

Mobility will sweep away the digital divide, says Wits professor

Professor Barry Dwolatzky, Director of the Wits University's Joburg Centre for Software Engineering (JCSE), has said that the last 10 years has seen mobility effectively sweep away the digital divide, ensuring that previously unreachable rural areas now have digital access and connectivity...



Professor Barry Dwolatzky,
Director of the Wits University's
Joburg Centre for Software
Engineering (JCSE).

"Mobility has not only connected the unconnected, but it has also had a dramatic and lasting impact on business. It has challenged software engineering principles and approach, and, as a result, today every organisation is a software business, directly driven by mobility," said Professor Dwolatzky.

Never before has time to market been more critical, but Dwolatzky says that this must not come at the expense of traditional elements such as cost and quality: "Software engineering is now more challenging, with far greater complexity and a constant need for more interactive design."

He said that the next decade will be marked out by what he calls a 'triple convergence'. "Digital technology will dominate all aspects of life. It lies at the heart of the ways in which we manage our lives and run our companies. Digital technology is not limited to software, it includes hardware and content, and these three areas have converged."

Wits University's technology hub

Furthermore, Dwolatzky said that this convergence is present in software engineering today and has inspired the design and approach of Wits University's technology hub called the Tshimologong Precinct.

"Africans have to become major innovators and developers of digital technology, we have to create it and not simply be users. The Tshimologong Precinct will provide a space to expand the programmes already run under the banner of the JCSE and it will be a driver of software engineering across the triple conversion platform," said Dwolatzky.

He said that it is clear that the way we build software is changing: "Ten years ago, there were fewer tools and the world was much smaller. Mobility has changed everything."

On 22 May, 2015, Professor Dwolatzky will celebrate the JCSE's 10th anniversary. Go to www.tshimologong.joburg for an insight into the next 10 years.

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