

Australian Information Technology

AUGUST 2008

Australian students imagine best

Last month, Australia's team entry, SOAK (Smart Operational Agriculture Toolkit), won the world's premier competition for technology students, The Imagine Cup 2008, which was held in Paris, France.

SOAK developed a tool that mixes information such as weather forecasts with data including soil moisture, rainfall, temperature and dam levels to give farmers better knowledge of their water and how it should be used.

The Imagine Cup encourages young people to apply their imagination, their passion and their creativity to technology innovations that can make a difference in the world. Now in its sixth year, The Imagine Cup, sponsored by Microsoft, has grown to be a truly global competition focused on finding solutions to real world issues, with more than 200,000 students from more than 100 countries participating.

"The Imagine Cup brings the most creative university students from around the world together with the technology they need to solve our toughest problems", said Roger Lawrence, Group Manager for Developer and Platform Evangelism, Microsoft Australia.

For more information regarding The Imagine Cup, visit <http://imaginecup.com>



Left to Right: Dimaz Pramudya, Long Zheng, David Burela and Edward Hooper being awarded The Imagine Cup



Source: SMH, 15 July 2008



Stephen Conroy, Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy; and Matt Bai

Matt Bai talks online politics

Microsoft Australia hosted its inaugural Politics and Technology Forum in Canberra in June. It was attended by more than 100 senior politicians, bureaucrats, advisers, academics, media and bloggers. The forum featured a keynote address by Matt Bai, political writer for *The New York Times Magazine* and was followed by two panel sessions focusing on blogging, social networks, political movements and the media, featuring Annabel Crabb from *The Sydney Morning Herald*; Mark Textor from Crosby|Textor; and Peter Black from Queensland University of Technology and 'Politics 2.0' – the future of political campaigning, featuring Senator Bartlett; Senator Lundy; Shadow Minister for Health & Ageing, Joe Hockey, and ABC election analyst, Antony Green.

The forum generated lively debate on the role of online technologies in the modern political world (including the US Presidential election) and their perceived and real influence, as well discussion on last year's Australian Federal election campaign. In the words of blogger, Solidariti, "It was the most inspiring event I have been to this year on the topic of politics and online engagement." To view the Politics and Technology Forum, visit <http://blogs.msdn.com/avgovtaffairs>

In Australia, Matt Bai also addressed The Sydney Institute; American Studies Centre, The University of Sydney; United States Consulate, Sydney; United States Embassy, Canberra; US-Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group; and the Institute of Public Affairs, Melbourne.

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