Business Portfolio Research Report 2003

A report on the Business Portfolio’s Australian Research Council (ARC) grant application successes, research scholars recommended for award and DEST approved research publications including books, book chapters, articles in refereed journals and refereed conference papers.

August 2004
The RMIT University, Business Portfolio 2003 Research Report has been compiled by the Research Development Unit with input and assistance from the respective Schools and Centres within the Portfolio.

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RMIT University's Research Mission:

'To undertake research programs that address real-world issues within an international and community context.'

Achieving this Mission in the Business Portfolio:

The Business Portfolio at RMIT University is proactive in establishing close links with industry and addressing research issues that are relevant to business and the communities in which we operate. Through conducting research that has real world relevance, our collaborative ventures yield research that has broad social, economic and cultural benefit that dissolve some of the traditional boundaries that exist between university, business, industry and community.
Message from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business)

Within the Business Portfolio at RMIT University the pursuit of academic excellence, expressed through our scholarship and research is central to all that we do. We are committed to engaging with industry and the community to ensure practical real world focus in our approach to problem solving.

Our research is positioned to maintain high standards of international relevance whilst also seeking to enhance the benefit to local and regional communities.

The Business Portfolio has developed areas of research expertise in seven key fields which include knowledge management and e-business, health services management, financial markets and applied econometrics, entrepreneurship and innovation, practice based research which contributes to professional practice, organizational policy, practice and market effect and infrastructure management. This Report highlights the breadth and depth of research being undertaken by the Business Portfolio which I invite you to explore.

Professor Chris Whitaker
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business)
A key component of the RMIT research mission is about our research and innovation activities making a difference in the communities in which we operate. The Business Portfolio at RMIT University interprets this mission by having its research across a span of business disciplines which contribute to make a difference in solving the business problems of industry and government.

Our significant achievements in 2003 include:

- Further strong growth in publications output continuing the trend of recent years
- Growth in the number of timely completions by research students
- A total research income of in excess of $1 million, including growth in the national competitive components from the ARC and CRCs

A strong growth area in recent times has been success in ARC and CRC programs. Our emphasis on research that makes a difference in providing business solutions has seen us obtain ARC Linkage Grants for a diverse range of projects with industry partners including the ANZ Banking Corporation and Bio Diem Ltd. We have also been involved in a number of projects as part of the CRC for Construction Innovation and the Smart Internet Technology CRC.

The research efforts and achievements of our staff and students are summarised in this publication. They show a strong and growing research base and we congratulate all who have contributed to building on our research successes.

We are well placed for continued research growth into the future.

Professor Robert Brooks
Dean (Research and Innovation)
Australian Research Council (ARC) Research Grant Application Successes

In 2003 the following Australian Research Council (ARC) research grant applications were accepted for funding commencing in 2004.

ARC Discovery

**Associate Professor Sinclair Davidson** and **Professor Tim Fry** from the School of Economics and Finance with Dr. Lisa Farrell from the University of Melbourne were successful with their project entitled: *Economic Reform and Australian Electoral Decision Making.*

**Project Summary:**
Australia has undergone dramatic economic, demographic and social change in the past twenty years. This project will investigate how these changes have impacted upon elector behaviour. With compulsory voting, comprehensive census data and the Australian Election Study an uniquely detailed dataset can be constructed. This dataset and the application of ‘cutting edge’ statistical techniques from the fields of cohort analysis and discrete choice modelling will allow for the untangling of various influences on voter behaviour. With compulsory voting many biases due to voter turnout issues will be avoided making this project an unbiased test. This research will be of international interest and significance, in contributing to understanding of voter behaviour.

This project receives funding of $150,000 over three years commencing in 2004 and will be administered by RMIT University.

Dr. Ollan Henry from the University of Melbourne and **Associate Professor Michael McKenzie** from RMIT’s School of Economic and Finance were successful with their project entitled: *Causes and Consequences of Short Selling for Equity Returns.*

**Project Summary:**
Short selling involves holding negative quantities of an asset. As prices fall, the short position makes profit. Short selling is thought to reflect the market’s expectation of future underperformance. This study aims to explore the determinants and consequences of short selling. In particular we aim to address the following:
1. Do short sales create excessive volatility?
2. Can we price the volatility associated with short selling in a modern risk management framework?
3. What factors underlie the volume of short sales?
4. Should we distinguish between long and short transactions, or is gross traded volume a sufficient measure of turnover?

This project receives funding of $180,000 over three years commencing in 2004 and will be administered by the University of Melbourne.
ARC Linkage

Dr. Roslyn Russell and Professor Robert Brooks from the Research Development Unit along with Judy Morton from Arts Victoria were successful with the project entitled: *Demand and Supply of Creative Arts in Rural and Regional Areas*.

This project is supported by industry partner Arts Victoria.

**Project Summary:**
The arts industry has experienced substantial growth over the last thirty years, providing significant economic and social benefits nationally. While growth in this sector is represented on both the demand and supply sides, it has not been evenly distributed geographically. There is significant difference between the health of the arts industry in the city centres and that of rural and regional areas. This project will investigate entrepreneurial capacity of the arts in regional Victoria and develop best practice business models that promote sustainability in small to medium sized arts enterprises which will in turn aid in the regeneration of regional areas.

This project receives funding of $70,668 over three years for an APA(I) award commencing in 2004 and will be administered by RMIT University.

Professor Bill Martin, Dr. Hepu Deng and Paul Mercieca from the School of Business Information Technology along with Dr. Jonathan Boymal from the School of Economics and Finance were successful for their project entitled: *Competition and Collaboration in the Market for Digital Publishing*.

This project is supported by industry partner CCH Australia Limited.

**Project Summary:**
This is a pioneer, in-depth analysis of the shifting relationships and alliances between key stakeholders in digital publishing, in a context of complexity, rapid technological change and Australian involvement in high value electronic information service markets. Using a multi-staged approach, the project aims to identify the fundamental requirements and expectations of key stakeholders in digital publishing. The outcomes will include an ecological analysis of the digital publishing space and a redefinition of value propositions and business models with practical significance for Australia’s participation in the information economy in general, and for the development of the digital publishing industry in particular.

This project receives funding of $70,668 over three years for an APA(I) award commencing in July 2004 and will be administered by RMIT University.
school of
Accounting &
Law

RMIT UNIVERSITY
Head of School: Professor Shelia Bellamy
Director of Research: Professor Craig Deegan

The School of Accounting and Law's research efforts tend to focus around a number of key areas, these being: public sector accounting; e-Business Law; social and environmental accounting; ethics and corporate governance.

Apart from the research within the above areas, staff within the School also regularly author a number of textbooks that are leaders within their respective fields. These books in themselves typically require a considerable deal of research, and include: Internal Control and Corporate Governance, Prentice Hall; Australian Financial Accounting, McGraw Hill; Financial Accounting Theory, McGraw Hill, Modern Auditing and Assurance Services, Wiley, Understanding Company Law, Law Book Company; and, Essential Corporations Legislation, Law Book Company.

In relation to our research student completions in June 2003, Trevor Wilmshurst (under the senior supervision of Professor Craig Deegan) completed his PhD entitled: A metaphoric approach to stakeholder theory - the decision to report environmental information. Trevor has subsequently now been recommended for award of his Doctorate in 2004.

In recent times the School has undertaken efforts to attract quality research students. The results of this effort have led to a number of new enrolments in both our Research Masters degree and our PhD program. Current students within the School are identified below, together with details of their respective topics and principal supervisor.

**Kevin Adams, PhD Candidate**
Thesis title: Corporate social reporting and auditing
Senior Supervisor: Professor Max Aiken

**Hong Nee Ang, Master of Business by Research**
Thesis title: Corporate environmental governance of the Australian wood and paper industry
Senior Supervisor: Professor Craig Deegan

**Huei-Chun Chang, PhD Candidate**
Thesis title: Greening of RMIT Business: an environmental management accounting case study
Senior Supervisor: Professor Craig Deegan

**Chung Ho Fong, PhD Candidate**
Thesis title: Social and environmental accounting
Senior Supervisor: Professor Craig Deegan

**Beata Nagy, PhD Candidate**
Thesis title: Triple Bottom Line Assurance Reports
Senior Supervisor: Professor Craig Deegan
Robert Grose, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Analysis of the short and medium term effectiveness of Australia’s administration and activity test breaching regime  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Max Aiken

Allan Molland, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Financial decisions and reporting by Victorian local authorities: an investigation into the financial decisions made from depreciation costs and their implication  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Sheila Bellamy

Michaela Rankin, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Determinants of executive remuneration: Australian evidence  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Sheila Bellamy

Tom Rowles, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Development of concepts of income and capital in early financial reporting: an historical study  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Sheila Bellamy

Sharon Soltys, Master of Business by Research  
Thesis title: Community expectations and the community licence to operate: corporate interpretations  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Craig Deegan

Bulend Terzioglu, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Internal transfer pricing in services: a value-chain framework  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Robert Clift

Kim Watty, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Quality in accounting: an empirical analysis of academic accountants views  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Robert Clift

Grace Wong, Master of Business by Research  
Thesis title: Accounting education  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Barry Cooper

Antony Young, PhD Candidate  
Thesis title: Accountants acceptance of a verification mark  
Senior Supervisor: Professor Robert Clift

In addition to the research degrees listed above, several staff are supervising students undertaking a thesis in the Doctor of Business Administration degree.

