us that IT will grow again very significantly. We are already at a level roughly at the post-collapse time and the needs of, or the shortage of, drops in industry is already quite significant. So we do expect a significant growth, also in terms of student numbers.

We know that industry investment in terms of IT, that is computers and also software, will grow more than it has ever grown before. American predictions are that the spending of companies on computers will multiply by a factor of five in the next ten years. The spending on software will multiply by more than a factor of two in the next ten years. And with these increases that will make the spending on IT by far the biggest spending that companies will have to do in the next ten years.

Background voice:
Professor Schroder, thank you for your time today.

Heiko:
Thank you.