



Aussies fly the flag at CeBIT

Roland Tellzen in Hannover
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WHILE still well below the glory days of Australia's presence at the CeBIT IT trade show in the mid 1990's, a small growth in the number, variety and geographical spread of local companies at this year's event signals that Australia's profile in Hannover is growing.

The presence is still heavily dominated by Victorian companies, but signs are emerging that other states are starting to take notice of the world's largest annual IT trade fair as a venue for reaching an international market.

This year's show has also attracted visits from the wider political sector in Australia, with the head of NICTA and Western Australia's technology Minister all slated to visit the fair.

Australia's dedicated exhibitor stand at the show is a more high-profile one this year, having moved to the more central Hall 3 at the Hannover fairground (directly opposite New Zealand's larger stand) and boasting more visible signage.

As well as eight Victorians located at the stand - a mixture of seasoned CeBIT veterans and some newer entrants - NSW has also gained representation through the presence of Sydney-based technology venture company Capital Technic Group.

The company, which is handling approximately \$900 million worth of technology ventures at the moment, is at CeBIT searching for business opportunities for its clients in international markets as well as to conduct research on behalf of some of its ventures.

But Australia's presence goes beyond those maintaining a spot on the national stand. A large corps of representatives of local companies is attending the event to network and seek out business opportunities. Again, Victorian companies head this group, with some nine companies and organisations among the ranks of CeBIT networkers.

"Our CeBIT policy is to support Victorian companies that normally would not get the opportunity to go offshore," manager of ICT investment and business development for Multimedia Victoria Ian Naughton said.

"I think the proof is in the pudding with the performance of Victorian companies here compared to that of other states."

The chief executive of national IT research body NICTA, Dr David Skellern, is also scheduled to visit CeBIT 2006, aiming at building partnerships with other international research institutions and to build NICTA's reputation as a top world ICT research centre.

Also visiting will be Western Australia's Minister for Energy, Science and Innovation, Francis Logan, to investigate key international development opportunities for the state's ICT sector.

He is also scheduled to meet with German government technology officials in what is believed to be some of the first official inter-governmental contacts between Australian officials and those of the newly formed unity government of German chancellor Angela Merkel.

Roland Tellzen travelled to Hannover as a guest of Hannover Fairs

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