Research Publications

A1 Books


C1 Journal Articles


Research Scholars Recommended for Award

**David Moore**, Master of Business by Research  
Thesis title: *Environmental management accounting and effluent treatment and disposal: an investigation into the classification and allocation of costs within a water authority.*  
Supervisors: Dr. Barry Hutton and Dr. Pat O’Brien

David’s topic originated from the observation that effluent treatment is of concern to various stakeholders who obtain benefit from the coastal environment, such as surfers. The challenge with his research became to determine how accounting information could be used to manage, and possibly mitigate, the associated environmental impact.

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Researcher Profiles

Professor Margaret Jackson, Professor of Computer Law

Professor Margaret Jackson returned to the School of Accounting and Law in May 2003, having completed a three-year term as Dean and Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Business Portfolio. Margaret's primary research area is the legal protection of information, which directly links into her postgraduate course “e-Business Law” in the Master of e-Business.

In 2003, Margaret completed a book titled: *A Practical Guide to Protecting Confidential Business Information*. This is a book designed for corporate lawyers and business managers. She was invited to give a keynote presentation to the Knowledge Management Conference in Penang in August 2003 on one aspect of the book, that of protection of globalised business information and whether legal protection was available. This paper, titled: ‘Globalised information - Can the law cope?’ was included as a refereed paper in the *International Journal of Knowledge, Culture and Change Management*.

On her return to the School, Margaret joined the User-Centred Design Group led by Associate Professor Supriya Singh. The Group is part of the Smart Internet Technology Co-operative Research Centre (SITCRC), a multi-university, multidisciplinary research program. Margaret's contribution has been in the areas of data protection, privacy and intellectual property law. She also published an article, ‘Internet privacy’, in the *Telecommunications Journal of Australia*. Her aim has been to clarify how the new laws governing information privacy should be interpreted for technology design.

In a totally different field of research, in 2003, Margaret was awarded a research grant through the RMIT Centre for Entrepreneurship to investigate the role of Farmer's Markets as regional incubators. The project will be completed in 2004.

Kim Watty, current PhD candidate

In August 2004, research student (and School of Accounting and Law staff member) Kim Watty will submit her PhD thesis titled: *Quality in accounting education - An empirical analysis of academic accountants' views*. The thesis is an investigation into academic accountants' views of various aspects of quality in accounting education. The purpose of the enquiry is to explore, describe, and understand these views with the aim of developing a theoretical profile of academic accountants' views of quality. In the thesis, it is argued that a view of quality that is clearly articulated, will command greater recognition in the continuing discourse around quality at both academic and policy-making levels within the university sector of Australian higher education. The research question investigated is: What are academic accountants' views about quality in accounting education?

The findings of the research show that academic accountants are united and consistent in their beliefs (what is) about quality in accounting education, which differ from their attitudes (what ought to be) about quality in accounting education. In addition, a majority of respondents indicated that the quality of accounting education, as viewed in their immediate working environment (schools/departments), has declined. These findings question the effectiveness of current internal and external quality assurance mechanisms and present a theoretical profile of the views of academic accountants that should be considered in further quality and quality assurance policy developments.
The year 2003 was one of steady consolidation for the research effort in the School of Business Information Technology. The School Research Strategy continued along its three-pronged trajectory: recruitment of research students, enhancement of publication profile and submissions for grant funding from the Australian Research Council (ARC). Student numbers continued to be buoyant with a number of students successfully completing. A highlight for the year was the ARC Linkage success for a grant involving Professor Bill Martin, Dr. Hepu Deng and Paul Mercieca from the School of Business Information Technology together with Dr. Jonathan Boymal from the School of Economics and Finance and industry partner CCH Australia Limited. This grant will provide funding for an Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry) scholarship to investigate competition and collaboration in the market for digital publishing. In addition to this the feedback on other ARC Linkage and Discovery applications improved. Dr McKay, newly-appointed Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Human Computer Interaction, was also, successful in winning funding from the Telematics Trust, the RMIT Foundation and the Virtual Research Institute scheme. One of our doctoral students Tayyab Maqsood along with colleague Andrew Finegan and Professor Derek Walker from the CRC in Construction Innovation also won an RMIT Research Innovation (Group) Award within the Business Portfolio.

During 2003 however, perhaps the most notable feature of the School's research performance was that it clearly demonstrated that staff have attained critical mass as a body of published scholars. Not only was the refereed publications list longer than ever before, but also it contained a significant number of new contributors, both in terms of people who were first-time authors and those whose area of expertise marked a new area of research endeavour for the School. Noticeable among the latter were topics in such fields as digital and electronic publishing, knowledge and innovation in the construction industry and e-business models. It was also particularly gratifying to see our research students well represented both in the lists of authors of refereed journal articles and as presenters or co-presenters of papers at major refereed conferences.

These developments bode well not just for the burgeoning research culture within the School but also for its future profile and sustainability as a research unit.

Research Publications

**B1 Book Chapter**


**C1 Journal Articles**


Research Scholars Recommended for Award

Youngmi Choi, Master of Business by Research
Thesis title: The use of information and communication technologies by the boutique fashion small and medium sized enterprises in Melbourne.
Supervisors: Associate Professor Supriya Singh and Ms. Karen Webster

Youngmi’s thesis investigates the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by the clothing industry, particularly the boutique fashion industry. Triggered by increasing competitiveness in domestic and international markets, Youngmi’s research explores the benefits of adoption (and further adoption) of ICTs, with e-commerce given particular focus as it seen as providing a new opportunity to improve competitiveness. Youngmi’s research places the boutique fashion designers and their activities at the centre of her research in which she explores how their activities fit with ICTs and how these technologies in turn fit or do not fit with the designers activities.

Emma Coath*, Master of Business by Research
Thesis title: Regional agribusiness clusters: An Australian example.
Supervisor: Professor Bill Martin

Emma’s research focused on the opportunity for networks of producers in the Australian agri-food industry to use the Internet to enhance their activities. There is a growing awareness among those involved in the agri-food industry in Australia that collaboration has become a prerequisite for sustainable competitive advantage in both domestic and international markets. Although not only a prerequisite for success, the Internet has become a useful tool for agri-food networks to achieve their objectives by enhancing their ability to keep up with current business practices. Emma’s research found that by the creation and utilisation of a website, the Internet can be used as a marketing tool to capture new markets for its members, both individually and collectively. This enables a more efficient means of disseminating information to members and provides a platform for sharing information. Emma’s research has now been extended into her ARC funded current PhD topic where she is investigating best practice supply chain model for exporting Australia’s fresh produce to global retailers in Thailand.

Cynthia Moussi*, PhD
Thesis title: Approaches to the adoption of e-business in Victorian manufacturing small to medium enterprises (SMEs).
Supervisors: Professor Bill Martin and Mr Bill Davey

In researching the adoption of e-business in small and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises in Victoria, this thesis confirmed that Australian SMEs have been slow to adopt e-business practices. Contrary to conventional wisdom however, this low level of adoption has not been detrimental either for the firms concerned or national competitiveness. In her research Cynthia developed a model that can be used by SMEs to assess their own level of progress in this regard and to isolate specific potential obstacles to e-business growth.

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Researcher Profiles

Dr. France Cheong

Dr. France Cheong worked as an Industrial Chemist and Management Information Systems Consultant in Mauritius before migrating to Australia. He holds science, engineering, management and business degrees. He obtained his PhD in Computer Systems Engineering from La Trobe University. He worked as a sessional tutor and lecturer in the Department of Computer Science and Computer Engineering of La Trobe University and as a lecturer in the School of Computing Science of Queensland University of Technology. Prior to joining RMIT University, he worked in industry as a Java Software Engineer at Verve Inc. and as a contract Java Developer in the IT Department of the Country Fire Authority (CFA).

Due to his multi-disciplinary background, Dr. Cheong’s research interests are also multi-disciplinary in nature. He has successfully used fuzzy logic and evolutionary algorithms in engineering systems and currently is using modelling and simulation techniques in the business area (e-business, mobile commerce, economics and finance, management, manufacturing systems, etc). Modelling and simulation techniques used include: system dynamics, fuzzy logic, Bayesian networks, evolutionary algorithms, multi-agent systems and artificial immune systems. Dr. Cheong is supervising a group of 5 research students who are using some of these techniques.

Carmine Sellitto, recently completed PhD candidate

Carmine Sellitto's research examined Internet adoption by small Australian wineries. The research identified winery e-business best practices based on the experiences and perceptions of a group of early Internet adopters. In an age were numerous generic e-business models have been proposed, very few are industry specific. Indeed, this project in identifying industry specific e-business practices provides for Australian wineries an important template on which to found their Internet adoption strategies. Furthermore, because of the specificity of the research, the identified practices allow Australian wineries to gain a degree of competitive advantage over their overseas counterparts who are international competitors that are yet to engage in this type of Internet examination.

Although the identified best practices compose the foundations of the project several other aspects of the research stand out as being innovative. The study is one of the few to report the diffusion of the Internet amongst a defined cluster within an industry sector, and as such is viewed as a significant contribution to the growing work on clusters. The literature suggests that cluster participants are interdependent with close business interaction at all levels, hence the usefulness of the Internet within a cluster will be dependent on the degree of Internet adoption by all constituents. Another notable aspect of the research were findings that suggested the existence of an important knowledge dimension associated with Internet best practice. The knowledge intense nature of the Australian wine industry in areas of viticulture and winemaking is well documented - this research is the first to identify a knowledge dimension in the industry beyond the primary activities associated with direct grape growing and wine making.

Carmine’s research won the 2004 RMIT University Student Innovation Award within the Business Portfolio.
Research occupies a central position within the School of Economics and Finance. In 2003 the School continued to produce research outputs in both the professional literature and in the popular press reflecting our strong real world focus in applied research. Our research interests include financial markets, corporate finance and governance, empirical finance, public choice and applied econometrics. These research interests are focused on both the domestic and international markets and the School continues to have great success in attracting international students to its post-graduate research degrees. The School continued to run its research seminar series with a mixture of external and internal speakers. The series attracted good attendances including many people from other Schools in RMIT and from other universities and organisations.

