

ADAPT IT PILOTS STUDENT CHATBOT AT NUST

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Clinton Naidu, Innovation Manager - Adapt IT Education,

reveals how a smart campus strategy at NUST is set to improve the student and staff experience at the university by providing anywhere/ anytime access to information using mobile devices.

Globally, one of the major trends in education is the development of smart campuses on which technology helps improve the learning and teaching experience, and empowers all stakeholders. The Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) is committed to creating a smart campus, and is currently collaborating with Adapt IT’s Education Division to pilot a student chatbot.

The chatbot offers students an easy, interactive way to obtain critical administrative information on their smart phones from wherever they are - without the need to come onto campus and queue to get information. Now, they can obtain their fees balance, course details, timetables and other important information on their phones. The information is available 24/7 via an easy-to-use interface.

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The solution was developed by Adapt IT as part of our innovation agreement with NUST. The agreement creates a partnership in terms of which Adapt IT and NUST co-create software, pilot it on campus and then commercialise it.

The pilot, which runs on the live system, was launched in March to around 300 students and, so far, feedback has been very positive. In due course, it will go live to the whole student body, and the scope of the information, as well as the interface, will be developed.

An innovation partnership such as the one between NUST and Adapt IT is a way to develop and try out new ideas rapidly, and it also allows end-users to be involved in the design of the solution. This pilot is a good example of the benefits of such a partnership: it is developing a way to facilitate greater access to information and, by giving students and staff more autonomy, promises to improve their experience greatly.

NUST is now well on its way to implementing its strategy to develop a smart campus.

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