



Research Directions

Office of Research Services

Moving Business Online

Dr Robyn Lawson, Ms Ana Hol and colleagues from the School of Computing and Mathematics are collaborating with the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation to encourage small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in the Penrith area to make their business available to consumers online.



'SMEs do not embrace emerging technologies at the same level as larger organisations' says Dr Lawson. 'Primarily, factors that affect adoption include a lack of dedicated IT staff, lack of awareness and knowledge by business owners and managers, and lack of trust in the benefits of consultants for IT services. This low engagement can reduce the market share of small to medium enterprises by isolating the availability of their products and services to local areas, rather than expanding the business to give them a more global presence. Penrith Valley is one of the largest and fastest growing business areas in Australia, so this project will investigate how the Penrith Valley local government area can benefit from a program that assists SMEs to move their business online by leveraging advances in information technology and communication technology to become globally competitive.'

Working closely with the Penrith Valley Economic Development Corporation, the project team will identify pilot SMEs in the area and carry out an audit of the businesses current level of IT usage. The researchers will also investigate the existing business environment in which the SMEs operate, in order to determine appropriate technology that could improve the organisations business and communication systems, how these can be implemented, and how they compare with similar competitors IT usage. This information will be used to develop a proposal to widen the strategy to all Penrith Valley SMEs.

This research will allow Penrith Valley businesses to capitalise on new technologies to expand their market by migrating to online outlets, and will also provide social benefits by demonstrating how SMEs can build their business to provide more job security for their staff and provide better services to both a local and a global community.

Project Title: Moving Business Online

Funding has been set at: \$12,500

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Contact Details:

r.lawson@uws.edu.au

a.hol@uws.edu.au

<http://www.uws.edu.au/school/compmaths>