During 2003, 4 students were recommended for award of their research degrees. Two of our researchers Dr. Heather Mitchell (senior lecturer) and Juliana Yim (PhD student) were awarded a Certificate of Award for Best Paper by The International Society of Applied Intelligence for their paper ‘A comparison of corporate failure models in Australia: hybrid neural networks, logit models and discriminant analysis’. Associate Professor Sinclair Davidson and Professor Tim Fry, along with Dr. Lisa Farrell of the University of Melbourne, were successful in the 2003 round of Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery grants to fund the project: Economic Reform and Australian Electoral Decision Making. Associate Professor Michael McKenzie, along with Dr. Olan Henry of Melbourne University were also successful in the 2003 round of Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery grants to fund their project: Causes and Consequences of Short Selling for Equity Returns. Both of these projects will commence in 2004.

Work continued on other ARC funded projects. Professor Richard Heaney was involved on a Discovery grant with Professor Shirley Gregor and Professor Terry O’Neill at the Australian National University and Professor Doug Foster and Professor Robert Wood at the University of New South Wales. This research focuses on the impact of the introduction of electronic trading systems. Professor Tim Fry was involved in a Discovery project joint with Professor Brooks (RMIT) and Professor Robert Faff (Monash University) on the application of microeconometric techniques in finance. Particularly, in modelling risk and return in markets with thin trading.

Professor Tim Fry was extensively involved in research work with Starcom Worldwide Pty. Ltd. that investigated the determinants of advertising effectiveness and return on investment in advertising. A well-attended seminar ‘Modelling advertising effectiveness using adstock models’ held in August reviewed the methodology typically employed in such research. Starcom and their clients are also using the research as an input into media planning and buying decisions.
Research Publications

A1 Books


B1 Book Chapter


C1 Journal Articles


**E1 Conference Proceedings**


**Research Scholars Recommended for Award**

**Reikman Aritonang, PhD**

Thesis title: *The effect of non debt tax shield on capital structure: Indonesian evidence*

Supervisors: Associate Professor Michael McKenzie and Associate Professor Sinclair Davidson

Reikman's research considered non-debt tax shields such as depreciation expense and loss carry forward which provide alternative tax deductions to interest expense in offsetting taxable income. It is hypothesised that firms with lower non-debt tax shields will employ greater debt in their capital structure, however, the empirical evidence on this matter is inconclusive. The dissertation, using Indonesian data, developed theoretical models to show that the negative relationship between non-debt tax shields and capital structure is valid if the optimal capital structure level is considered.

**John Gionea, PhD**

Thesis title: *Trends and prospects in the global food grain sector: opportunities for Australia's food grain industry*

Supervisors: Professor Robert Brooks and Associate Professor Michael McKenzie

John's PhD thesis analyses the future prospects for two of Australia's major agricultural exports, specifically wheat and rice. John investigates the history of changes in the trading environment for major commodities...
and also the influences of globalisation. The thesis develops a market assessment measure to rate countries for future growth prospects.

**Hoa Thuan Nguyen**, PhD  
**Thesis title:** *Determinants of derivatives usage and risk management practices by Australian corporations.*  
**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Sinclair Davidson and Professor Robert Faff

Corporate risk management practices have emerged as a controversial issue in recent times. This is due largely to a lack of understanding of risk management practices in the Australian context. Hoa’s thesis reports empirical evidence that suggests Australian corporations employ financial derivatives with a view to enhancing shareholder value by taking advantage of market imperfections. Further, Australian corporations in general, adopt a rational approach to risk management and as such corporate risk management is a worthwhile exercise.

**Bruce Cowling**, PhD  
**Thesis title:** *Were Australian government business enterprises over capitalised? An application of the Averch-Johnson methodology to Australia Post, Telecom and Qantas over the period 1975 to 1988.*  
**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Sinclair Davidson and Dr. John Shannon

The aim of Bruce’s thesis was to establish whether the extent of competition faced by state owned enterprises effects their use of resources - in particular whether these firms employ more capital than their unregulated counterparts. The findings supported this hypothesis. This is an important result as it not only provides support for the Government's corporatisation policies of the 1990s but also provides support for the introduction of further competitive policies for Australian businesses.

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**Researcher Profiles**

**Professor Richard Heaney, Professor of Finance**

Richard's research interests include corporate governance, commodity pricing, asset pricing models, derivative pricing, derivative use and portfolio theory. He has published widely in internationally recognised journals, taught in a range of finance courses at both undergraduate and graduate level, supervised at honours, Masters and PhD level and has held various academic positions during his career, including head of department, convener of graduate program and convener of honours program. Prior to becoming an academic he worked as a programmer and as an accountant and is a member of the Australian Computer Society (MACS), a Fellow of CPA Australia (FCPA) and a Certified Finance and Treasury Professional (CFTP).

There are two grants driving much of his current research. The first is a large ARC grant dealing with the behaviour of inexperienced traders in electronic markets. This involves the use of computer-based experiments to increase understanding of the trading behaviour of new traders and to develop tools and procedures that help these traders make more informed trading decisions. The second is a RMIT Virtual
Research and Innovation Institute (VRII) grant focusing on corporate governance. This grant has allowed the team to gather data on a wide range of international firms with a view to studying the links between governance mechanisms and corporate performance, in particular the sensitivity of size and composition of the senior management team to prior period performance.

**Bronwyn Coate, current PhD candidate**

Bronwyn's research is located within the field of cultural economics. In particular her PhD looks at the economics of authenticity focusing on the Australian fine art market. Bronwyn's research considers from a theoretical perspective demand and supply side factors for art and how these impact upon the market. These theoretical underpinnings provide a basis upon which assumptions are made and hypotheses formed. Currently Bronwyn's research is focused on testing the developed hypotheses by an empirical study of identified characteristics affecting the price determination for Australian art works sold at auction. Using an extensive dataset containing details on art sales and associated characteristics her research considers different clusters of factors associated with the artist, the artwork and the auction house in determining price for Australian fine art.

Furthermore in light of the nature of the Australian art market which has a sizable proportion of indigenous artists, focus has been given to whether differences exist in price determination of indigenous art compared to non-indigenous art. This is particularly relevant given the growing interest in indigenous art which has since the mid to late twentieth century gained wider recognition, resulting in its entry to international museums, galleries and auction markets. Recently Bronwyn presented a paper entitled 'A comparison of the prices for Australian indigenous and non-indigenous art at auction: 1995 - 2003' at the 13th International Conference for the Association of Cultural Economics held in Chicago.

Bronwyn hopes to complete her PhD by mid 2006. Her supervisors are Dr. Jonathan Boymal and Professor Tim Fry.
school of

Management

RMIT UNIVERSITY
During 2003 the School of Management maintained a focus on research in the area of Health Services Management while developing significant achievements in the areas of Knowledge Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Reflective Practice. The Director of Research was Associate Professor Rosalie Holian, the Program Co-ordinator for the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) was Dr. Paul Gibson. Associate Professor Carlene Boucher was the Program Co-ordinator for the PhD and Master of Business by Research Programs. Ms Lynne Koochew continued to manage the administration for the DBA, PhD and Master of Business by Research programs.

In 2003, a total of 103 postgraduate students were undertaking research programs within the School including 37 PhD students, 26 Master of Business by Research students and 40 DBA students. We congratulate Elizabeth Dimitriadis, Master of Business by Research candidate, also Lionel Boxer, Bill Callaghan, Suthida Jamsai and Jennifer Lehmann who were Doctor of Philosophy candidates, and Sheila Doyle, Donald Fraser, Claire Noone and Ayman Shrebati who were Doctor of Business Administration candidates. All these candidates from our research programs were recommended for award during 2003. This number of successful completions is the highest that the School has achieved in any one year.

Innovations in our research programs included the DBA Program Team continuing to examine ways in which the coursework content and assessment can complement the candidates’ research work. They are also working on building an awareness of epistemological issues into all of the courses, as a key feature of the Program.

Health Services Management continued to be an area of research strength. A team from the School obtained external funding for a new joint project with Northern Health Service examining ways of best using reflective practice as a management development tool. Associate Professor Carlene Boucher also organised a workshop for about 85 health managers to share recent thinking on change management in the health sector. A group led by Ian Woodruff is nearing completion of a Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing funded research consultancy to develop costing guidelines for Australian Hospitals.

Key researchers in the area of Knowledge Management included Associate Professor Sandra Jones and Marianne Gloet. Dr. Fang Zhao continued her research into innovation and Tim O'Shannassy continued to publish extensively on various aspects of strategy. A new staff member, Dr. James Latham added strength to the School's research profile in the area of critical management studies. Associate Professor Julie Wolfram Cox whose research interests include aesthetic perspectives on organisation
theory and research, particularly organizational change also joined the School.

Two staff were awarded grants as part of the Business Portfolio in Industry Program. Dr. Fang Zhao spent time doing research at Seimens Pty. Ltd. and Ian Woodruff was able to continue his research at Melbourne Health Service.

Staff and students within the School continued to be involved in a range of research topics. Research outputs in addition to academic publications listed in this report included articles in professional journals and presentations at international conferences. Areas of research covered included health services management, knowledge management, innovation and entrepreneurship, reflective practice, management education, strategic planning and strategic thinking, decision making, corporate governance and ethics, human resource management, careers, diversity, gender and international and cross-cultural management issues. The School continued its practice of holding a series of Research Seminars on current issues delivered by a combination of staff, students and invited guests including Professor John Hassard from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST). Areas covered include reports on various conferences staff had attended and topics such as information privacy, strategy, research supervision, organisation structure, boundary management and industrial relations research and practice.

