

CURTIN BUSINESS SCHOOL  
issue 6 spring 2006

CURTIN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY | WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A MAGAZINE FOR  
BUSINESS AND ALUMNI

# review



## Battlefield to Boardroom

Building elite business teams

## Powering Up

Training for China's LNG industry

Success in life can be built on education. Many of the alumni featured in this edition of *Curtin Business School Review* attest to the importance they placed on their work and experience at our university. The staff at Curtin Business School (CBS) are proud of their students and their achievements; we are confident that there are numerous alumni who have built great careers on the basis of their university studies. Two linchpins – staff commitment to their professions and their students – have contributed mightily to the dominant place that we have in Western Australian business education today.

Over the decades that CBS and its antecedents such as WAIT, have been offering courses in business to local and international students, staff have emphasised one central tenet: students must be offered material that is relevant to business and applicable to its needs.

Our graduates now take their places around the board room tables of major companies, in government and in the offices of the many small to medium enterprises that have enduring roles in business in the state and the immediate region. Alumni start their own businesses and take risks that will build jobs and wealth for their communities. They give their time and skills voluntarily to non-government organisations, to community service and to sport. As the alumni do so, their communities win more than the financial benefits that have their source in a sound and effective business education.

Now Curtin Business School wants to offer its alumni opportunities to give of their business experiences in the development of its teaching and research activities. A program will be launched later in the year inviting alumni to work with small groups of staff on material that we can include in our core activities of teaching and learning and applied research. Further details will be provided as the scoping of the project is completed. I am confident that alumni members will find the project worthwhile and an excellent opportunity to continue their relationship with CBS and its students.



Professor Michael Wood  
Executive Dean, Curtin Business School



# in review

issue 6 spring 2006  
CURTIN BUSINESS SCHOOL | REVIEW



“When you subscribe to the idea of being elite you’re not saying you’re better than anybody... you’re saying you’re better than you were yesterday.”

Peter Tinley

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CURTIN BUSINESS SCHOOL REVIEW WELCOMES YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS.  
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# business brief



DR VICTOR EGAN AND SON TIMOTHY

## UniAID Somalia Book Drive success

10,000 books and numerous computers donated by staff and students from Curtin, other Western Australian universities and the general public recently left Fremantle to help in the fight against poverty in Somalia.

The book drive organised by Curtin Business School in cooperation with all Western Australian universities, Thomson Learning and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) was prompted by the recognition of a dire need for educational resources in Somali universities.

Book Drive coordinator Dr Victor Egan, School of Management said there is much to be done to assist Somalia in its economic development.

“One effective means of assistance, that is well researched and documented, is raising the level of education within a population; and this is the issue we are targeting with the UniAid Somalia book and computer drive,” Egan said.

“Students and staff were encouraged to donate academic books of any discipline which were no longer being used, and personal computers were also collected.

“It has been a huge success with the collection of so many books and computers over the past months from students, staff and the community. In some small way, we hope that our gesture will help educate under-privileged Somalis in the coming years.”

## Top business researchers awarded

Three of Curtin Business School’s top researchers were acknowledged recently at a presentation attended by Curtin Vice-Chancellor, Professor Jeanette Hackett.

Dr Therese Jefferson and Professor Alison Preston, both from the Graduate School of Business were awarded the 2005 CBS Article of the Year for their article titled *Australia’s ‘other’ gender wage gap: Baby boomers and compulsory superannuation accounts*, published in the journal, *Feminist Economics*. Both Preston and Jefferson are members of the Women in Social and Economic Research unit (WiSER).

Jefferson also picked up the 2005 New Researcher of the Year prize for the quality of her journal publications, her achievements while completing her PhD, and the ‘highly commended’ pass that her thesis received.

The 2005 Curtin Business School Researcher of the Year award went to Professor Elizabeth Chang, School of Information Systems, for her outstanding performance in quality research activity, exemplified by the very high rate of publication. Chang has attracted several large National Competitive Research Grants and has also played a role in building a research culture both in the School of Information Systems and Curtin Business School.

## Services Management Symposium

The School of Management, Curtin Business School will host the 1st Services Management Symposium on Monday 13 and Tuesday 14 November 2006 at the Bankwest Theatre, Curtin University of Technology, Bentley Campus.

The two-day symposium will provide professional development and networking opportunities and offer a forum to discuss key issues facing the public and private sectors.

Internationally recognised experts in their fields have been invited to share their views as well as industry and government representatives who will present specific case studies from a practitioner’s perspective. During the event two very topical issues for business, government and academia will be explored: Security and crisis management in the tourism and hospitality industry; and contemporary challenges in public sector management.

Website:  
[www.business.curtin.edu.au/sms](http://www.business.curtin.edu.au/sms)

# Battlefield to Boardroom

## A soldiers guide to building elite business teams

WHILE A MAJOR IN THE SAS PETER TINLEY HELPED PLAN AND DEPLOY AUSTRALIAN TROOPS IN TROUBLE SPOTS AROUND THE WORLD. NOW HE'S USING THAT SAME APPROACH TO HELP BUILD ELITE TEAMS IN THE WORLD OF BUSINESS AND SPORT.

A lifetime as a career soldier has taught Peter Tinley one thing: no plan ever survives first contact with the enemy. That very point was demonstrated in life and death terms in early 2003 when he was part of the Australian taskforce responsible for securing western Iraq and destroying Scud missile sites.

Tinley, who spoke to Curtin Business School students recently, helped plan the campaign, dubbed *Operation Falconer*. The only thing was the enemy didn't realise the role they were supposed to play.

