






The PhD Project

Project Title: The Impact of User Perceptions of Information Quality on World-wide Web Information Retrieval Strategies

Project Summary: As part of the larger ARC Discovery project "*Building a Prototype for Quality Information Retrieval on the World-wide Web*" undertaken between Edith Cowan, Wollongong and Siena Universities, this PhD will examine the impact of user perceptions of the quality of the information they retrieve from the World-wide Web. Specifically, it will examine these perceptions impact on users Information Search/Seeking Behaviour and information retrieval strategies.

This is a call for user-group participation in the research project - which will provide valuable models of user information seeking behaviour and search engine interaction, the basis of which will be used to build better quality-related algorithms for the Search-Crawler Prototype being built as part of the larger project.

Project Contacts:	PhD Student/Researcher Shirlee-ann Knight  s.knight@ecu.edu.au  +61-8-9273 8283	Principal Supervisor Janice Burn  j.burn@ecu.edu.au	Secondary Supervisor Shirley Bode  s.bode@ecu.edu.au  +61-8-9370 6015
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Disclosure of User Data

The terms and conditions of involvement in this PhD user-group are established to protect the researcher, the University and the participants against any adverse effects resulting from the research processes or methodology. The terms and conditions are listed below. Participants are requested to read these terms and conditions before they register their interest in being part of the user-group, and it will be assumed by the researcher that they (participants) have done so, once they agree to be part of the research.

The research will adhere to the guiding principles outlined in the ECU Research Code-of-Conduct policy document:


(see  [Research Code of Conduct.pdf](#))

Privacy and Record keeping:

- » User data and records will be held in a secure database, accessible only to the researcher and supervisors. (3.1.1)
- » Stored data will be held securely for a period of at least 5 years. (3.1.2)
- » In keeping with Australian Federal Privacy Legislation (3.1.3)
 - identity of individual's involved in the user-group will be held in the strictest of confidence, including email addresses and/or any contact details
 - observed behaviours reported in any 'findings' will not be associated with the identity of any one individual

- » Analysed data may be used in the larger ARC project "Building a Prototype for Quality Information Retrieval from the Internet" with which this PhD project is associated. However the raw user data collected here-in will be used for the expressed purpose of the **current research project only**.


Procedures:


- » Once they have read the terms and conditions, participants are required to fill in a *registration application*. They will then be informed (via e-mail) of their suitability and invited to join the user-group.
- » Users who do not meet the selection criteria outlined in the  [Call for Participation](#) document will be so informed via email, and — for security and privacy reasons — their user-details will be discarded.
- » Users invited to join the user-group will be sent user log-in details, and can begin participating in the research immediately.
- » Participants will be required to complete 4 short surveys relating to their perceptions regarding World-wide Web information quality, information retrieval, and perceived usefulness and ease of use of the World-wide Web environment.
- » Some participants will be asked to complete a Web Information Retrieval Task (WIRT). This is *not* a requirement for user participation.

User Participation:

- » Participants can withdraw from the study at any stage, although their general data relating to TAM, IQ perceptions and IR strategies will be kept as valid statistical data relating to users' information seeking behaviour
- » Participants can join the study at any stage of the data-gathering process, and can recommend other users (who meet the selection criteria) join also.
- » A participant can only register ONCE for this research.
- » By joining the user group, it will be assumed they have **read this document**, describing the general participation conduct and procedures requirements. Users found to have deliberately "cooked" any of their results will be removed from the study, as will their general data relating to IQ, TAM and IR strategies, as it will be judged to be possibly invalid.

Independent Contact Person:

- » Users who become concerned for whatever reason or have general questions are encouraged to contact
Shirlee-ann Knight (via e-mail)  s.knight@ecu.edu.au.
- » In the event that a user cannot contact Shirlee-ann, they are advised to contact either
Janice Burn -  j.burn@ecu.edu.au, or **Shirley Bode** -
 s.bode@ecu.edu.au.

- » An independent contact person is also available should a user feel their concern/enquiry has not been dealt with adequately. In this case, please contact **Kim Gifkins** -  research.ethics@ecu.edu.au

Edith Cowan University, Ethics Approval

- » Participants should be advised that the current project adheres to ECU's policies relating to data collection from human subjects, and has been approved by the ECU Human Research Ethics Committee

If you agree to the above Terms and Conditions regarding this research project, please click on the "Application to be part of User-Group" link below, and register your interest by filling in an on-line application form. The on-line application form includes documentation regarding user-participation **Informed Consent**.

[Application to be part of User-Group»](#)



www.informationqualityonline.com

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