Research Publications

B1 Book Chapter


C1 Journal Articles


Zhao, F. (2003), 'Enhancing the quality of online higher education through measurement', Quality Assurance in Education, Vol. 11, No. 4, pp. 214-221.


Zhao, F. (2003), 'Enhancing the effectiveness of research and research supervision through reflective practice', UltiBase Journal, July, available on-line at: http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au

E1 Conference Proceedings


Brigden, C. (2003), 'Exploring power, space and scale in the aftermath of the trades hall council 'Split', Proceedings of the 16th Conference of the Association of Industrial Relations Academics of Australia and New Zealand (AIRAANZ), Teicher, J., Holland, P. & Turberville, S. (Eds), AIRAANZ, New Zealand.


Hiley, T. (2003), 'Understanding the current crisis of 'culturally-induced autism' and the potential for 're-sounding' Western organizations', Proceedings of the 4th International Conference for the Advancement of Organizational Excellence, Boxer, L. (Ed), Intergon, Australia.


McNicholas, B. (2003), 'Postmodern influences on arts and business relationships: the shift from arts sponsorship to strategic cultural partnerships', *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference for the Advancement of Organisational Excellence*, Boxer, L. (Ed), Intergon, Australia.


Nousala, S. (2003), 'Investigations into research methodologies for cultural analysis', *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference for the Advancement of Organizational Excellence*, Boxer, L. (Ed), Intergon, Australia.


O'Shannassy, T. (2003), 'High level uncertainty and excellence in strategy process and content response: Qualitative insights from the aviation, insurance and mining industries', *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference for the Advancement of Organizational Excellence*, Boxer, L. (Ed), Intergon, Australia.

O'Shannassy, T. (2003), 'Qualitative insights into internal and external stakeholder roles in contemporary strategy process from the top down', *Proceedings of the 17th ANZAM Conference*, Brown, A. (Ed), ANZAM, Australia.


Zhao, F. (2003), 'Academic entrepreneurship in the commercialisation of research outcomes', *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference for the Advancement of Organizational Excellence*, Boxer, L. (Ed), RMIT, Melbourne.


Research Scholars Recommended for Award

Lionel Boxer CD, PhD
Thesis title: Using positioning theory to understand how senior managers deal with sustainability issues.
Supervisors: Professor John Dalrymple and Professor Peter Sheldrake

Lionel's PhD commenced mid-1999 to understand why some organisations deal with issues well, while others do not. He previously noticed a pattern in CEOs who dealt with issues, but was unable to articulate it other than to say leadership was the key. Sustainability was selected to focus the thesis, because it is an urgent issue facing contemporary organisations. Nevertheless, Lionel defined sustainability as part of obligatory and externally imposed (OEI) issues, including quality, safety and equality.

Having secured several CEOs willing to participate, interview transcripts were subjected to discourse analysis using a positioning theory framework. Oxford University Professor Rom Harré's positioning theory puts forth that people define themselves and others through discursive action. That is to say, identity is derived from conversation. Working through citations, Lionel noticed a strong influence on Harré's seminal positioning theory work in Collège de France, Professor Michel Foucault's theories. In returning to Foucault, Lionel contributed to the development of positioning theory in a way that Harré chose to include Lionel's work in his second positioning theory text, The Sell and Others.

Lionel's PhD shows that, while culture - defined by rights, duties, morals and actions - determines conversation and subsequent creation of selves, the reverse is true. Through alternate positioning and appropriate conversation culture can be changed. Lionel identified patterns of positioning and conversation initiated by CEOs through which culture was aligned with intentions of dealing with sustainability issues. Details of his thesis are at http://intergon.net/phd

Please note this information concerning Lionel's PhD also appears on p.62 in the Centre for Management Quality Research section of this Report.

Elizabeth Dimitriadis, Master of Business by Research
Supervisor: Associate Professor Carlene Boucher

The objective of Elizabeth's study was to explore how Australian managers of Greek background understand, articulate, value, perceive and utilise their biculturalism in their management work, and how this can inform understandings of cultural diversity in management. The study explored the experiences of Greek-Australian managers in order to develop a description of the impact that ethno-cultural identity can have on individual managers. The ultimate aim of the research was to contribute to the emerging body of knowledge that addresses cultural diversity in management and organisations.
In addition, the study aimed to delve into ways of researching and reporting on ethno-cultural experience in management, and to consider how lived experiences may be described and theorised in ways that honour and include people’s subjective emotional experiences. The research identified the difficulty of generating discussion on the subject of management and cultural diversity. The analysis Elizabeth presented reveals that the themes considered within the study do not fit easily into existing management theory, and that attempting to do so runs the risk of stereotyping Greek-Australian managers or developing theoretical frameworks that might be alienating for the individuals being described. Supporting the views of other researchers, it is asserted that management development needs to acknowledge cultural diversity as an integral part of modern organisations and as such reflect it in management education and training in a way that recognises that ethno-cultural identity is not merely a minority group issue.

Suthida Jamsai, PhD
Supervisors: Associate Professor Rosalie Holian and Associate Professor Ken Wright

Suthida’s thesis proposed a descriptive model of how Thai managers acted and adjusted to rapidly changing business requirements and the needs of employees during the 1997 Asian economic crisis. The model Suthida developed illustrates the different ways in which the managers developed Strategic Human Resource Management Plans and played differing roles to overcome various levels of difficulties faced by companies. The model may be useful for dealing with future crises and changes occurring as a result of unstable business environments.

Jennifer Lehmann, PhD
Thesis title: *Managing organisational change in rural social and community services: the nature of the experience.*
Supervisors: Associate Professor Rosalie Holian, Associate Professor Gary Hough and Associate Professor Carlene Boucher.

Jennifer’s thesis examined the nature of the experience of Australian Rural Social and Community Services (SACS) Managers, in particular the nature of the management of change in community-based Health and Welfare organisations during the late 1990s. This qualitative research used interpretive and social constructivist approaches. Six interrelated perspectives or meta-themes were developed.

Claire Noone, DBA
Supervisors: Professor Margaret Jackson

Claire’s thesis examines compliance programs in Australian organisations using Australian Standards - AS3806 to assess their practices. It finds that firms have done little to embed compliance into the day to day activities of their business. Firms focus their compliance activities on education and training. The research shows that there are three broad types of organisations - 'the law abiders', who emphasise legal compliance; 'the image makers' who are concerned with image and the 'internal communicators' who emphasise values and behaviours.

Bill Callaghan*, PhD
Supervisor: Professor Clive Morley

The core objectives of Bill’s research were to investigate the lack of congruence between segmentation theory and management practice and subsequently to determine the nature of improvements required to
develop a more effective strategic approach. The research was largely based on marketing practitioners' input and Bill considers this practice based approach offered much insight contributing to the development of marketing theory.

**Sheila Doyle**, DBA  
**Thesis title:** Challenges and success strategies for IT management: evidence from a global case study  
**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Erica Hallebone and Mr Tam Vu

Sheila's research examined how rapid IT change, diversity in the workforce, globalization and IT outsourcing impact on the way IT managers perform their role. The research identified 12 challenges for IT management and outlined practical guidelines to help cope with these challenges. The research also highlighted success strategies for managing IT-business relationships, IT-supplier relationships and leveraging IT for business success.

**Donald Fraser**, DBA  
**Thesis title:** IT governance: Australia company directors and IT decision making  
**Supervisors:** Associate Professor Rosalie Holian and Mr Eugene Falk

Donald's thesis is a qualitative study of Australian corporate governance. Interviews and analysis address how directors undertake their IT governance responsibilities. Directors approach IT matters with well-developed selection decision-making and governance techniques. Whilst diversity is commonly sought when appointing directors, IT skills are rarely specifically sought. A shortage of IT expertise within the board impacts how well directors execute this responsibility.

**Ayman Shrebati**, DBA  
**Thesis title:** Barriers to customer orientation in the luxury hospitality environment: the view from the frontline.  
**Supervisors:** Professor Clive Morley and an external industry supervisor

Prior to this study, the published research on customer orientation of service workers has relied on supervisors' and self-reports in industries where the customer orientation construct was not significant. Consequently, Ayman's study used a structured observation protocol in the luxury hospitality environment to ascertain the determinants of frontline employees' customer oriented behaviour. The major finding of this research is that extraversion is less important than the frontline employees' personal culture and professional background congruence with the service model.

* In previous years Research Student Completions have been included in the annual Research Report rather than Research Scholars Recommended for Award. This has resulted in some students who completed in 2002 but where recommended for award in 2003 appearing in both this current report and the previous report.

**Researcher Profiles**

**Associate Professor Sandra Jones, Associate Professor of Employment Relations**

During 2003 Sandra made several major research contributions in the concentrations of Knowledge Management and Organisational Sustainability. In particular she developed a new theory of employment (industrial) relations for a knowledge economy, that resulted in her paper being chosen for the Plenary Session of the 13th World Congress of the
International Industrial Relations in Berlin (http://www.fu-berlin.de/iira2003). The paper was subsequently published in the German Journal of Industrial Relations (Industrielle Beziehungen). Sandra is currently collaborating with colleagues from several countries including Canada, USA and the UK to edit a book of case study that illustrate this theory, and has been invited to visit colleagues in Canada in 2005. On the basis of a new theory of relationship negotiations for cross-cultural environment that Sandra presented at the British Academy of Management Conference in the UK, she accepted an invitation from the Harvard University Law School to participate in a Negotiation Master Class, and has since been invited to undertake a research sabbatical at Harvard.

