

## **ICT Project Alignment at NorthTec University**

Xiaohui Xu, NorthTec University, New Zealand

xxu@northtec.ac.nz

NorthTec is located in the northern region of New Zealand where population is widely distributed. Since early 2003 NorthTec has invested significantly in the development of its Information and Communications Technology (ICT) applications. NorthTec adopted the strategy to use technology to improve the efficiency of the organisation and to enhance education delivery. This strategy is important, given the widely distributed nature of the region's population.

This paper will present some examples to demonstrate how IT projects can contribute to NorthTec institutional objectives. In particular, Unified Communication, Campus Portal, Laptop and Wireless Initiative projects will be discussed.

Unified Communication: prior to the integration project, NorthTec had completed a number of infrastructure projects in the last three years. This included campus rewiring, WAN upgrade, wireless implementation, and video conferencing implementation. The unified communication project established an infrastructure that seamlessly integrated data, voice and video communication, email, voice mail, facsimile, instant messaging, and institution-wide learning and business applications. This project provided faculties and students the capabilities to use advanced communication and collaboration tools across LAN, WAN, Internet, Wireless and mobile network. An application of this project was the use of "virtual classroom", which enabled NorthTec to conduct teaching and tutoring via a combination of physical classrooms and interactive online spaces.

Campus Portal: this project established a framework that seamless integrates information, process, and collaboration tools. Many campus applications such as Course management system (Moodle), Campus Resource Management System (Syllabus Plus), Student Management System, electronic library, learning materials, and unified messaging functions can be accessed via the Campus Portal. This project enabled students, faculties, and staff to have secure, seamless, and personalised access to learning and business information anywhere, anytime.

Laptop and Wireless Initiative: this project converted all NorthTec classrooms into computer-enabled smart classrooms. Advanced collaboration tools were provided to enhance teaching and learning experience.

With these projects, NorthTec has made great progress to provide students, faculties and staff with the infrastructure required for communication, collaboration, and information access. This paper will identify the factors that contribute to the success and the lessons learned.