"We had this fantastic plan, we were going to sneak across this particular route – we were going to take it sight unseen, overnight, by night vision equipment driving 60 kilometres an hour across the desert – and we planned it with all the US intelligence available – air photos, satellite, you name it, to be without contact from anybody else, to suddenly arrive," he recalls.

"Two hours after crossing the border, out from the right flank comes an Iraqi convoy, just from nowhere. The ensuing skirmish was

speed. We planned 40 days to capture western Iraq, we did it in 21."

Tinley says that encompasses what elite teams are all about: consistently delivering better than expected results. "Often we talk about 'elite' teams, or organisations being 'elite', and we're confusing them with 'elitism'. With elite teams, it's actually the results that matter," he says.

And being responsive to your environment also counts. Tinley says the plan to secure western Iraq was a good plan on paper – but it had to be changed after five days, simply to allow the troops to rest.

"In western Iraq, it was the most intense combat we've had in terms of the effort expended. So after five days, we're sitting back at headquarters and said we've got to stop and give these guys a rest because nobody slept for the first five days. A lot of people find that really difficult to believe, but getting shot at can keep you awake a fair bit! The fact we had to adapt the plan allowed us to then go on and produce a result."

to pass on tips on leadership, building elite teams and strategy. To meet the demand, he's started a business consultancy, Blue Gum Leadership.

"There are so many other determinants of your success in the business world, not least of which are the people around you."

Harnessing the skills of those people is the key to team success in both the SAS and business. He says the bottom line is that elite teams consistently achieve superior results. Building elite teams is all about leadership. And that involves a special type of leader.

"And it's not so much the classic 'follow me' charismatic style of leadership. It's about the thinking leader who sits for 20 or 30 minutes a day, contemplating what's needed," he says.

"It's about someone who truly understands the nature of their business, how to do it better than the next guy, and who looks for innovation to create better results. That underpins the idea of elite results," he says.

Nobody slept for the first five days... getting shot at can keep you awake a fair bit.

brief, and the Australian troops advanced. And the analogy I suppose for business is that no plan ever survives first contact with the market – because the market gets a vote, and your competitors get a vote, and they weren't there at your planning."

Tinley has a unique perspective on business as he has recently made the transition from being a major in the Special Air Services (SAS) Regiment to private businessman. As principal planner for the SAS, Tinley developed and executed plans for its worldwide operations including East Timor, Christmas Island (Tampa) and Afghanistan. He was the lead tactical planner for SAS campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. In the Iraqi campaign he was Deputy Commander of Australia's 550-member Special Forces Task Group, consisting of about 130 SAS soldiers with the rest drawn from all three defence forces.

"The overall objective was to seize the ground very quickly in what they call a strategic raid. We had 6,500 square kilometres to clear and we just went at it at breakneck

The SAS has an international reputation as top-notch troops specialising in reconnaissance and stealth, yet they still had to convince the USA and UK top brass they were up to the job in Iraq.

"I went to the USA for about three months to participate in the planning prior to the war and I led the planning team there to produce that result. On a professional level it was a great win for us to get the jobs we did and the resources we were able to put together."

In 2003, Tinley was made a member of the Order of Australia for his role in planning and coordinating Australia's role in military planning and coordination.

After being a soldier for 23 years, he has now swapped his uniform and decorations for a different leadership role: he's the head of Australis Pavestone, a company based near Fremantle which makes reconstituted limestone paving.

He's also helping build better businesses. He's often called on to address the corporate world – and even the sporting sector –

### Tinley's four-step guide to building elite teams

#### Mission focus:

##### Focus team members on the aim of their mission

"The Australian forces in Iraq had one overwhelming task: to prevent Scud missile launches in western Iraq. Nothing else mattered. There are so many distractions in our corporate life these days, particularly communications, that make us – as leaders and managers – forget why we went to work."

#### Individual unconventionality:

##### Get more ideas on the table

"What are the formal and informal structures in your organisation that allow the most junior person to have a great idea?"



PETER TINLEY

Tinley's four-step guide to building elite teams continued...

The SAS is a good example because it has an informal 'flat leadership' structure that exists behind the more conventional armed forces hierarchy. There's a lot of informality in the SAS – there's no saluting and there's no rank in the conventional sense. As a result, you have to build rapport and respect differently, not unlike a civil organisation. This idea of a flat leadership allows an informal structure to arise where people are respected for what they say and what they do."

**Creeping excellence:**

**The SAS version of continuous improvement**

"Always question assumptions, never accept the status quo, and sometimes be unreasonable – this underscores elite results right through. When you subscribe to the idea of being elite you're not saying you're better than anybody – that's elitism – you're saying you're better than you were yesterday. And you will be better tomorrow than you were today. And for an organisation, there's this incremental change. So 'creeping excellence' just talks to that."