As well as her discipline-based research, Sandra has engaged in, and developed, innovative approaches to research supervision that resulted in a collaborative paper delivered at the RMIT Research conference in 2003 that has since been extended into a paper delivered at the Management Conference in Greenwich, UK. Furthermore, Sandra has established a Research Community of Practice with her DBA, PhD, and research candidates that has received positive response from the candidates and formed the basis of a collaborative practice-based reflective research paper.

Finally, Sandra has extended her practice-based research in teaching and learning into how flexible learning opportunities and quality improvement processes can be used as the basis for new partnership links between universities and industries in a global economy.

**Dr. Julian Lippi, recently completed PhD candidate**

The title of Julian's thesis is: *Doing, knowing and being: bringing Athena out of the shadow to illuminate the mentoring archetype and to guide practice.*

His supervisors were Associate Professor Carlene Boucher, Dr. Nita Cherry and Associate Professor Rosalie Holian and he recently completed in December 2003 and has been recommended for award of his Doctorate in 2004.

Prior to commencing his research, Julian worked as an academic, broadcast journalist, manager and as a consultant for over 20 years. His interest in mentoring was stimulated by his work as a consultant from the early 1990s helping managers with their development by working 'one on one'.

Julian's thesis was an exploration of the construct of mentoring and its transformative power in the development of self. The concept of Athenic mentoring was offered and framed in Jungian terms as an archetypical encounter between two people that can facilitate a significant transformative shift (metanoia) in the development of the personal and professional self. These shifts are initially at the level of 'being' but influence the more visible dimensions of 'doing' and 'knowing'. A major outcome of this research was the differentiation of Athenic mentoring, facilitating the transformation of a person's 'being', from mentoring that helps to develop what a person 'knows' or 'does'.

It was concluded that Athenic mentoring might not be, fully or even partly, recognised until well after it occurs and that because it involves the psychodynamic and largely unconscious interplay of one person's dominant archetypes with those of another, it is not something that can be easily orchestrated or arranged. This challenged contemporary notions that mentoring can be packaged, 'commodified' and paid for in a similar way to counselling and coaching.

As a stimulus for further work, it was suggested that the role of mentor can be understood as completing or starting aspects of the development of self that have not been initiated or concluded in the parenting
relationship. Further, the possibility for being a mentor or a mentee continues throughout life, or for at least as long as there remains the possibility that a ‘Dream’ can be fulfilled (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee 1978).

**Christine Murphy, current DBA candidate**

Christine Murphy spent the first half of her business career in the hospitality and retail sectors within private enterprise. The second half of Chris’ career has been in the non-profit sector, predominantly leading organisations through changing and turbulent times. Like many, Chris’ entrance into the world of the non-profit was accidental, however, Chris found that once she was immersed in the complex and paradoxical nature of operating effectively within the sector, it has became a quest for her to understand and improve the way in which non-profits are operated and governed.

As CEO of a non-profit organisation and through her membership on a number of national non-profit boards, in her research Chris has been able to draw upon her extensive experience as a practicing manager in both commercial and non-profit sectors. Within Chris’ research which investigates how non-profit boards reconcile their mission with the need to be financially sustainable, the merits of modelling non-profit organisations on commercial principles are questioned. In her own work and professional practice Chris has found her research has prompted her to keep foremost in mind the underlying mission of the organisations she represents, to ensure the strategic direction and actions of the organisation is aligned to the fulfillment and achievement of the mission and not simply to the attainment of bottom line results. Chris believes that the recognition and support of the mission is the driver to achieve long term sustainability in non-profit organisations. This shifts the organisational paradigm of non-profits from being like they are in the commercial sector which is fundamentally functionalist to being interpretive. In her management and leadership roles within the non-profit sector Chris is focused upon the social actors and how people both within the organisation and external stakeholders can shape the organisation and in turn its future. This is complimented by an understanding of rationalist language and behaviour which drives the commercial world and which can be used to further differentiate and leverage non profit organisations to achieve their stated missions.
For the School of Marketing, 2003 heralded another productive research period. Research funding demonstrated an increment on the previous year, as did the number of DEST research publications, which included 3 book chapters, 9 refereed journal articles, and 15 refereed conference publications.

On top of existing ARC Linkage projects, the School continues to develop applied collaborative ties with industry partners. During 2003, the School submitted 2 ARC Linkage (APAI) grant applications. Moreover, the School completed 3 major Industry-based and funded research projects:

- **BRW Fast 100**
  It is noteworthy that the BRW Fast 100 study culminated in the entire issue of the magazine being devoted to the study. Carol Tan, one of the School’s 16 postgraduate research students, is undertaking her PhD project in this area which is led by Professor Kosmas Smyrnios.

- **Family Business Global Leadership Study**
  This project was funded by the Family Business Network and the International Family Enterprise Research Academy and was led by Professor Kosmas Smyrnios.

- **The BDO Nelson RMIT Australian Business Growth study**
  This was a further research project led by Professor Kosmas Smyrnios and also Associate Professor Rhett Walker.

The School’s Research Committee, comprising Professor Kosmas Smyrnios (Chair), Associate Professor Booi Kam, Dr. Anthony Lowe, Associate Professor Michael Schwartz, and (formerly) Associate Professor Walker met on a regular basis and continues to do so. Matters relating to the fostering of a robust research culture and research concentrations within the School provide a significant focus. Systematic processes for assessing School support for conference attendances and Staff Development are in place, and form an important function for the Committee.

The School maintains it colloquium series and notable speakers in 2003 included: Catherine Carrigan, a Senior Defence Logistician involved in logistics planning for operations for the Australian Army; and Ross MacDowell, a successful entrepreneur and writer.

The School has a number of research student candidates, carrying out research in the areas of logistics, marketing, and hospitality and tourism. Examples of the research being undertaken by these students include:

- **The capacity of ports for sea-containerizable cargoes**
- **Quality of nature-based tourism in the Lorne to Port Campbell region: a stakeholder perspective**
The impact of customer-service provider relationship quality on loyalty in a technology-enabled service context: a study of the Web based retailing sector
Competitive/comparative advantage of fast growth firms
A best practice supply chain model for exporting fresh food from Australia to multinational food retailers in Thailand
The application of relationship marketing in the construction Industry

Research Publications

B1 Book Chapter


C1 Journal Articles


E1 Conference Proceedings


**Researcher Profiles**

**Dr. David Wilson**

In 2003 David presented two conference papers on his transport and logistics research one in Adelaide and the other at an international modelling and simulation conference in Townsville. ‘Brown's Fourier Method for Non-Stationary Time Series’ was presented at CAITR 2003, University of South Australia, with Anna Cai and Tony Hingston. While at MODSIM2003 in Townsville the paper entitled: ‘The Use of Simulation for Clothing Manufacturing Executives: A Case Study’, was presented in July 2003, with R. Laney.

David is also supervising several Master’s and Doctoral scholars in the field of transport and logistics within the School of Marketing. He advises Ratio Planning Consultants on forecasting and land-use modelling strategies. His research interests are in inventory control theory and supply chain modelling. David is also the Education Sub-Committee Chairman of the United Jewish Education Board.

**Mai Phan, current PhD candidate**

Mai Phan is a PhD student within the School of Marketing at RMIT University. In her doctoral research, Mai is examining whether the conventional belief that "environmentalism is a burden, rather than a competitive advantage, to business" could be upheld in reality. She is exploring factors that influence environmental practices and firm performance, and intends to build a model to determine, both quantitatively and qualitatively, how green initiatives affect firms’ performance.

Her interest in studying the relationship between green initiatives and organisational performance is very much influenced by her background in environmental science and social policy planning. She also attributes her motivation for this study to the work of her two mentors, who have been instrumental in encouraging her to link theories in social environmental studies to business operations.
At this stage, Mai is in the process of finalising her survey questionnaire to interview environmental officers and CEOs of manufacturing firms in Victoria to determine the level of importance top management perceive towards greening initiatives within their organisations. Her research highlights the growing emphasis business organisations are giving to green practices in reducing operation costs, improving their image, and enhancing their competitive advantage.

Understandably, many business enterprises believe that green initiatives do not contribute to increasing productivity and view them more as a burden, rather than an asset. Mai is convinced that there is a need to provide further information for businesses to understand the value-added aspects of green initiatives. She hopes that, through her research, the mismatch between what values customers expect and what values businesses can offer through green initiatives can be reconciled. In this light, Mai feels that her study will assist in heralding a new era in which environmentalism could be regarded as a gain to businesses, rather than a liability, as the current perception among most businesses seem to suggest.
Centre for Management Quality Research

CRC for Construction Innovation

Smart Internet Technology CRC
Centre for Management Quality Research

**Director:** Professor John Dalrymple  
**Research Fellows:** Gitachari Srikanthan, Dr. Lionel Boxer  
**Research Assistant:** Warren Staples

The Centre for Management Quality Research (CMQR) focuses on organisational performance measurement, improvement and quality. This is done through taking the systemic view of the organisation as typified by the Business Excellence Models and frameworks developed in Australia and internationally. The CMQR has a mission to strive for recognition as a national and international centre of excellence in the field of Management Quality Research through applied research and scholarship. The nature of management quality is such that it permeates all aspects of organisations and individuals in industry, commerce and the public sector.

The CMQR continues to develop its research through interaction with the international academic and professional communities via its International Visiting Scholars Program, the organisation of conferences and the involvement with scholarly journals.

