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Azurn, Curtin research targets SMEs

Mark Beyer

A NEW technology float that is commercialising products developed in the US is working with Curtin University in Perth to research future developments.

Azurn International has an unusual mix of geographic influences, as the company is based in Melbourne and is floating on the Australian Stock Exchange even though its technology was developed in Boston.

Clive Flory, a co-founder of prominent firm Melbourne IT, saw the technology in the US and decided Australia would be a good market for the company to develop.

Azurn managing director Viberto Selochan said the move made sense because Australia was gaining an international reputation as an early adopter of new business technology.

Azurn's chosen field is 'convergence' technology, which enables voice, data and video systems to be integrated.

Mr Selochan said it would be offering a suite of products using its 'multimedia convergence platform'.

It has already launched an audio and multimedia web conferencing product, which the company said allowed customers to manage their total communications in-house.

Mr Selochan said the product offered a 'plug and play' approach, which made it easy for business customers to implement and manage.

"It's really developing new business strategies to be innovative in the way we deliver Azurn's services."

- Viberto Selochan

Another advantage was the use of thin-client architecture, which meant clients did not need to download software.

Azurn's research with Curtin University academic Dr Elizabeth Chang, funded by a $450,000 Australian Research Council grant, is ultimately designed to improve take-up of technology in a distributed environment.

Dr Chang said the research was designed to help suppliers of Internet software improve trust and service quality in an anonymous network environment, as well as helping small business users of such software.

"Large organisations can afford the large, complex systems that help them to capture the business intelligence," Dr Chang said.

"We want to provide equal systems and technology that small and medium enterprises can afford and automatically assist their business."

Mr Selochan said Azurn was not pursuing a traditional R&D program with Curtin.

"It's really developing new business strategies to be innovative in the way we deliver Azurn's services," he said.

"We want to understand how we can

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Azurn, Curtin target SMEs

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be more innovative in working with our customers, so that the customer can trust us to deliver a service that meets their requirements."

In support of its business plans, Azurn is in the middle of its initial public offering, seeking to raise $7 million before listing its shares on the ASX.

The company has already invested $5 million developing its technology, with funding from a range of private investors and US venture capital funds.

Mr Selochan said none of the existing investors was selling out during the float, indicating their support for the company's prospects.

He said his personal goal was to see the company list on the Nasdaq market in the US.

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JOINT EFFORT: Azurn International managing director Viberto Selochan and Curtin University's Dr Elizabeth Chang jointly obtained a $450,000 Australian Research Council grant.
***Photo*: Tim van Bronswijk**

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