NTT and Dimension Data Sign Memorandum of Understanding with Deakin University and Western Sydney University to Accelerate Innovation

1. Summary

NTT and its Group company Dimension Data have entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Deakin University in Victoria, Australia, and Western Sydney University (WSU) in New South Wales, Australia, to collaborate on research and development (R&D) projects with a focus on solving social challenges that are common between Australia and Japan. This joint-vision partnership is the first time NTT has entered into an agreement of this nature with research institutions outside of Japan. Under this agreement, all parties will start working together to develop and implement innovative solutions with the joint vision of improving the lives, health, and well-being of citizens.

2. Background and purpose of innovation

In 2018, delegates from Deakin University and WSU participated in the NTT R&D Forum held in Tokyo. The R&D Forum serves as the annual proving ground for NTT's breakthrough technologies and is an opportunity to introduce next-generation innovations to NTT's customers, partners, and employees. Here, delegates were first exposed to innovations such as NTT's wearable vital-sensing fabric called hitoe™, which has been integrated with Deakin University's virtual reality firefighting simulator known as FLAIM Trainer™. Delegates also encountered San-shi™, the secure computation system that underpins the data value management ecosystem Mass Data Observations, which has been co-developed by Dimension Data and WSU. Both technologies were showcased at the launch of Dimension Data's first Client Innovation Centre in August 2018 [1].

The emphasis on healthcare, disability, and ageing is influenced by the ageing populations in both countries and the challenges this poses for society as a whole. Japan's societal transformation plan Society 5.0 was the inspiration behind the MOU and explores how the development and access to disruptive technologies such as connected healthcare can transform and improve society. This partnership provides a framework for Australia and Japan to drive the creation and commercialization of technologies and solutions to address real-world issues such as the needs of the disabled and those of an ageing population.

To realize this vision, several joint research projects will be established and will commence in fiscal year 2019. These projects include R&D of communication between dementia patients, their family, and other caregivers; as well as R&D of smart homes to ensure a safe and secure life for the elderly and the disabled.

Under the terms of the agreement, research projects will be tested through a proof-of-concept model in Australia. Viable projects will draw upon Dimension Data's commercial experience and leverage this co-innovation partnership to take these ideas to a global market.

3. Roles of the organizations

NTT brings a rich heritage of R&D and innovation with significant R&D capability, a portfolio of assets, their B2B2X (business-to-business-to-X) framework, and the Society 5.0 ethos. Dimension Data's role is to

provide technical integration capability, relationship coordination, and expertise in collaboration, co-innovation, and commercialization. Both universities bring applied research expertise, specific domain expertise, and commercialization expertise. Together, Dimension Data and the universities bring a network of partnerships and innovation ecosystems.

Reference

[1] D. Bordignon, "Co-innovating to Accelerate Transformation and Create New Value," NTT Technical Review, Vol. 17, No. 3, pp. 27–34, 2019.
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http://www.ntt.co.jp/news2019/1903e/190326a.html