



Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

Write your Master Thesis in Australia!

Applications are invited from suitable qualified current Master students for an opportunity to write their Master Thesis at the Information Systems School at Queensland University of Technology. Thesis projects circle around innovation in the retail sector and will be conducted in close collaboration with our industry partner Woolworths to combine rigorous academic research with practical relevance.

Initiative Background

The student will work in the ongoing collaboration between the Information Systems School at Queensland University of Technology and Woolworths. The initiative's objective is to conduct applied research on business, process, and technology innovation as well as on the management of innovation processes in organisations. The domain of the initiative is the retail sector, with a particular focus on supermarket operations. Research topics are selected from a variety of business, management, process, service, and IT-components. As a result, individual projects feature different research strategies and are preferably conducted with holistic and multi-disciplinary research approaches.

Over recent years we have studied a number of different topics such as for example, positive deviance in retail stores, criteria influencing store manager performance, the use of enterprise social media for capability development and innovation, technological concepts for checkout-less stores, the use of IT systems in replenishment and forecasting, the use of advanced technologies such as 3D printing, iBeacons, or in-memory technology, and gamification of shopping.

Potential Thesis Topic Areas

There are opportunities for several master theses in the initiative. There is also considerable freedom to choose and define a specific topic once the formal requirements of the application have been met. Potential themes could revolve around the following ideas but are not limited to:

- *Analysing multi-option retailing.* A consistent user experience is nowadays expected by consumers across all channels, offline and online. Consequently, consumer requirements, expectations, and value-add potential need to be analysed in order to develop a multi-channel retailing strategy. This strategy need to take into account the mobile channel as the channel with the highest potential of value-add for the consumer.
- *Enterprise Social Networking.* Enterprise Social Networking Platforms, such as Yammer and Google+, purportedly enable employees to collaborate, share knowledge, discuss innovation ideas, etc. An opportunity for an empirical



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study exists to analyse Woolworths' enterprise social network and its uptake and appropriation by the Woolworths staff network. Potential focus areas are in content analysis (in order to identify common themes, topics of interests, usage behaviours (motivations, user profiles) and predictive models (development of enhanced or novel individual or organizational capabilities). This research could culminate in the design of an employee engagement strategy.

- *Customer use of mobile shopping technology.* This area can include studies of consumer behaviour in mobile shopping contexts, electronic self-checkouts, iBeacons, online delivery and so forth.
- *Staff engagement and collaboration using social technologies.* Woolworths is the largest client of Google, with 190,000 employees using Google products such as mail, calendar, drive and circles. The consequences of this technology use remain unclear, be it in form of performance advantages or increased engagement, collaboration, sharing or mutual understanding.
- *E-commerce.* Research in this area can include studies of factors that influence customers' online shopping experience, the potential of omnichannel shopping, or factors that need to be in place for adoption of virtual reality shopping.
- *Innovation management and entrepreneurship.* Research in this area can focus on the use of external knowledge (e.g., from customers and suppliers) for innovation purposes, the development of innovation capabilities, or the establishment of innovation ecosystems to foster collaboration between large companies and entrepreneurial ventures.

There are various further topics ranging from business to technical foci that lend themselves for a Master Thesis. Applicants can suggest research areas in their application and a specific topic will be determined upon successful application.

The Research Environment

QUT's Information Systems School is one of the leading Information systems (IS) research departments. In 2010, it was the only Australian IS research group ranked with a perfect '5-out-of-5' score in the initial Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) assessment. The school continues to be among the highest ranked research departments in terms of publications in the top IS journals worldwide.

QUT's Information Systems School has a global reputation for its work on Business Process Management, Workflow Technology, and Innovation Management. The School has an unconditional focus on rigorous research with demonstrated practical relevance. Research from the school has appeared in premier journals such as the *MIS Quarterly*, the *Journal of the AIS*, the *European Journal of IS*, *Decision Support Systems*, *Information Systems*, *ACM Transactions on Software Engineering and Methodology*, and many others.



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To find out more about the Information systems School, please visit

<http://www.qut.edu.au/science-engineering/about/about-the-faculty/school-of-information-systems>.

Application Criteria

The successful applicant

- has a Bachelor's degree in management, information systems, finance, marketing, business administration, computer science or a comparable field,
- has the ambition and capabilities to complete a high-quality Master's Thesis within a 3-6 months timeframe.,
- has a strong research mindset, and a strong interest in developing skills in theoretical and empirical research,
- possesses evidence of strong analytical and problem-solving capabilities,
- speaks and writes fluently in English,
- optionally has experience in the retail sector, and
- likes to work in an international setting and in a high-standard applied research setting in close interaction with key industry partners.

Application Procedure

Applicants are required to submit a letter of application for the position to Frederik von Briel (frederik.vonbriel@qut.edu.au) by **31 January 2016**, briefly describing qualifications, relevant skills and work experiences where applicable.

Applicants will be screened and, if suitable, invited for further assessment and interviews.

The following supporting documents are required:

- CV including a comprehensive list and details of all completed units if any.
- A letter stating comprehensively how the above criteria are met by the applicant

Further, applicants should indicate whether they are applying for the summer semester 2016 or winter semester 2016/2017.