**Institutional agility:**

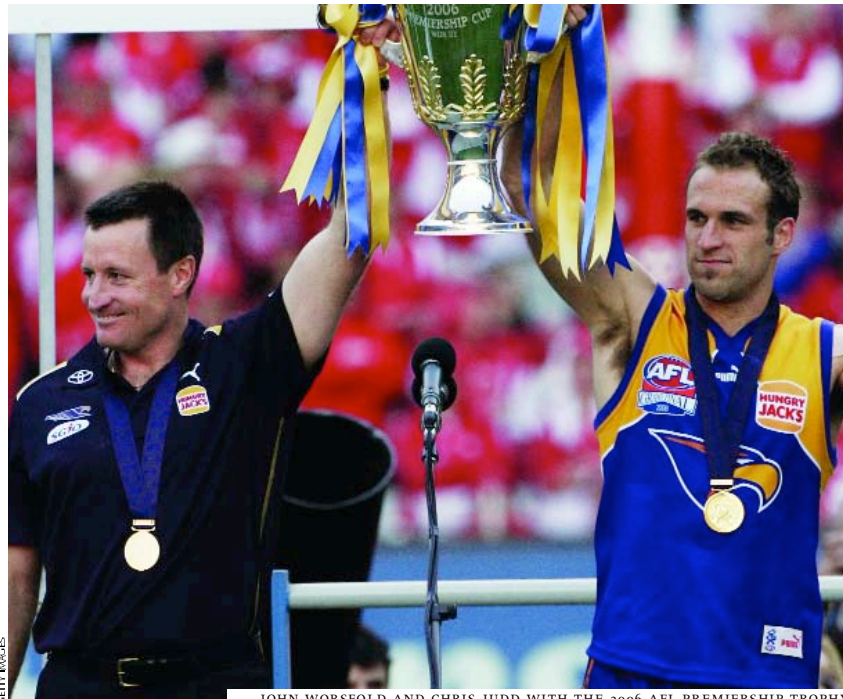
**How fast you can move your organisation to take advantage of opportunities**

"In other words, how fast you can turn your battleship – or corporation – around to meet the demands of a fast-changing environment. Prior to Iraq we had 100 people in East Timor we had people in Afghanistan, a counter-terrorism responsibility that we maintain all day, every day here in Australia. And we were able to put our hand up and say 'Yeah, yeah, we're able to do a fourth thing, we will go to Iraq. We put our hand up first knowing we could do it, we just weren't sure how we'd do it. But the belief in the organisation was agile enough to adapt and we did.'"

# John Worsfold

## Commander and coach

PLAYING AN AFL FOOTBALL MATCH IS A WORLD AWAY FROM FIGHTING BATTLES, BUT THE WEST COAST EAGLES FOOTBALL CLUB HAVE TAPPED INTO SOME OF THE SAME LEADERSHIP QUALITIES ESPOUSED BY PETER TINLEY AND THE SAS.



JOHN WORSFOLD AND CHRIS JUDD WITH THE 2006 AFL PREMIERSHIP TROPHY

Earlier this year, Peter Tinley held a workshop with Eagles coach John Worsfold and his coaching staff, focusing on planning, preparation, attaining high-risk goals and demonstrating strong leadership.

Worsfold explains that the workshop focused on looking at ones own strengths and weaknesses and also the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition

"We are in the situation where we look at our opposition directly and regularly," says Worsfold. "He did a lot of work on defining mental toughness and getting that out of people. It certainly gave us some good ideas

in our planning and how we go about doing our own SWOT analysis on ourselves and the opposition."

Worsfold says in some ways sport is like war, with the players trooping into battle each week and the coach as commander.

"You are trying to put together a strategy that takes place each week," he says. "I suppose one of the biggest differences is that we have a different opposition each week. But it is similar in the way we look at it, we try to make sure we do our best to maximise our strengths and exploit the opposition's weaknesses."

# Achieving Goals

## in football and business

ACCORDING TO FORMER AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL PLAYER AND CHAIRMAN OF THE WEST COAST EAGLES WHAT IS LEARNED ON THE FIELD IS GOOD TRAINING FOR THE CORPORATE GAME.

When Dalton Gooding left his tiny hometown in rural Western Australia to come to Perth to play football and study at Curtin, he had no idea that it was to be the springboard for an international business career.

The Claremont Football Club awarded the teenager from Dumbleyung a scholarship of \$1,000 over three years, which enabled him to study accounting as well as play football in the State league. He played nine seasons with the Tigers, and stood out not just for his ability, but also the trademark thick lens glasses he wore while playing matches.

"I was a wingman, a tall skinny wingman then. I didn't have great natural stamina, but I could read the play and hopefully move where I thought the ball would go and try to think it through a bit. That's what got me through," Gooding recalls.

Some 25 years after hanging up his boots, football still plays a significant role in his life and the skill in looking ahead and thinking strategically spilling over into his approach to business – as Chairman of the West Coast



DALTON GOODING

he explains. "You can't win a premiership every year in AFL because of the way the drafting system works, and you go through various cycles," Gooding says.

"What we're trying to do is minimise those cycles so we remain at the top for a long time. One of our strong emphases on remaining at the top is having very good recruiting. Our draft picks are crucial."

And in business, he says the same philosophy applies: "you need to recruit and develop talented team players within your business. I think in business the biggest asset you've got is human capital and people are what it's all about. If you haven't got good, loyal, hardworking people, your business won't succeed. And I'm a great believer in developing people, or promoting people ahead of their time to let them grow into the position."

He's also a great believer in tackling issues head-on.

"That's probably one of my philosophies in business, to eyeball people when there's an issue or problem to sort out," he says. "I think

You learn a lot about playing football at the elite level and you take those sort of disciplines into business.

Eagles as co-founder of a successful boutique accounting firm and director of several companies, some based overseas.

"Football has always played a very big role in my life and it's been very helpful from a professional perspective. You learn a lot about playing football at the elite level and you take those disciplines into business."

His role as Eagles chairman can be varied. One day he can be working with coaching staff and his board to develop long-term strategy, the next appearing on the news to clean up a PR mess or reading the riot act to high-profile, trouble-prone players.

"You have a pre-meditated plan as to who you call to get advice on how to deal with situations and you must deal with the situations very quickly because the media scrutiny in Western Australia as a two-team town is very intense, and you need to deal with it quickly and professionally," he says.

He says the club has core values and expected standards of behaviour on and off

the field. But things don't always work out that way. "They're young men, they're earning a lot of money, they've got a lot of energy, and people do make mistakes, and they're high-profile people so their mistakes get really focused upon," Gooding says.

