

# Making research pay

Bluebox has the tools to market QUT research.

Bluebox, QUT's technology transfer and commercialisation company, has been quick to put runs on the board after its launch only 18 months ago.

The Torqx partnership (opposite page) follows such coups as the multi-million dollar research collaboration with Syngenta, the world's leading agribusiness company, to develop to commercial scale sugarcane that may yield cost-effective bioethanol (see *Links* Feb 2008, p1) and the successful float of QUT's medical devices company ImpediMed on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX).

In the latest round of National Health and Medical Research Council grants, six of 22 grants awarded to 14 universities went to QUT thanks to bluebox and the Office of Research who worked with

QUT applicants to develop competitive applications with strong commercial potential.

Eager to generate new commercial opportunities in the future, bluebox life sciences general manager Dr Paige Maguire and her team have conducted an IP review of QUT's Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI).

They identified several promising research projects including computer models to predict fracture healing, a tool to aid feeding of premature babies and a health lifestyle promotion program for women with chronic disease.

"Our aim is to translate IHBI research outcomes into viable products that can be used for the benefit of everyone," Dr Maguire said.

Similarly, bluebox's Colin Kinner, physical sciences general manager, and his team have also recently completed an IP review of QUT's Information Security Institute, uncovering potential marketable projects including automated vehicle surveillance software and side channel analysis of smart cards.

Bluebox's diverse activities aim to mine the potential of QUT researchers and stimulate their enthusiasm for and participation in commercialisation of QUT research.

The bluebox Discovery Competition for QUT staff and students awarded \$10,000 in prize money to biotech and IT researchers last year.

- Niki Widdowson



## expertise...

DR RICHI NAYAK IS A SENIOR LECTURER IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCHER IN THE SMART SERVICES CRC.



Dr Richi Nayak looks at issues around the increasingly sophisticated way in which the internet and mobile platforms provide services.

### I am concerned about giving away my life story online, how can I protect myself?

In this era of online applications, publishing online is the easiest way to reach the global audience. "Crawlers" and "web-spiders" are able to extract information from web pages which is primarily used for indexing by search engines to enhance the accuracy of the search. So the next time someone wants to find information related to you, a search engine can display your information within the few top search results based on the information gained by your online life story. One way of protecting information is to use images containing the text instead of using the text directly by simply saving your text file as an image file. At the moment, web-spiders and crawlers are unable to extract information from the images even though a huge amount of effort is being put into reading text from images.

### What is data mining and how does it affect me if I'm using social networking sites such as Facebook?

Data mining, in simple terms, is extracting knowledge or particular trends from data accumulated over a considerable length of time. Data mining is utilised

to understand user behaviour in online web services so the services can be enhanced to enrich the user experience with add-on services such as personalised recommendations based on like users' preferences. The usability of sites like Facebook is not affected. However, all your activities (interactions with the system) are collected in server logs that can be analysed later. The data collected is not matched with your personal details that you have entered on your Facebook or MySpace page. As a user you cannot stop the collection of your data, in fact, most sites require you to agree to allow data collection.

### What can we look forward to regarding smarter online services?

Smarter online service will be able to predict users' next moves. This eventually means the service you're using knows you better than you know yourself. For example, a user who regularly visits a sports site asking for stories on "Brisbane Lions", goes to the site to search for "footy", and the site will know that what they really want is news about "Brisbane Lions". In a couple of years online services will provide personalised service even if you do not specify what you are looking for. Thus, you should get a recommendation which you actually wanted, but had never thought of. Some of us in the Faculty of Information Technology are conducting sophisticated "personalisation" research that will guide website users towards their perfect partner, car or house.