DNA ARCHITECTURE

Reveille sounds for conscripts at IT boot camp

A new computer lab promotes a greater understanding of the ABC behind DNA

By **JENNY SINCLAIR**

FIVE-DAY "boot camps" for IT staff and developers at a new Melbourne computer lab will introduce them to the wonders of Microsoft's DNA architecture.

The Windows DNA (Distributed interNet Applications) Laboratory at Expert Software Systems in the city will cost $1 million a year to run, and is one of the first Windows DNA labs to be set up outside the United States.

Expert Software Systems general manager Lloyd Borrett said intensive sessions in the laboratory would allow corporate customers to design systems, choose and develop the right applications to make them run and do some testing.

The sessions will be run by existing Expert Software Systems staff, with at least one Microsoft Consulting Services consultant.

The software and tools in the lab will be completely reconfigured to suit the system being designed. The third partner in the lab is Dell, which has provided all the hardware.

It was launched last week by Victorian IT and Multimedia minister, Alan Stockdale, and the head of Microsoft Australia, Eugenio Beaufrand.

Borrett said many businesses were aware they had to move to new systems, but had trouble understanding how to use them to the fullest extent. "Businesses are saying 'we've got to do it, but where is the benefit?' — we really have a huge story to tell (them)."

Clients using the lab would be able to complete their transition from relational data storage to object-orientated systems.

He said Expert Software Services had suggested setting up the laboratory when their existing relationship with Microsoft's consulting and developer support areas began moving into areas covered by similar labs in the US and Tokyo.

He said the week-long workshops would be hard work for the staff involved: "Once they get into the development phase, it's pretty full on. They tend to be starting very early and finishing very late."

As well as DNA development work, the laboratory will deliver training in other areas, including Microsoft Transaction Server and Web skills and there will be shorter planning workshops.

One of the first projects likely to be fine-tuned at the lab is a confidential Telstra project that Borrett said was

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probably one of the most innovative major IT projects in Australia at the moment.

Another is a new e-commerce business that is about to recruit developers and send them through the lab process to bring them fully up to speed on the latest DNA architecture.

Borrett said he expected the centre to help in their expansion plans; Expert is to set up a Sydney office later this year, and the Melbourne lab will bring in clients from Australia and probably neighboring countries.

www.expert.com.au

The big picture: Lloyd Borrett of Expert Software Systems flags the benefits of intensive sessions in the laboratory .

Picture: ANDREW DE LA RUE