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News

QUT to search for the model to business success

18 January 2012

A Queensland University of Technology (QUT) information systems researcher aims to develop guidelines to simplify business processes to help businesses grow and operate more efficiently.

Associate Professor Jan Recker has been awarded a \$375,000 Australian Research Council grant to come up with a theory for effective business process models and guidelines for their design.

Professor Recker said business process models were commonly used throughout business and were a graphical representation of a business and its processes.

"They're the flowcharts that tell a business's story in pictures," he said.

"The models are blueprints of organisational processes and they're crucial for not only understanding how a business works but good, accurate models lead to good decisions being made.

"They tell a business manager exactly how their business is operating and let them see how changes could be made to increase revenues, grow their business, improve operational efficiency, reduce costs or increase compliance.

"They can also be used to analyse how an organisation can reduce their carbon footprint."

He said the key difficulty with current models was that they were often too complex, big and cumbersome to be incorporated into the day to day review and operations of a business.

"Businesses often spend a lot of time and money developing these models or flowcharts, but the reality is that they are often not used making them a wasted investment.

"Our research aims to determine what works best for processing modelling and help organisations develop simplified models and make the best decisions with them."

He said it was essential that business process models were intuitive but also accurate as incomplete or incorrect models misrepresented the processes that kept a business ticking and would lead to poor management decisions.

He also said models were a key tool used in business redesign and restructure decisions.

"It's obviously critical that managers are able to measure the precise impact that a change to one aspect of their operations will have on all other areas. If process models are inaccurate they will be given an inaccurate picture of the impact their changes will make.

"Ultimately, they will make bad decisions about change.

"The challenge is to understand how simple business process models can be developed that are easy to read and use and also cost effective and this is a challenge that QUT is well placed to meet," Professor Recker said.

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Associate Professor Jan Recker has received an ARC grant to develop a simplified business process model that will help entrepreneurs better manage their businesses.

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