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Anand Jeyaraj

Wright State University - Main Campus, anand.jeyaraj@wright.edu

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Raj Soin College of Business Offers Enterprise Systems Consultation for SMEs in the Dayton Region

By: Anand Jeyaraj, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Information Systems, Raj Soin College of Business

Small- and medium- sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Dayton region can benefit from a program at Wright State University that offers consultation and evaluation services for those who are considering or planning to implement enterprise resource planning (ERP) system.

Made possible by an advanced course on information systems development and implementation offered by the ISOM department over a period of ten weeks, student "consulting" teams are deployed at pre-arranged times to the premises of SMEs ("clients") requesting this service. The consulting service itself is "free" (i.e., no monetary compensation is required); however, SMEs would have to grant access to their organization and personnel, production and warehousing facilities and illustrative documents (such as purchase orders, bills of lading and invoices) for the consulting teams to provide optimal service and for the SMEs to gain maximal benefits.

Through the duration of the program, the consulting teams will interview senior executives and key personnel and learn about the SME and its operations, tour the production and warehouse facilities, map the business processes, identify enhancements for more streamlined operations and construct an ERP business model that serves as a blueprint for implementation. The teams also develop a "business case" that will help the SME determine whether or not ERP systems can be justified for their operations. The findings from these activities will be made available to the SME as a written report to facilitate any effort at implementing ERP systems.

Optionally (i.e., based on time available), the consulting teams may also develop a partial or full "prototype" of an ERP system based on the ERP blueprint, using tools such as Microsoft Dynamics or Oracle E-Business Suite. In such a case, SME representatives would have the opportunity to view a "demo" of the prototype at the premises of Wright State University and see for themselves the extent to which ERP systems may benefit their everyday operations. The prototype itself stays at Wright State University and cannot be distributed to the SME since it will be developed using software acquired through academic initiatives of the respective software vendor organizations.

There are two opportunities to participate in this program every calendar year. The first session runs from early January to mid March and the second session runs from early April to mid June.

If you are an SME and are interested in finding out more about or participating in this program, please contact Anand Jeyaraj at anand.jeyaraj@wright.edu.

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