Throughout its existence, the Centre has attracted a steady stream of international visitors. In 2003 these included:

- Dr. Martin Spring from the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, an internationally renowned expert in Supply Chain Management
- Graham Dwyer from the Irish Management Institute
- Professor Doug Hensler from the University of Colorado
- Professor Rick Edgeman from the Maryland University
- Colin Bottomley from the University of Strathclyde

The CMQR has been involved in a number of projects including one entitled: *Benchmarking Best Practice in Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) Sector*. Initially the feasibility of the application of ‘UK Benchmarking Index’ in the Australian SME environment was investigated. This project was successfully completed, with the participant companies enthusiastic about the value that they had gained. A subsequent project followed to investigate: *Achieving Employment Growth in Small Enterprises*. The aim was to identify strengths in a group of SME sector companies and develop a business growth plan and an implementation action plan for each company with the aim of assisting the participant companies to achieve profitable growth. In 2003 a further project entitled: *Improving International Competitiveness in (SME) Sector Companies Through Product and Process Innovation* was investigated whilst a project investigating *SME Business Growth through Tactical Marketing* has recently received funding from the Department of Transport and Regional Services.

The Centre received funding from the CRC for Construction Innovation in 2003 to conduct the *Feasibility Study Linking Best-Value Procurement Assessment to Outcome Performance Indicators*. It is anticipated that this project will lead to further successful research collaboration with the CRC and its partners.
Part of the role of the CMQR has been to bring international conferences and events to Melbourne. In 2003 the Centre hosted MAAOE (Multinational Alliance for the Advancement of Organisational Excellence) 2003 – the 4th International Research Conference on Organisational Excellence in October that attracted around 100 delegates.

The CMQR has now organised five international conferences with participation from over 800 delegates. These events have enabled staff and student researchers from RMIT to showcase their research in the international arena and receive feedback from international peers.

Other highlights from 2003 include the University Research Award for the best contribution to refereed conference publications in 2002 being awarded to Professor John Dalrymple. Also the CMQR continued its role in the editorship of the international journal - *Quality Assurance in Education* - and has membership on the Editorial Board of two other international journals. Furthermore, in the area of professional activities the CMQR has the membership on the Board of Directors of the Quality Society of Australasia as well as the membership on the National Steering Committee for review of the Australian Business Excellence Framework.

**Research Publications**

**B1 Book Chapter**


**C1 Journal Articles**


**E1 Conference Proceedings**


Researcher Profile

Dr. Lionel Boxer

Dr. Lionel Boxer CD, is a research fellow with the Centre for Management Quality Research and the CRC for Construction Innovation. Lionel qualified as an industrial engineer after studying at Ryerson Polytechnic University in Toronto and at the Royal Military College of Canada. He has completed MBA and PhD programs at RMIT University. He lectures to business and engineering undergraduate and postgraduate students and supervises doctoral students. He was a leadership and engineering instructor and course commander for the Canadian Army from 1975. In 1993 Lionel was made a Fellow of the Quality Society of Australasia and is listed in *The International Who's Who of Quality*.

Since 1981, Lionel has consulted within government and industry to develop and implement productivity improvements. He has worked independently and with staff from KPMG and Computer Power Group in North America, South East Asia, and Australasia. Initially, he harnessed his industrial engineering...
training in facility planning, material handling, work methods, logistics and quality management. He
broadened to include mentoring, leadership, sales, and OH&S. The increasing demand for ISO9000
certification led him to assist telecommunication, manufacturing, service, information technology and
publishing clients. He has led strategy workshops, produced implementation plans, and organised
major conferences. At times he has managed manufacturing operations and led teams of specialists to
complete a variety of works and perform administrative and logistic tasks.

Lionel's research focuses on discursive practices and how these influence individuals, teams and
culture. He helps others to understand management processes to identify opportunities for improvements,
leading to the development and implementation of better ways.

**Professor John Dalrymple, Professor of Quality Management**

John Dalrymple is a Professor of Quality Management and the Director of the
Centre for Management Quality Research (CMQR) at RMIT University.
John is a physicist with a BA from the University of Stirling and a Doctorate
from the University of Strathclyde. As a management academic, John began
to work on projects with industry, firstly taking interest in the manufacturing
sector. Here he worked on problems in manufacturing logistics and
developed an interest in quality management, operations management and
manufacturing strategy.

Along with colleagues, John established the Scottish Quality Management Centre at the University of
Stirling to underpin the teaching and consultancy activities of the Department with research. Following a
process of peer review, The Scottish Quality Management Centre was designated a Centre of Excellence
in 1993. He worked on a wide range of problems and was awarded more than one million pounds
sterling to conduct research in companies in areas related to operations and quality management.
Before leaving Scotland, he led a team investigating the application of service quality measuring
instruments established in the private sector to public sector services.

John moved to Australia to take up the Computing Devices Professorship of Quality Management and
Founding Directorship of the Centre for Management Quality Research at RMIT University in November
1997. Under his leadership the Centre has developed an international reputation for research excellence
in management quality in the southern hemisphere. It has attracted a significant research funding and
recognition by academy, industry, commercial and public sector organizations.

**Dr. Cathy Balding**

Cathy is currently the Manager of the Victorian Quality Council, the principal Ministerial Advisory Council
on health care safety and quality leadership in Victoria. Her background is in Health Information
Management; she has a Masters in Health Administration and a PhD in Business. Cathy has been a
finalist in the Telstra Business Woman Awards, and won the 2001 Australian Council on Healthcare
Standards (ACHS) Quality Improvement Award for the development of a QI and accreditation database.
She sits on a number of advisory committees for safety and quality in health care, and is an ACHS
accreditation surveyor and a Fellow of the Australian College of Health Service Executives.

Cathy's key interest is in finding practical solutions to issues of quality improvement implementation,
particularly in the area of staff involvement. Cathy has been involved in quality and safety improvement in
health care for many years at a number of levels; including hands-on as a coordinator for both rural
regions and metropolitan health networks, and at a strategic and policy level working with the Australian
Council on Healthcare Standards and also the NSW and Victorian Departments of Human Services.
Further to this Cathy has also worked at an Executive level in a large teaching hospital, variously as Director of Corporate Development where she played a key role in strategic planning, decision support and quality improvement. Cathy has published and presented papers in these areas nationally and internationally.

Cathy has recently completed her PhD at RMIT University. Her thesis is entitled: *A Model for Enhancing the Involvement of Middle Managers in Hospital Quality Improvement Programs*. Her supervisors were Professor John Dalrymple and Associate Professor Sandra Martin.

**Dr. Peter Bryar**

Peter is a Research Fellow with the Centre for Management Quality Research and the CRC for Construction Innovation. He is also an independent consultant in the area of process improvement, organisational development and human resources management. Peter holds a Master of Business in Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management and a Master of Applied Science in Innovation and Service Management. He has also recently completed his PhD at RMIT University. The title of Peter's thesis is *Supply Chain Quality Improvement: The Case of Small Horticultural Enterprises*. His supervisors were Professor John Dalrymple and Adjunct Professor Peter Harvey. The research Peter carried out as part of his PhD identified a number of critical success factors that were considered to be essential in meeting the changing fresh fruit and vegetable market food safety and quality demands. It was also shown that individual enterprises, the fresh fruit and vegetable industry, the customer, consumer and government are all beneficiaries of such systems.

Peter is a consultant to the SME sector, working with those businesses with a view to improve people and organisational performance. His focus has tended to be in the horticultural/agricultural/food processing sector. Furthermore, Peter is also a lecturer and tutor within the Business Portfolio. He has developed and facilitates a number of public programs for the Australian Human Resources Institute.

Peter is an Associate Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management, a Certified Professional Member of the Australian Human Resources Institute and is a registered Food Safety Systems Facilitator for the Quality Society of Australasia.

**Dr. Sunny (Bhussun) Ramsurrun**

Sunny is an International Visiting Research Fellow of the Centre for Management Quality Research and an independent consultant in the SME sector. His focus is on quality management and organisational development. Sunny holds a Master in Business Administration from Leicester University UK.

He completed his PhD at RMIT University under the supervision of Professor John Dalrymple in November 2003. The title of Sunny's thesis is *Global Competitiveness within Small and Medium Manufacturing Enterprises in Mauritius*. This research was designed to investigate the performance profile (strengths and weaknesses) of a sample of the SME sector in Mauritius. This was done using an International Business Profile Benchmarking instrument developed by Department of Trade and Industry, UK. The research sought to critically evaluate global competitiveness of a sample of Mauritian SMEs and derive policy level recommendations for effective government interventions in the sector. In addition, Sunny's research seeks to increase the knowledge of the sample of SMEs in Mauritius by giving them performance feedback along with recommendations to improve performance. Through his consulting, Sunny works closely with the SME sector and businesses with the view to improve organisational performance. Sunny is Certified Professional Member Quality Society of Australasia.
Graham Dwyer

Graham Dwyer holds a BA(Mod) and MLitt. from Trinity College Dublin. He has been working as a management researcher at the Irish Management Institute, Dublin. Under the auspices of the IDP Australia-Europe Scholarship (Ireland), he joined the Centre for Management Quality Research (CMQR), at RMIT University, in June 2002 for a period of one year. During his time at CMQR, Graham collaborated with colleagues from Ireland, Singapore and Australia, to complete peer reviewed journal papers, reports, working papers, case studies in the subject areas of strategic change, public sector change, organisational development and quality management. By adopting the principles of grounded theory and action learning, the research output is geared towards the reflective practitioner and qualitative researchers. In 2003, Graham took up the position of Research Officer in the Office of Emergency Services, Department of Justice in the Victorian Government.