Running a national football team involves discipline; winning is what it's all about.

"The Eagles demand success, we don't tolerate underachievement," he says. "Our whole theme is sustained success, and we think we've been the most successful club over the last 20 years with what we've achieved – four grand final appearances, two Brownlow medallists, two premierships and the second highest membership with 44,000 members, and also the most profitable club in the AFL."

But it's not just the current season that's important. Much of Gooding's role involves working with the management team to lay the seeds for long-term success.

"We've got a three-year strategic plan, a three-year vision, which we review each year,"

we've fallen into the trap these days of too much email and we don't actually look each other in the eye and discuss tough issues, it's often done by email and sometimes people often say things in email which they wouldn't say face to face."

The boutique accounting firm, Gooding Pervan – that he and Suzanne Pervan established with several others after leaving Ernst and Young in 1998 – has grown to employ 50 people. He says it was a challenge leaving the corporate comfort zone.

"Just starting your own business is a real challenge, you've got to find personal guarantees and you're building up everything from scratch," he explains. "And you have to bankroll it yourself."

"We have 50 people now, and we're expanding – we have a four to five-year vision, we want to have about 80 to 90 people within that period."

# Entrepreneurs

## Who wants to be one?

AUSTRALIANS ARE RENOWNED FOR AN ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH TO BUSINESS, BUT WE SHOULD FURTHER EXPLOIT THE TOOLS NOW PROVIDED BY ENTREPRENEURSHIP AS AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE.

Australians are in love with entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship, according to Professor Thierry Volery. It's related to the pioneer culture of the Australian – the 'can do' confidence. We see business opportunities and grab them with the belief we'll succeed in this land of opportunity where everyone gets a fair go.

Volery recently spent six months in Australia as a visiting Research Fellow at Curtin, before returning to his position as Professor of Entrepreneurship and Director of the Swiss Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business at the University of St Gallen in Switzerland.

"I'd estimate that more than 10 per cent of Australia's population is currently involved in entrepreneurial activity – a fairly high number," says Volery. He cites an international study where, in a comparison of entrepreneurship in about 40 countries, year in year out Australia ranks in the top entrepreneurial nations of the world. And



THIERRY VOLERY

Current approaches emphasise that entrepreneurship is a learned phenomenon.

entrepreneurs are becoming more prevalent across the country.

But, says Volery – who also serves on several editorial boards, including the *International Small Business Journal* and the *Journal of Enterprising Culture* – while we have an inherent opportunist spirit, we're yet to fully exploit entrepreneurship as a teaching and research discipline. Although, entrepreneurship education is fast gaining credence since becoming proficient in providing entrepreneurial tools distinct from management tools.

"Entrepreneurship is increasingly recognised as vital to the regeneration and development of our economies – encouraging it is smart economic management. But it's a fairly new discipline, so the teaching of entrepreneurship has been progressing since being put into curricula in the past 10 to 20 years," he says.

Crucial to fostering entrepreneurship is the capability to motivate individuals to become entrepreneurs, and equip them with the skills that turn opportunities into successful ventures. While certain traits have long been

associated with 'entrepreneurial types' – resourceful, self-assured, a risk-taker, might describe those drawn to entrepreneurial business activity – current approaches emphasise that entrepreneurship is a learned phenomenon.

This awareness has seen good business schools establish courses and programs in entrepreneurship, and governments and organisations set up initiatives to create awareness about entrepreneurship and to train potential entrepreneurs.

"Perhaps entrepreneurs are not born, but created by their experience as they learn, being influenced by teachers, parents, mentors and role models during their growth," Volery says. "An inspirational outlook is important, but you can be very creative, a risk-taker and so on, and if you don't know what to do, or you don't know how to master the relevant tools, your business idea is doomed."

So how is entrepreneurship acquired? It has spread through access to exemplars, but entrepreneurs – while enthusiastic motivators – are not necessarily good pedagogues. Volery

cautions that successful entrepreneurs tend to think all businesses will become successful the same way theirs did, and they may not understand fully the business model that worked for them and be able to analyse the real reasons they triumphed.

While accepted that entrepreneurship education needs both practical and theory components, there's been a precedent of delivering these from a management perspective, where the focus is on driving existing organisations.

Volery emphasises that entrepreneurship is beyond the effective coordination of resources. Entrepreneurs have identified a need in the marketplace and formed an idea for a service of product that meets that need at an acceptable price. Their intuitive skills will therefore become more effective when equipped with applied, specific knowledge.

"The would-be entrepreneur must be capable of marshalling the resources to pursue that opportunity in the presence of risk and uncertainty. You need the knowledge to transform your idea into a viable plan, and

then communicate that plan with enough conviction to procure the resources needed to create the new enterprise," he says.

"Then there are the skills required to build the team and the whole organisation to deliver the product. This development stage usually entails the transition from start-up to a fully articulated and complex enterprise structure with human resources, finance, marketing, manufacturing and quality management. Then, successful entrepreneurship must evolve into good business management."

How then can prospective entrepreneurs best obtain these skills? Traditional approaches in entrepreneurship education have comprised two separate arenas: the university – providing cognitive, planning frameworks – and the organisation providing the opportunity to apply theory in practice. But, according to Volery, individuals participating in entrepreneurship education and development programs have been moving sequentially from one arena to the other too often.

One of the pedagogic difficulties of teaching entrepreneurship, he points out, stems from the heterogeneous entrepreneur-opportunity situations.

"Every entrepreneur has opportunities which vary in terms of technology, innovation, risk, uncertainty and financial implication," he says. "Therefore, covering the continuum of learning required a better articulation and integration of business schools, lecturing expertise, seasoned entrepreneurs, consultants and financiers."

