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Woolworths and QUT to spearhead retail revolution

Woolworths will invest nearly \$1 million over the next three years to fund research into innovation in retail.

The investment will fund a position at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) which will be taken up by award-winning business systems design expert, Professor Jan Recker.

As Chair of Retail Innovation, Professor Recker will lead research in developing new ways of identifying innovation potential in retail. He will also play a significant role in shaping the strategy of QUT's [Information Systems School](#), a leading research institute nationally for information systems research.

Professor Recker's work will focus particularly on people, process and technology, and aim to improve the experience of customers as they set about their supermarket shopping.

Three initial research streams will investigate why fresh food operations are more successful in some stores than others, better methods of shelf restocking, and design of the retail experience of the future.

Director of Supermarkets, Tjeerd Jegen, said he was excited by the potential learnings and changes that this partnership will generate for the benefit of Woolworths customers.

"Woolworths is a leading innovator in retail in Australia and has been for many years. Our online platform, 'click-then-collect' services, Woolworths App and virtual shopping will have all helped improve the ability of our customers to shop the way they want.

"I'm looking forward to working with Professor Recker and QUT on exciting concepts that will improve our business and how our customers shop," Mr Jegen said.



Professor Jan Recker has been named Woolworths Chair of Retail Innovation, a position designed to spearhead a retail revolution.

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Executive Dean, Professor Martin Betts, said the move would help shape the future of retail.

"Woolworths is to be congratulated for recognising that research is crucial to finding better and smarter ways to shop," he said.

"This mutually beneficial arrangement will position QUT at the forefront of retail innovation research while at the same time providing Woolworths with cutting-edge ways of using IT to develop brand and customer base.

"While the research itself will be publicly available, trials of new technologies, processes and systems will be developed with Woolworths in a way that propels the company ahead of competitors."

Professor Recker said: "We aim to identify the characteristics that make some fresh food outlets more successful than others and then develop 'best practice' policies for implementation across all Woolworths stores.

"We will also develop new technologies and processes to enable shelves to be replenished more efficiently - a move expected to result in significant cost savings - and elicit the support of QUT's design experts to devise business models for retail in the years ahead.

"Shopping has the potential to be vastly different from what it is today. We expect to pre-empt the demands of customers and work with designers to develop out-of-the-box creative models fit for the future," Professor Recker said.

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