



Microsoft's Mr Haehnel, left, with former Victorian Minister for Information and Communication Technology, Mr Tim Holding, who launched the Centre, Vice-Chancellor Johnson and Professor Singh.

## La Trobe and Microsoft set up new Centre for ICT innovation

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY and Microsoft have established Australia's first campus-based Microsoft Centre, the first of three to be set up in partnership between the two organisations.

The Centre – supported by the State Government, Intel, Wacom, i-mate, and Victoria.Net – will provide cutting edge hardware and software and lower infrastructure barriers to ensure students, academics and small to medium companies have access to start-up facilities for research and product development.

La Trobe University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Johnson, said the University was extremely pleased that its expertise and reputation for software research, development and information technology had attracted such important infrastructure to Victoria.

**'The facilities and activities in the Centre will focus on strategic projects, closely aligned to the Microsoft platform, encouraging the innovative abilities of our students and furthering their entrepreneurial skills and career prospects.'**

'This, in turn, will contribute to economic growth through development and transfer of technology, new products and world-class skill acquisition.'

Mr Norbert Haehnel, Director of Developer and Platform Group, said

Microsoft saw this partnership as a great mechanism for driving student to business linkages and an excellent opportunity for the students and faculty at La Trobe as well as for Microsoft.

'Microsoft will provide support ranging from mentoring and access to the latest software and IT tools to seminars and workshops exploring dealing with emerging technologies.

'We will be promoting the centre's facilities to Microsoft partners, industry clusters and other stakeholders, opening up opportunities for students and helping local business source the next generation of IT professional,' said Mr Haehnel.

Professor Jugdutt (Jack) Singh, Director of the University's Centre for Technology Infusion, said:

'This is a wonderful development. It will provide easy access to cutting edge technology to facilitate skill transfer and innovation between industry and academia in a stimulating environment.

'Smaller companies will have access to mentoring by larger companies, and will give students and researchers exposure to industry in a supportive environment to help develop products for eventual commercialisation.'

La Trobe's Centre for Technology Infusion, a University-based research and product realisation facility, will manage the Microsoft Centre. ●

### New appointments

The University has appointed two new executive directors to lead its Albury-Wodonga and Mildura campuses.

Dr **Lin Crase** heads the Albury-Wodonga campus. Associate Professor in Economics, Dr Crase is a long-standing member of the academic staff of the campus, having served most recently as Deputy Head of the School of Business.

His research interests range from the management of regional resources to broader local government and community issues. Of particular relevance are two of his current fields of study: contracts for managing inter-sectoral water trade and biodiversity planning in the face of climate change.

Dr Crase takes over from Dr **Julie Jackson** who has been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality Enhancement), at the University's main Melbourne campus at Bundoora. Part of Dr Jackson's responsibilities will be preparing the University for the 2009 AUQA audit.

Mr **Kent Farrell** has been appointed to lead the Mildura campus. A Brisbane-born educator, Mr Farrell's academic career has taken him to the UK and the United Arab Emirates where he was Deputy Director and Head of Academic Programs at Middlesex University in Dubai.

He has also worked at the University of Southampton's School of Management in the UK and in the Faculty of Business and Economics at Monash University's Gippsland Campus.

Mr Farrell takes over from Professor **Alan Frost**. A well-known Australian historian and author, Professor Frost has been appointed Director of La Trobe University's Institute for Advanced Study.

The Institute brings together outstanding scholars from Australia and overseas and encourages research by providing fellowships to senior researchers of exceptional distinction and junior post doctoral researchers of high promise. ●