While a variety of pedagogical tools can be used in entrepreneurship education and training – such as lectures, readings, testimonies, case analyses and computer simulations – the evidence is that 'practice by doing' induces the highest retention rate.

"Students who write a business plan, take part in a game where they have to make some decisions or even set up a real business venture will learn a great deal," Volery says.

While in Australia, Volery undertook research for the second edition of his textbook (co-authored with Curtin Professor of Management Michael Schaper): *Entrepreneurship and Small Business: a Pacific-Rim Perspective*. To be published in 2007 (by John Wiley & Sons) the book includes a series of Australian entrepreneurship case studies. One describes the path of a successful Australian start-up company called Neuromonics – now delivering internationally a novel treatment for tinnitus, which progressed from an invention by a Curtin health researcher affected by the condition.

"We need entrepreneurs of all levels – they're the doers," Volery says.

"The best and the brightest will make it anyway, but if we take the person of average intelligence, creativity and so on, and we provide this person with entrepreneurship tools, then he or she will most likely relish their experiences in business and be fairly successful."

## Students assist local small businesses

Entrepreneurship students from the School of Management have helped a number of small businesses scoop the pool at the 2005 Belmont Small Business Awards ceremony held at the Burswood Casino Ballroom recently. The students, Ben Tan Wei Keong, Faldi Umaya, Andrew Ooi Lye Wei and Glenn Hsu helped complete the award applications for ten businesses. Of the businesses helped by the students, all ten were category finalists and seven won major category awards out of a possible fifteen, including the Most Innovative Enterprise (PDA Products) and Export (PDA Products) awards.

According to Louis Geneste, lecturer, School of Management the project involved the allocation of students to small firms seeking help to complete an award application. Students interviewed the owners of the small firms and completed an award application on behalf of the firm.

"Business owners too busy to complete the applications, benefited by having students complete the applications for them and in turn students learnt about small business management, entrepreneurship and the challenges faced by the firms and factors that led to their success."

## EXECUTIVE TRAINING

# Powering up Management in China's gas industry

THE USE OF GAS AS THE CLEANEST OF THE FOSSIL FUELS IS EXPANDING ALL OVER THE WORLD. MANY GAS DISTRIBUTORS ARE ADAPTING TO A PRIVATISED AND MORE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT.

The newly established Australian Centre for Natural Gas Management – a joint venture between Curtin and The University of Western Australia (UWA) – provides a critical mass in gas management expertise. It provides executive education programs focused on the entire gas value chain – from development through to end-user. And with LNG expected to supply 12 per cent of China's energy within

four years, the need for increased numbers of Chinese managers with a comprehensive knowledge of all facets of the downstream industry is essential.

Cisca Spencer, Curtin's manager for the project and Academic Coordinator for the training program, said Curtin has been involved in developing the collaborative program since 2003.

"We have been collaborating on a consultative design process with the NorthWest Shelf, the Chinese Government and the WA Department of Industry and Resources to ensure what we deliver is what the Chinese companies want. We have also had some success in delivering gas-related training elsewhere, for example to the Korean company Kogas and the Indonesian pipeline operator PGN," she says.

Both these developments need managers with new skills and a strong understanding of the downstream gas industry as a whole.

Through the Australia-China Natural Gas Technology Partnership Fund (established in 2003) the Centre will, for the next five

years, provide executive education to Chinese managers from industry sectors including LNG terminal operators, pipeline operators, power-generating companies, city gas distributors and government regulators. Training includes MBA-style generic modules, specialised modules relating to the gas industry, and many visits to companies and regulators. Training is provided by academics, consulting and law firms with direct experience in the gas industry. The second cohort of Chinese managers is currently in WA undertaking the six-month training program.

Cisca Spencer said that the training program provided a wonderful opportunity for the future leaders of the Chinese gas industry – many of whom will go through the program in the next five to 10 years – to build business and personal links in WA.

Trainees will be awarded an Executive Management Certificate (Gas), jointly awarded by Curtin and UWA.

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# Corporate Governance

## Listen up, because it's no longer background noise

IT'S UNWISE FOR ANY BUSINESS GRADUATE TO CONTEMPLATE A CAREER IN THE CORPORATE SECTOR WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES, ACCORDING TO ALISON GAINES, GLOBAL PRACTICE LEADER FOR INTERNATIONAL BOARD CONSULTING SPECIALISTS GERARD DANIELS.

Alison Gaines knows something about corporate governance. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Politics, a Masters in Public Policy, and recently completed a Bachelor of Laws. In July, she was appointed Deputy Chancellor of Murdoch University. Not long before that, Curtin Business School's top students and graduates paid attention to what Gaines had to say about corporate governance, at the annual Prizes and Scholarships Ceremony.

A key point of advice offered by Gaines was that, to be an effective advisor in their careers, graduates must be highly aware of the governance arrangements in which they work – in the wider political economy, in the corporate sector and within the organisation.

Why is this knowledge now indispensable? Government continues to be the major driver for the conditions of commerce and, according to Gaines, the latest revolution for commerce – particularly companies – is the corporate governance regimes imposed by governments and shareholders.

"The world-wide trend for greater transparency in board operations has led from notorious corporate collapses like HIH in Australia, and Enron and other big corporates in the US," Gaines says. "And in the past it's been too easy for a board to get away with just 'spinning its wheels.'"

Highlighting the weight of concern is the World Economic Forum's recent placing of corporate governance in their list of top 10 global risks. And like a number of other



ALISON GAINES AT THE CURTIN BUSINESS SCHOOL PRIZES AND SCHOLARSHIPS CEREMONY

Government continues to be the major driver for the conditions of commerce.

western countries, the Australian federal Parliament has, in the past five years, created significant new governance obligations in the Corporations Law, and for the financial services sector in particular.