Research Scholars Recommended for Award

Lionel Boxer CD, PhD
Thesis title: Using positioning theory to understand how senior managers deal with sustainability issues.
Supervisors: Professor John Dalrymple and Professor Peter Sheldrake

Lionel's PhD commenced mid-1999 to understand why some organisations deal with issues well, while others do not. He previously noticed a pattern in CEOs who dealt with issues, but was unable to articulate it other than to say leadership was the key. Sustainability was selected to focus the thesis, because it is an urgent issue facing contemporary organisations. Nevertheless, Lionel defined sustainability as part of obligatory and externally imposed (OEI) issues, including quality, safety and equality.

Having secured several CEOs willing to participate, interview transcripts were subjected to discourse analysis using a positioning theory framework. Oxford University Professor Rom Harré's positioning theory puts forth that people define themselves and others though discursive action. That is to say, identity is derived from conversation. Working through citations, Lionel noticed a strong influence on Harré's seminal positioning theory work in Collège de France, Professor Michel Foucault's theories. In returning to Foucault, Lionel contributed to the development of positioning theory in a way that Harré chose to include Lionel's work in his second positioning theory text, The Self and Others.

Lionel's PhD shows that, while culture - defined by rights, duties, morals and actions - determines conversation and subsequent creation of selves, the reverse is true. Through alternate positioning and appropriate conversation culture can be changed. Lionel identified patterns of positioning and conversation initiated by CEOs through which culture was aligned with intentions of dealing with sustainability issues. Details of his thesis are at http://intergon.net/phd

Please note this information concerning Lionel's PhD also appears on p.42 in the School of Management section of this Report.
CRC for Construction Innovation

Project Leader: Professor Derek Walker
Research Fellows: Dr. Andrew Wilson, Dr. Andrew Finegan
Research Assistant: Peter Goldsmith

Wining a $64million, 7-year project with the CRC for Construction Innovation in 2001 involved a core team of four proposal writers that included Professor Derek Walker from the Research Development Unit.

During 2003, activity by the team led by Professor Derek Walker was focused around the project entitled: Delivering improved knowledge management and innovation diffusion. This project was recently completed on 30 June 2004. It involved Professor Derek Walker for approximately 40% of his time, Dr. Andrew Finnegan from the School of Business Information Technology for 20% of his time and Dr. Andrew Wilson as full-time research fellow. Also Mr. Peter Goldsmith was a research assistant from the Research Development Unit full time on the project until the end of 2003. Mr Vachara Peansupap and Mr. Tayyab Maqsood, are CRC full-time PhD students working on this project. Mr Vachara Peansupap is in the final write up stage of his thesis.

The project investigates how Information Communication Technologies (ICT) innovation is diffused in the construction industry and how knowledge management (KM) can be enhanced and improved. Specific outcomes for this project being developed include an ICT diffusion model to guide best practice and the development of a knowledge advantage guide (KAdv) that helps organisations, using soft systems methodology, to audit and map their innovation processes for KM and use this knowledge for benchmarking and strategic planning. Further, a digital-dashboard type tool is being developed that enables firms to identify and access strategic knowledge assets when making a decision to tender. This project was undertaken in collaboration with Queensland University of Technology, the University of Newcastle, two major contractors from the construction industry and three government departments representing the client interest. The best practice K-Adv guide and the tool for identifying and deploying knowledge assets will yield commercial benefits for project participants.

The academic outcomes of the project include 3 book chapters to be published by Idea Group Inc Books, an industry booklet of 30 pages, 9 refereed conference papers in 2003 and 8 for 2004, and 2 more for 2005 plus 2 refereed journal articles that have been accepted for publication. The work provides a greater understanding of ICT diffusion and KM practices of major construction organisations and has led to the developments of several other research projects being undertaken through the CRC for Construction Innovation.

Other projects funded through the CRC for Construction Innovation have involved staff from the Centre for Management Quality Research and also other staff from within RMIT University, including the team led by Professor Arun Kumar which in 2004 has joined the Business Portfolio.
Research Publications

B1 Book Chapter


C1 Journal Articles


**E1 Conference Proceedings**


Researcher Profiles

Dr. Andrew Wilson

Dr. Andrew Wilson joined the Research Development Unit within the Business Portfolio in February 2002 as Research Fellow for the Construction Innovation CRC project Knowledge Management and ICT Diffusion. Previously Andrew had lectured in economics, project management and information technology in the Department of Building and Construction Economics at RMIT University. Andrew also has industrial experience as a quantity surveyor and large-scale project manager.

Andrew is currently involved in a number of research projects including leading an ARC proposal examining the supply chain diffusion of ICT within the Australian construction industry with particular reference to industry-based web portals.

Andrew is also presently leading a significant research initiative that proposes to establish at RMIT University, the Centre for Infrastructure Procurement Efficiency through the ARC Centres of Excellence program. The general purpose of this centre will be to undertake research to optimise the processes and outcomes associated with infrastructure procurement. The centre proposes to initially test the tender cost and price optimisation model and prequalification benchmark mechanism that Andrew has developed in conjunction with the CSIRO. This model encapsulates systematic approaches to knowledge management and risk management synergised to produce optimal tender process outcomes and provide a benchmark mechanism for tender prequalification. The development and implementation of the model by the Centre will assist in providing the impetus for the development of similar knowledge-based systems designed to optimise the processes and outcomes associated with infrastructure procurement, and subsequently facilitate and enhance stakeholder efficiency.

Tayyab Maqsood, current PhD candidate

Tayyab Maqsood is undertaking his PhD in School of Business Information Technology, supported by CRC for Construction Innovation, under the supervision of Professor Derek Walker. Tayyab is conducting a research in the area of knowledge management specifically targeting the construction industry. He is investigating the role of knowledge management in supporting innovation for effective planning and delivery of construction projects. He is also researching how successful implementation of knowledge management strategies can turn construction organisations into ‘Learning Organisations’, which would then be in better shape and more equipped to produce innovations for the benefit of the construction industry. Tayyab is extensively using Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) as a basic research tool to carry out his investigations. The outcome of his research will be models of knowledge management intertwined with innovation concepts and organisational learning to transform an organisation into a learning organisation. Tayyab expects to complete his PhD in August 2005. The outcomes in his candidature so far include 11 refereed publications with 3 more submitted that are presently under review.

Tayyab concedes that to adopt knowledge management industry-wide, emphasis should lie not only with big organisations at the delivery end of the supply chain, but also with all the trading partners in the supply chain, i.e. suppliers and subcontractors. He strongly believe that meshing knowledge management concepts within supply chain management would give the property and construction industry a new modus-operandi, with the ability to minimise or eliminate wasteful business processes and resources, reduce conflicts among trading partners, lower overall cost of projects and improve quality of products.

Tayyab is a Civil Engineer with Masters of Engineering Degree in Construction Engineering and Management from Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand. Tayyab has worked in Pakistan, Thailand, the UK and Hong Kong in various capacities including as a lecturer, project engineer and research associate over the last 9 years. He is also a member of various professional organisations such as IEAust., AIB and ASCE.
Senior Research Fellow: Associate Professor Supriya Singh  
Research Fellows: Charlotte Scarf, Dr. Kylie Cassar Bartolo, Dr. Maurice Castro and Youngmi Choi

The Smart Internet Technology Co-operative Research Centre (SITCRC) is a multi-university, multi-disciplinary research program that is funded by the Federal Government along with corporate and academic partners. SITCRC aims to develop Internet services that people find useful. It has three main programs: Smart Networks and Intelligent Environment; Smart Personal Assistants and Natural Adaptive User Interface; and the User Environment Program (UE). These programs interact and build on each other.

Associate Professor Supriya Singh from the Research Development Unit in the Business Portfolio at RMIT University leads the User-Centred Design (UCD) project which is part of the UE program. The project is entitled: Establishing a Culture of User Centred Design. This project aims to support and encourage a culture of user-centred design (UCD). At RMIT, the project includes from the Business Portfolio Associate Professor Supriya Singh, Professor Margaret Jackson, Dr. Kylie Cassar Bartolo, John Burke, Charlotte Scarf and Christine Satchell. In addition it also involves Professor Leon van Schaik from the Design and Social Context Portfolio; and Dr. Ron van Schyndel from the School of Computer Science and Information Technology. In addition to this there are another six researchers involved in the project from Griffith University and the University of Tasmania. An important contribution is also made by seven PhD scholars attached to the UCD project in the three universities.

The UCD project works towards achieving its objectives in five ways:

1. Linking with technology programmes right from the beginning to ensure that the user is at the centre of design: At present we are working with five technology projects.

- In the Secure Identity Management Project the RMIT UCD team has completed a user study on how people control their personal information. We have also drawn attention to the different legal privacy frameworks which will influence design. These understandings are translated to design which is then to be further tested and re-designed with users.

- The University of Tasmania UCD team is doing participatory design on immersive audio in massively multi-player games.

- At Griffith UCD a project that designs mobile devices for the blind is a major focus.

- At RMIT UCD we are also participating in a user-centred digital rights management project, focusing on how people use and share different media objects in Australia.

- We are an integral part of the SITCRC Architecture project which revolves around a UCD scenario of young people using mobile devices.
2. **User Studies:** We will continue our emphasis on young people, small and medium sized businesses and people with disabilities. We are extending our work in the fields of health, learning, e-commerce and knowledge management.

3. **Methodology:** In developing our methodology we have two points of focus.

   - Translating use to design: We will draw on our experience in working with researchers in the technical projects particularly to reflect on the two way translation process that is needed to translate use to design.

   - Participatory design

4. **Cross-cultural UCD:** We are exploring how the cross-cultural use of UCD shapes and is shaped by the design of technologies. Initial links have been established in India, Malaysia, Canada and Ireland.

