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**The Influence of End-Users on Strategic Information
Systems Planning in a NZ Polytechnic:
A case study**

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ABSTRACT

This study reports research about the management of information technology and the experience of computer users at the Eastern Institute of Technology, Hawke's Bay in New Zealand. The context of the study is New Zealand tertiary institutional use and professional practice of information technology management in the early 2000's. It reports and analyses planning meetings of the information technology department and user groups and activities related to the information technology strategic planning process in the years 2001/2002. The investigation of the relationship between the desires and expectations of user groups and the influence these have on the setting of strategic information technology plans is the object of the study.

Literature describing other organisations' approach to strategic information technology planning is reviewed in terms of its relevance to the study. In addition selected literature about end-user computing and the approach to information systems planning from the viewpoint of the user is presented. From this literature emerged some patterns of information technology management, which included user group participation and a modern approach to strategic planning using emerging technologies at tertiary institutes.

A justification for the selection of the particular research approach is explained and data collection, organisation and analysis are described. The study uses Eastern Institute of Technology corporate records, meetings minutes, interviews with managers and users, and results from staff and student surveys on information technology planning. This is a case study which examines and analyses the complex dimensions of organisational change and planning, so is rich in detail and provides a "slice-of-life" example of a tertiary organisation grappling with the many demands of information technology and user demands

The results of the data analysis are presented in terms of the key plans and aims of the information technology department and user groups. From this analysis conclusions are drawn in relation to the research questions that underpin the study and in terms of

information technology and management planning methodologies. In particular, conclusions draw a relationship between the quality of information technology strategic planning and the level of consultation and involvement of computer users at various levels within the organisation; key organisational processes helping to allow user involvement and the articulation of a shared vision through published information technology planning documents.

The conclusions also view the information technology planning process as a move towards a learning organisation with the characteristics of the context of change and new technology.

Flowing from the research findings, recommendations are made for professional information technology management practice and for changes in non-IT managers' involvement in the information technology planning process.