"Directors of boards and senior officers are now more accountable to the market, particularly current shareholders, and to regulators for the performance of the board and the corporation," she says.

In addition to the law, other institutions are also shaping corporate governance in Australia – and providing resources that

students and graduates would find invaluable. Gaines recommends highly the Australian Stock Exchange's corporate governance principles.

"Many private companies, not-for-profit boards and associations are using the ASX principles as the checklist for their internal governance reforms," she says. "The Australian Institute of Company Directors has been influential in this discourse, publishing numerous policies on Board improvement."

Add to this, she explains, the fact that shareholders and large institutional investors

are becoming increasingly informed and organised.

"Being able to deliver strategies for organisational growth means the board must build integrity and provide investors with the confidence the corporation is compliant. Shareholders are prepared to put a premium on the share price in return for good corporate governance," Gaines advises.

Hence her encouragement to business and commerce students and graduates to meet the challenge of contemporary governance.

# alumniview

IT WAS A HOT NIGHT IN THE CBD WITH CURTIN GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ALUMNI GATHERING AT E'CUCCINA FOR THEIR ANNUAL SOIREE. NEW PRESIDENT DAVID IZZARD WELCOMED GUESTS AND ENTERTAINMENT WAS PROVIDED BY LATIN FUSION BAND, MAGICIAN AND CABARET ACTS.

alumni.curtin.edu.au



1 FROM L-R | CHARLIE COLTMAN, ENNO SCHIJF AND VANDA SCHIJF

2 FROM L-R | DANIELLE DOVER AND KYLIE AGNEW

3 FROM L-R | MAEVE O'BRIEN AND MICHAEL WILEY

4 ORGANISING COMMITTEE FROM L-R | ALI SUMNER, MICHAEL STARLING, PROFESSOR ROB EVANS, DAVID IZZARD, KAREN CADDY, SOPHIE DWYER, AMIT VOHRA, MAEVE O'BRIEN, TERESA TAGLIAFERRI AND MICHAEL DISBURY

# classnotes

The hallmark for Kenneth Hart's company, *eye4you* is ingenious software. Hart says it captures the company's commitment to providing innovative software with 'you' in mind.

KENNETH HART

## Making an impact with ingenious software

Kenneth Hart graduated from Curtin Business School in 1999 with a Bachelor of Commerce, Marketing. After completing his degree, Hart travelled to Europe and it was here that he discovered a niche market. His experience working for a Swiss, software firm taught him that IT companies spend a huge amount of time developing software but not a lot of time marketing their products and building their brand.

"My biggest lesson in Europe was to see how they market things over there - some of the world's most recognisable brands Mercedes Benz, IKEA, Nokia etc. are from northern European countries and they do amazing marketing (direct mail, customer loyalty programs, expos etc). Here in Australia, we have a very 'lets make a fast buck and not invest too much money' approach to marketing rather than long-term brand building," he says.

After a year in Europe, Hart returned to Perth and responded to an advert from a German software developer seeking an Australian distributor for their new software. He seized the opportunity to market the product, started the company, *eye4you* and began marketing HDGUARD, a PC security program.

With its central control tool, HDGUARD reduces network administration to almost zero by not only restoring PCs with every reboot, but allowing incredibly simple management of all PCs in entire rooms, offices, building and even enterprise domains. It can be installed in under three minutes, and configured (with just a few clicks) for almost any type of environment or desired outcome.

Some of the marketing strategies Hart used unwittingly raised controversy. "We use marketing methods not common to software or our primary target markets (around 75 per cent of our business is from education - schools, universities, TAFEs etc). For example, we held an 'aspirin campaign', a direct mail piece with an Aspro Clear attached - to show IT Managers how our software can get rid of one major headache in their life (time wasted on fixing student computers). With most other products being advertised in magazines, flyers etc, this worked extremely well and we had a good response rate (with follow up). It stood out and raised controversy because some of the tables got squashed in the post and ended up leaving white powder in the envelope! Something we didn't plan, but it stirred a lot of interest and got people talking," he says.

"We also use laypersons terms in our marketing, not technical jargon. And most of all... we create a 'human' feel to everything we do!"

His human 'lets have fun' approach to marketing his software is unusual in this type of techno-business. "It is not about technology stuff, like free ipods, but about people and the benefits to the individual customer. Marketing is my strength. It is what my company is built on," he says.

Today, the product is used by over 650 organisations across Australia and New Zealand. He also recently received an order for 300 schools in New Zealand. And his other clients include TAFE, GEOS College of English, Hilton Hotel, Las Vegas, La Curacao - largest shopping centre in Los Angeles

Hart's plans for the future include the launching of new flagship software, international expansion, specifically to the North American market, a complete redevelopment of the 'face of business' and more uniqueness in the branding.



KENNETH HART

VA BUSINESS NEWS

CLASS NOTES



CAROLINE BADMINTON

CAROLINE BADMINTON

## Netting PR honours

Hitting the books and being media savvy has paid off for Whale World marketing manager Caroline Badminton, who was announced as Student of the Year at the Public Relations Institute of Australia Hidden Target Awards.

A week before the event, the top three graduating public relations students were invited to present their public relations strategies to a panel of PR practitioners, who assessed the quality of the strategy and presentation skills. Badminton was selected as the overall winner and presented with the Mitchell Student of the Year award and a \$500.00 cash prize on the evening. Badminton, originally from the UK completed a Bachelor of Commerce in Tourism Management and Public Relations at Curtin and has been employed at Whale World since June as marketing manager. Badminton said she felt extremely honoured to have won the prestigious award and declared it as an exciting end to her studies.

