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Prentice to play vital role in University's IT development

by Dr Ian Reinecke, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Services)

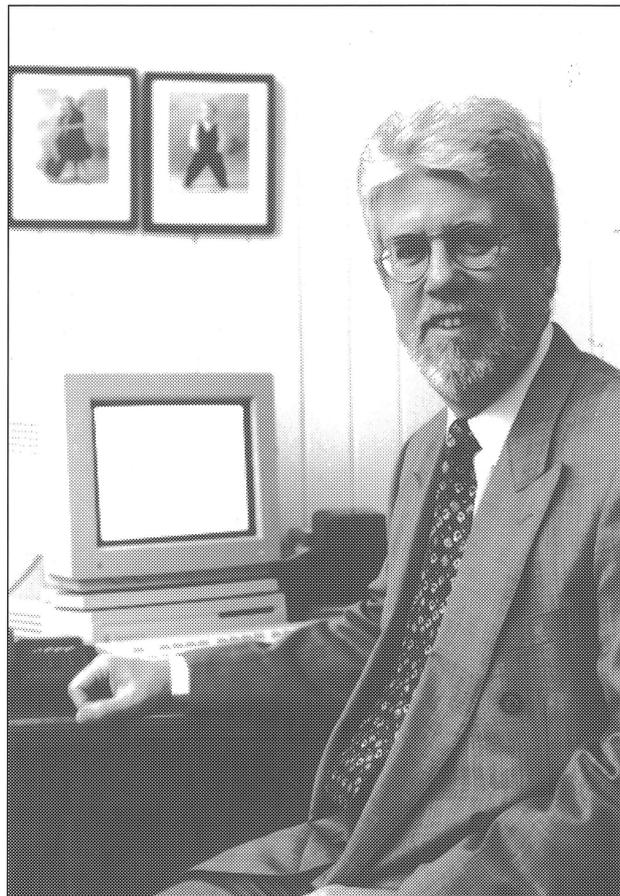
The Prentice Centre is positioned to play a more strategic role in the development of information technology at the University of Queensland, following its review and the establishment of the Vice-Chancellor's Information Technology Committee (VCIT).

The review of Prentice, which is now being considered in the context of a strategic planning exercise by the Acting Director and his executive team, concluded that in many areas of activity Prentice provided excellent service to the University. This was particularly true where departments and units had negotiated facilities management agreements for Prentice network support.

There were however areas of client service that needed to be markedly improved and these are now the focus of attention of Prentice's management team. In general the report confirmed that the services offered by Prentice are among the most important enabling factors in improving teaching and learning, research and community interaction.

The VCIT has agreed on a work plan for the next year in which Prentice will play a vital role. Among VCIT's priorities are the identification of the strategic value of the various IT services it offers, development of a draft code of conduct for University users of the Internet, an information security standard, network upgrading requirements and the technical standards needed for interoperability.

In order to provide the standard of service the University needs and expects, Prentice will need to take a more strategic view of its activities, work hard to devise and deliver the services that its clients want, and ensure quality in everything it does. The key to that agenda is the expertise, attitudes and energy of Prentice staff as they create an enhanced role for Prentice in serving the University.



Dr Ian Reinecke: In many areas of activity Prentice provides excellent service

Prentice Course Schedule Online

Clients can find out what Prentice courses are on offer without moving from their desk. The Prentice Centre provides a World Wide Web site where clients can access the latest course schedule. The web site address is:

<http://www.uq.edu.au/~ccjwilso/index.html>

For those clients without Internet access, it is still possible to see an online schedule. From the prompt on Dingo, UQVAX or Brolga, type course to display the current course schedule. Alternatively contact your DLO who has a schedule, or Kelly Tice in Client Service on ext 54255.

Technology to Support your Presentation

Effective presentation enhances your message. Here at the Prentice Centre, we can provide the technology to make your presentation more visually attractive, and therefore more appealing to your audience.

World Wide Web — the 90s' way of presenting information

These are some of ways in which World Wide Web is being used in this University:

- *Course Notes:* The Journalism department allows students enrolled in its Masters program to access course notes on the Web.
- *Tutorials:* The Medical School presents cameo cases for students to explore on the Web. For example, an Appendicitis case is cited detailing patient history, diagnosis and prognosis.
- *Assessment:* Again, the Medical School has selected the Web for students to access a Multiple Choice examination. Students submit their student number, and answer questions. Analyses of exams are possible.
- *Subject Information:* Electrical Engineering presents detailed Web pages providing information on subjects and the department.

To see these examples of Web usage, visit the site:

<http://www.uq.edu.au/pcc/services/webdev/presentation/>
The effectiveness of the Web as a presentation tool is monitored by Prentice. We can set up automated preparation of statistics on how many times Web pages are accessed, and from where they come. Contact Hank Szeto (ext 54358 or email h.szeto@cc.uq.edu.au) to discuss how your department could present a Web site.

Video for teaching, research and marketing

Prentice has a unit which makes videos for teaching, research, and marketing. Video is particularly useful for subjects that are complicated to present to large groups such as microscopic data, aerial views, and detecting trends in slow motion. We also arrange remote simulcasts and videoconferencing.

Aside from video production, Prentice also conducts training courses on video camera use, desktop video for video editing, and interview skills for academics questioned by the media.

Departments interested in finding out how video could assist them should contact Charles Costanza (ext 57069 or email c.costanza@cc.uq.edu.au).

Electronic presentations on CD-ROM

CD-ROM can be used for archiving large amounts of information, and it is ideal for electronic presentations. Prentice is able to store images onto CD-ROM along with a built-in database which enables you to browse the data then present the information. Contact Cliff Leigh (email c.leigh@cc.uq.edu.au or ext 54110) for more information on this technology.

Latest Hardware and Software Advice

University Technology Shop staff are able to advise the UQ community on the latest hardware and software technology developments. The shop has been able to assist departments including Architecture, Microscopy, Music and History in obtaining leading edge technology for their teaching and research. If you have a project requiring specific equipment contact Stephen Atherton in the University Technology Shop (email s.atherton@cc.uq.edu.au or on ext 53944).

Lecture Theatre AV Equipment Support

Computers do not replace teaching roles... they support it! Prentice supports 100 lecture theatres, thirty of which now contain data and computing aids. Courses are held on how to use lecture theatre equipment. For staff unable to attend these courses, individual instruction is possible. Contact Kevin Dalton (ext 54024) or Col Gilmour (ext 54032)(email av@cc.uq.edu.au, fax 54057) for more information.

These technologies were demonstrated at the DLO Meeting held 3 April 1996. DLOs saw how UQ departments are currently using these technologies in their teaching, and how Prentice is working with them to achieve those ends. Ask your DLO about the presentation.

Introducing the... Web Development Unit

World Wide Web popularity has grown phenomenally over the last couple of years. This appeal provides a new opportunity for the University to distribute information.

Recognising this, Prentice has formed the Web Development Unit. This team specialises in creating visually appealing and innovative Web sites for your department.

The unit also involves experts from other areas of the Centre for specialties such as graphic design, video and audio production, to provide a complete and sophisticated service. More details are provided in the article on the left.

Introducing the Web team

Pictured from left...

Hank Szeto: Hank is the team leader and has extensive Web programming experience. Contact Hank for more information (ext 54358 or email h.szeto@cc.uq.edu.au).

Anita Lipsky: The newest member of the team having joined Prentice in March, Anita comes to us with Web expertise, graphic and literary skills.

Michael Sandell: Mike has recently branched into the Web development field. He may be familiar to you as one of our intrepid Departmental Support staff, which he continues part-time.

