

Group discussing Promotion of Computer Science in Australasia  
Notes by Prof Michael Winikoff

This group exhibited a failure of collective self-organisation: it ended up with only 2 people (both from NZ). This somewhat limited our ability to have a vibrant and rich discussion.

We actually began by raising the point of how to get more collaboration between New Zealand and Australia.

We then got onto topic, and discussed a number of issues around how CS is seen, especially in the cohort of prospective students.

In brief ...

- Schools: importance of curriculum, noted recent positive changes in NZ, and also Justin Zobel's earlier (in the introductions) comment on CS101 in year 12. However, it's crucial to tackle perceptions earlier than year 12.
- Considered the perceptions of IT careers by prospective students:
  1. That jobs exist, and are well paid - this has been adequately conveyed by the media, especially recently
  2. We're still battling a pervasive myth that IT careers are solitary and geeky
  3. We need to get the message out that computing is a discipline with depth (i.e. it's not just facebook and MS word), but that IT careers are not just for ubergeeks.

There have been various initiatives at getting information out to prospective students (including, in NZ, ICT-connect, groupx in QLD [originally VIC])

Is there perhaps a role for CORE in assisting in developing a message, and helping departments to liaise with their institutions' marketing units.

Finally, we considered the prestige of IT careers: what would it take to make IT careers as prestigious and desired as, say, law or medicine?

Sent from mobile device, please excuse brevity and odd typos. Thanks!