"As a mature international student I had the determination to succeed throughout my course and I now look forward to my new career and new residence in Albany."

Badminton said she felt extremely honoured to have won the prestigious award and declared it as an exciting end to her studies.

SARAH FORD

## Golden academic stature

Sarah Ford owns a medal struck in nine carat gold. The Ken Hall Medal, awarded to the best graduating Honours student based on their academic record, is Curtin Business School's most prestigious academic prize. Ford's Bachelor of Commerce (Economics) Honours thesis is titled Banking Policy in China and Foreign Banks; a Critique.

Her thesis is intrinsic to the position she now holds as an analyst in the Payments Policy Department of the Reserve Bank of Australia. "My job involves monitoring and writing reports on developments that occur in payment systems in Australia and overseas," she said. "The skills I acquired, both written and analytical, have enabled me to produce the research work my position requires."

In addition to the Ken Hall Medal, Ford has received several other prizes in recognition of her academic excellence.

These include Economic Society of Australia WA Branch Prize, the West Australian Treasury Prize, joint winner of the Australian Stock Exchange Prize, the Evan Morgan Memorial Scholarship Prize, and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia Prize.

Ford said she was honoured to receive such high recognition for her work.

DANIEL TILL AND MARK ILCHUK

## Cocktail for success

Take two 'can-do' Curtin Business School graduates, mix them with a three-metre mobile bar and lashings of entrepreneurial spirit – and what do you have? A successful business idea for catering to the cocktail social set.

It's a simple idea for a business venture: to create a cocktail bar atmosphere for parties and other social events within the comfort of people's own home or office. That's what Daniel Till and Mark Ilchuk had in mind a year or two ago when they started up their mobile cocktail bar service, Cocktail Culture.

Till had extensive experience as a cocktail bartender from having worked for years in Perth and Melbourne.

"When I got out of the industry I still got a lot of phone calls to do private parties," he says. "And I was getting more and more referrals, so I thought I might as well make a business out of it."

The pair came up with the idea for a mobile cocktail bar service after they'd met studying for the Bachelor of Commerce majoring in Accounting.

"We work off each other very well," says Till. "I ended up buying all the glassware, Mark built the portable cocktail bar and we gave ourselves the name Cocktail Culture."

"We bring to people's homes the mobile cocktail bar, all the fancy glasses, all the garnishes and fruit – and a great bartender's attitude."

With a menu of about 50 liquid creations – everything from a martini to a 'Hawaiian honeymoon' to a 'multiple orgasm' – the pair has been catering to all sorts of functions. That includes hens' parties, 40th birthdays, engagement parties and numerous corporate events – such as one for 600 people held on the South Perth foreshore.

"When we first started, we didn't make money but we did it for the love of the work and having our own business," recalls Till.

And while they might have been short on money, they were earning heaps of experience, and cashing in on their Curtin Business School knowledge. The venture was a perfect way to put into practice the knowledge gained through their studies, including business planning, budgeting and developing marketing plans.

The pair started up a website and the venture has proved popular, with almost no advertising and most business coming via word of mouth.

"The only advertising we do is a very small ad in the Yellow Pages – so people can look us up if they know about us – and that's all we've got," he says.

CLASS NOTES



DANIEL TILL MIXES BUSINESS AND COCKTAILS WITH COCKTAIL CULTURE

But the two founders are facing a dilemma. The venture is ready for expansion to the next stage – involving possibly DJ music and catering – but since they've graduated, they both have full-time jobs, Till as an accountant and Ilchuk with a building company.

"We're looking at a couple of options, maybe selling it to a catering company and going on with our own careers. Or maybe looking at the option of getting someone to run it for us, and we help out where needed."

The venture also underscored the importance of an intangible ingredient which helps drive many successful businesses: showmanship. Till says the key to being a good cocktail bartender is not just mixing drinks, but also putting on a show.

"It virtually comes down to having confidence behind the bar, having confidence in yourself," he says. "You've got to make the customer feel like they can't wait to have that drink. As you're making it, you've got a big smile on your face, you taste it towards the end, and you usually say something like 'You're going to love that drink' as you hand it to them. And that's all part of the service."

**The venture was a perfect way to put into practice the knowledge gained through their studies, including business planning, budgeting and developing marketing plans.**

written by  
WADE JARVIS

BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE

# Branding

## Is it really that important?

MARKETING ACADEMICS HAVE ALWAYS SUNG THE PRAISES OF BRANDING. BASED ON EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE, IT CAN BE ARGUED THAT BASED ON EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE, A DIFFERENT VIEWPOINT MAY BE REQUIRED IN HOW WE MANAGE BRANDS AND HOW WE UTILISE THEM IN THE FUTURE.

Branding has been a good platform for marketing professionals to create communication programs, namely as a tool to generate awareness, create persuasive communications that lead to positive attitudes that ultimately result in purchase. This classical communication approach is based on consumers taking a step by step process to purchase – needing to be made aware of a brand, then becoming interested in it based on a combination of tangible and intangible attributes, forming a positive attitude to the brand (ie. liking it) and ultimately purchasing the brand.

with Dr Cam Rungie and Professor Larry Lockshin, both from the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute of Marketing Science, on the wine market has shown that wine consumers are more loyal to price and variety than they are to brand. Generally, consumers repeat purchase heavily the four major varieties and make irregular purchases from the others. The four major varieties are Cabernet Sauvignon and Shiraz (for red wine) and Chardonnay and Riesling (for white wine). In addition, consumers display high loyalty to certain price categories. A brand such as Vasse Felix might perform better than most

The result is a movement away from brand personality and image.

