

Attention: ■

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Website profiler taps subconscious secrets

A sophisticated 'personalisation' project that guides website users towards their perfect partner, car or house, is among the projects Queensland University of Technology will showcase at the launch of the Smart Services CRC.

Data mining techniques which sift through billions of web page clicks to build behavioural profiles - and thus predict users' next moves - could eventually mean the website you're visiting knows you better than you know yourself, says Dr Richi Nayak, a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Information Technology.

"The systems we're developing analyse how many people behave in the same way online, and recommendations are then based on the user's own past activities or how other 'like' users have behaved," Dr Nayak said.

"This information is derived from web server log files or web content databases."

The research is based on implicit behaviour - or the premise that "you are what you click".

So rather than look at what a user says they want in a partner, car or house, the programs will look at patterns of activity, or digital trails of interest, that might actually be more telling.

"What we say and what we do are quite different things," said Dr Nayak.

This project will use data mining techniques to analyse user-based information and customized algorithms that generate what are believed to be the best matches, based on user and service criteria and social relations inferred from user profile and prior behaviour.

QUT is a leading partner in the Smart Services CRC and the 'personalisation' project is one of 10 in which the university will participate. Fairfax Digital is QUT's key corporate partner in the research. Other partners in the personalisation project include international company SAP, the University of New South Wales and the University of Sydney.

Other QUT projects include one-stop personalised financial services, techniques to detect and anticipate changes in digital media consumption patterns and new tools for social media to make the production of user-generated content a simpler and more engaging experience.

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**** High res images of Dr Richi Nayak are available for media use ****