5. **Communication:** To ensure that the multi-disciplinary and multi-university UCD group remains cohesive and stimulating, we have an overt focus on communication:

   - We have face-to-face meetings of the group at least once a year (in addition to the annual SITCRC conference);

   - Fortnightly teleconferences;

   - Fortnightly e-mail newsletter with 432 subscribers (see www.ucd.smartinternet.com.au);

   - The website http://www.ucd.smartinternet.com.au. (In May and June, we averaged around 17,500 hits and 1,175 visits).

   - Peer reviewed papers. In 2003-2004, the overall UCD group was responsible for 15 peer reviewed publications.

**Research Publications**

**C1 Journal Articles**


**E1 Conference Proceedings**

**Choi, Y.** (2003), 'Clashes of ICT implementation and owners business philosophy: stories from designer-owned SMEs in the Australian clothing industry', *Proceedings of the 4th International Conference for the Advancement of Organisational Excellence*, Boxer, L. (Ed), Intergon, Australia.

**Choi, Y.** (2003), 'Understanding ICT adoption from SME user centred approach: views from the boutique fashion SMEs and the Australian government', *Proceedings of the 16th Annual Conference of the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand*, Herman, J. & Lowe, J. (Eds), University of Ballarat, Ballarat.


Researcher Profile

Dr. Kylie Cassar Bartolo

Dr. Kylie Cassar Bartolo is a Research Fellow at the Research Development Unit in the Portfolio of Business at RMIT University. She is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and specialises in health promotion and the treatment of illness.

Kylie is part of the User-Centred Design Group and her current research aims to understand user attitudes and practices in regards to privacy, identity and the control of personal information. A key objective of the project is to develop useful and commercialisable technologies, working at the intersection of the social, technological and business perspectives.

Kylie’s research interests include qualitative methodologies, health issues, multidisciplinary perspectives and cultural issues. She has ten years experience in psychology. Her doctoral thesis explored the experience of people with chronic illness. Her research led to the discovery of value systems that help explain why people do not adhere to life saving treatment plans. These findings will inform design of patient education programs, especially targeting the Maltese Australian community.
Building on past successes, 2003 was an active year for research in the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business). The Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business) includes the following groups that were each involved in various research initiatives: the Academic Development Unit, Business Online, the Innovation Unit, the Public Relations Unit, Business Direct, the Research Development Unit and the Work Integrated Learning Unit.

The Research Development Unit within the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business) continued to provide direction and initiative in relation to research strategy within the Business Portfolio at RMIT University, as well as provide support for research administration and management. Following the secondment of Professor Robert Brooks to the position of Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business) during 2003, the Research Development Unit had the good fortune to be led by Associate Professor Pam Green for some of the year bringing with her a wealth of experience from other parts of RMIT University, most recently the University’s Research and Innovation office.

There were a range of forums providing opportunities for interaction and networking that were run by the Research Development Unit for researchers. The Business Research Interns Program championed by Associate Professor Supriya Singh continued to bring together interested staff and research students for presentations and discussions that provide valuable networking opportunities for participants. The Research Student Seminar Program was developed so that it became more focused on ‘how to’ practical sessions on aspects of research methodology and research methods, software training, and the like. Also the Supervisor Training Program continued to be offered to Business Portfolio research student supervisors providing the chance to discuss and reflect on supervision issues.

Two Candidature Review Conferences were held, first in February and later in August, providing the opportunity for students to present their research proposals to their peers. These conferences continue to be a successful format for reviewing students’ candidature and help to provide ancillary benefits for students through the opportunity provided to present their research and network with fellow researchers.

Time was taken to review and reflect on Research Development Unit initiatives. Workshops and surveys were conducted to obtain feedback from staff and students as part of the Unit’s commitment to continuous quality and ongoing improvement. As a result of the consultation process, the Research Student Support Fund guidelines were refined and a number of valuable suggestions were compiled to help build on the initiatives of Research Development Unit programs in 2004.

A series of engaging and reflective articles were written by Associate Professor Pam Green, Professor Jacqueline Rowarth (Director of Research and Dean of the Graduate School at UNITEC, Auckland) and Professor Ian Cornforth (Adjunct Professor of Soil and Plant Science, UNITEC Auckland). These articles provide practical insight for research students and supervisors alike concerning problems and hurdles that are often encountered during the research process. These articles were placed on the Research Development Unit website and can be accessed online at www.rmit.edu.au/bus/rdu/r&s
Other highlights of the year include a visit from researcher, Dr. Gerlese Akerlind from the Australian National University who conducted a seminar entitled: *Developing as a University Teacher and Researcher: An Holistic Perspective on Academic Development.*

A growing number of individuals in the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Business) continued to contribute to the DEST publication output on research in a broad thematic areas including: research student supervision, assessments of the Australian universities, applied econometrics, tourism, consideration of Chinese universities as well as online learning utilising interactive animation and innovation.

**Research Publications**

**B1 Book Chapter**


**C1 Journal Articles**


Keane, P., 
Brooks, R. & Green, P. (2003), 'Developing a knowledge base for postal organisations', 

Lai, E., 

McKenzie, M.D. & 
Brooks, R. (2003), 'The role of information in Hong Kong individual stock futures trading,' 

communities of practice in online teaching and learning', 

Sokulsky, D., 
Brooks, R. & Davidson, S. (2003), 'Time varying volatility and beta patterns of sub-indices on 
the Australian stock exchange', 

Sokulsky, D., 
Brooks, R. & Davidson, S. (2003), 'Price effects of changes to size sub-indexes on the 
Australian Stock Exchange', 

Warnken, J., 
Russell, R. & Faulkner, B. (2003), 'Condominium developments in maturing destinations: 
potentials and problems of long-term sustainability', 

**E1 Conference Proceedings**

Brooks, R. (2003), 'Time varying betas on China's A and B share indices', 

Fraser, I. (2003), 'Chinese universities at the beginning of the 21st century', 

O'Connor, R. & Sheldrake, P. (2003), 'Small business and the arts: Encouraging arts companies to be business innovators', 
*Proceedings of the 16th Annual Conference of the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand*, Herman, J. & Lowe, J. (Eds), University of Ballarat, Ballarat.

Jones, S., Jones, D. & McCann, J. (2003), 'Designing and producing effective e-learning opportunities - moving from cross-functional teams to communities of practice (CoPs)', 

Pierce, R. & Atkinson, L. (2003), 'Interactive animation provides a vehicle for exploring students' understanding of derivatives', 
*Proceedings of the 26th Annual Conference of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia*, Bragg, L., Campbell, C., Herbert, G. & Mousley, J. (Eds), Deakin University, Australia.


Research Scholars Recommended for Award

Jennifer Mong-Lee Khoo, Master of Business by Research

Supervisors:  Associate Professor Booi Kam

Conventional housing models have largely focused on the determination of hedonic prices. Even though securing a sale is the ultimate goal of sellers, the saleability question remains largely unexplored. In her research, Jennifer focuses upon the extent to which pricing affects saleability. In addition, the effects of locational features, market conditions, neighbourhood quality and housing attributes on pricing and, in turn, saleability are also examined. Using data on four residential areas along the eastern corridor of metropolitan Melbourne, at varying distances to the city centre a comparative analysis was conducted. The study found that regardless of location and market condition, the most significant house price determinants are variables related to the size of properties, such as lot area and number of rooms. Yet interesting while the size factor is a prime determinant for prices, its impact on saleability is not as dominant. Jennifer’s research highlights the need to examine the question of saleability separately from the issue of price determination. Indeed the variables also that impact most on price are different to those impacting on saleability which tended to be related to the affixed characteristics of the property, such as proximity to the sea/bay, whether a property was north facing, etc.

Kwok Hung Charles Lau*, PhD

Supervisors:  Associate Professor Booi Kam and Associate Professor Jenny Morris

As part of his thesis Kwok Hung Charles develops an urban land use simulation model using cellular automation. The model distinguishes itself from previous cellular automation models by adopting a multiple, rather than a single-pass land use allocation algorithm. This allows for the interpretation of land use changes as the joint result of attribute, land-use-balance-and-mix, and agglomeration effects. Using metropolitan Melbourne as a case study, the model was shown to outperform one that is developed based solely on agglomeration effect.

* In previous years Research Student Completions have been included in the annual Research Report rather than Research Scholars Recommended for Award. This has resulted in some students who completed in 2002 but where recommended for award in 2003 appearing in both this current report and the previous report.
Researcher Profile

Professor Peter Sheldrake, Professor of Business Entrepreneurship

Since taking up the Chair of Business Entrepreneurship, Peter Sheldrake has been looking at the ways in which people in organisations can develop and sustain their innovative and entrepreneurial capabilities. Some of this work has involved projects with large companies, especially Orica, which has been a strong supporter of entrepreneurship at RMIT University. At the same time Peter has also been working with a number of smaller companies, across a range of industries. Flowing on from his earlier research on inclusive leadership, this has led Peter to focus on the importance of 'internal revolutionaries' or *Ronin*, as he prefers to call them.

*Ronin* were lordless Samurai who roamed Japan, and later travelled more widely, and who became a key source of innovative thinking in Japan, especially with the emergence of the industrial revolution in the West. Exploring the idea of organisational *Ronin*, Peter had two books published last year on this topic - *Ronin and Revolutionaries* and *The Age of the Ronin*.

The other theme that has preoccupied Peter for some time has been the place of wisdom in the knowledge economy. On the one hand, Peter has found himself conducting programs based on re-examining the writings of great thinkers from the past, and assessing their relevance to contemporary organisational practice: he feels we often discount the insights of past thinkers because their language and context are unfamiliar to us. On the other, Peter has also been exploring the need for new ways of thinking about organisations, especially as the limitations of 20th Century models of organisations and of leadership are becoming more apparent. Uncertain where this rather paradoxical combination will lead, Peter aims to complete a new book on the topic in 2005.