The more positive the attitude, the more likely the purchase.

While this type of thinking reflects the simple AIDA model (Attention, Interest, Desire, Action) commonly used as a framework to guide marketing communication programs, it fails to incorporate market forces and how consumers really go about purchasing products in today's environment.

Firstly, the reason for a shift away from brand image and attitude is because it seems that in most product categories consumers are purchasing from any number of brands, and also, consumers are actually more loyal to a type of product. The result is a movement away from brand personality and image and more towards companies competing by making it easier for consumers to choose and purchase the particular product types that they are after. The challenge is to identify the popular product types and to move towards becoming the 'consumer-mind' and 'shelf-space' leader in the product type.

As an example, research I have conducted

small brands, not because it tries to create a strong brand image, but because, in the white wine category for example, it mainly sells high priced Chardonnay. Thus its success can be attributed to its strong presence for this important product type, in both consumers' minds and also availability on the retailer's shelf. At the low price end, Lindemans Bin65 is synonymous with chardonnay and is the leader for this product type.

The above results were obtained by analysing actual purchase behaviour rather than attitudinal data for brand personality research. As brand was not shown to be the core driver of wine purchase, it casts a different light on how we use brands to communicate to build or maintain market share.

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DR WADE JARVIS

### GUEST COLUMNIST

Dr Wade Jarvis recently joined the School of Marketing at Curtin Business School. He has a PhD from the Ehrenberg-Bass Institute of Marketing Science. He is widely published and his research interests include choice modelling, market structures, loyalty, revealed preference, polarisation, small brand strategies, pricing, customer data-base analysis, wine branding and retailing.

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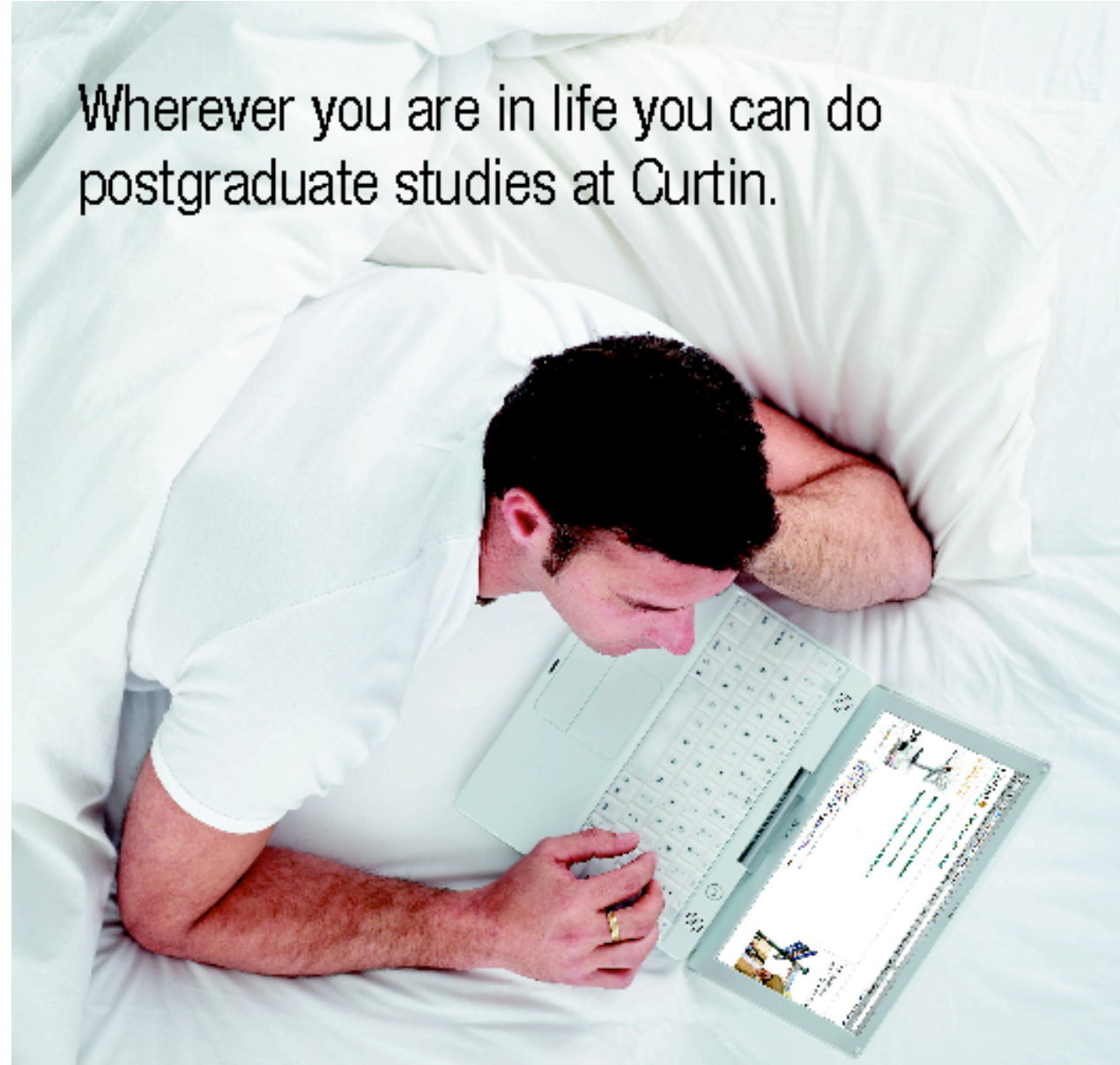
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