Master of Science in

Electronic Commerce and Internet Computing

The University of Hong Kong

www.ecom-icom.hku.hk
The University of Hong Kong

The University of Hong Kong, founded in 1911, is Hong Kong's oldest tertiary educational institution. The University, as a pre-eminent international university in Asia, seeks to sustain and enhance its excellence as an institution of higher learning through outstanding teaching and world-class research so as to produce well-rounded graduates with lifelong abilities to provide leadership within the societies they serve.

With the distinguished excellence in research and performance in teaching, The University of Hong Kong attracts first-class teaching and research staff as well as outstanding students from around the world. In the academic year of 2013-2014, The University had a student population of 27,440, including over 15,560 undergraduates and 11,880 postgraduates, and an academic staff population of around 3,000. Coupled with an active alumni network and generous endowments for programme research and development, the University is a dynamic and exciting institution.
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FOREWORD

As I was drafting this foreword, I read my online news and learnt that Queen Elizabeth the Second of the United Kingdom had just sent a "tweet" via the official @BritishMonarchy Twitter account. The 88-year-old's Twitter debut came during a visit to London's Science Museum as she opened a new gallery dedicated to the history of communication and information.

So even the Queen has caught up with the times! Nowadays, it is common practice for most organisations and companies to have a presence on Twitter and Facebook, but do we not wonder sometimes about the tangible benefits this social networking brings to businesses and even traditional institutions?

Every day we hear of new technological breakthroughs, e.g. driverless cars, location-mapping drones, wearable RFID devices, 3-D printed body parts and seamless haute couture fabric; they are awe-inspiring. We can be exhilarated by all these and think that we are at last finding a solution to everything, but do we not also despair and feel helpless when confronted by news of hundreds and thousands of Ebola deaths in the under-developed countries?

In our programme, our teachers endeavour to instil in students a holistic view of the reciprocal impacts of technology and businesses, but also remind them of the moral and ethical concerns as well as obligations, and the importance of complying with law and fair practices. Our teachers have wide interests and responsibilities themselves in many areas, as can be seen from the feature in this brochure written by Associate Professor Peter Looms, who teaches a digital media module for us. A teacher like Peter also provides pastoral care to our students and networks them with students of other countries on similar study topics to acquire a global outlook.

Students are thus encouraged to have an open mind, a keen eye and a cool head, all very essential in these exciting but unsettling times. Most importantly, I would like to emphasize that the one distinctive goal of our programme, is to help our students develop their critical, independent, life-long learning skills so that long after they exit from our programme, they can continue to separate the hype from the reality, be able to analyse new developments, synthesise and integrate them with established, sound structures and concepts, and to spot niche and opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures.

Students are helped in reaching these goals also by the comprehensiveness and richness of our curriculum, which introduces the basic concepts as well as specific technologies underlying electronic payment, supply chain and logistics, website engineering, mobile commerce, data engineering and mining, digital forensics, location-based services. The humanistic elements are reinforced in such modules as e-business transformation, customer relationship management, web 2.0, legal sanctions, and entrepreneurship. New and ubiquitous technologies such as apps, games, and cloud computing also earn a place two years ago in our curriculum, which is annually reviewed and revised to bring it up-to-date with new developments and business needs.

We are not on Twitter, but we have been around for 16 years and have an impressive track record to prove our contribution to the IT and business human resources pool in this region. So come and join us and be inspired.

Professor Paul Cheung
Programme Director
A dynamic and flexible curriculum that keeps abreast with the changing world

The University of Hong Kong was the first tertiary institution to launch in September 1999 a taught postgraduate programme to bridge technology and business, so we have had many years of experience to fine tune its curriculum design and operation. We have now 1,126 graduates working in Hong Kong, China and other parts of the world. Our goal has always been to design a course of study for you, either as business executives, policy and decision makers, managers, or as information technologists, chief technical officers, which will equip you with advance knowledge about technology development and business opportunities in electronic commerce on the Internet, so that you can make critical strategic decisions.

Our curriculum is comprehensive, comprising the core knowledge modules deemed essential for e-commerce and Internet computing professionals for the present as well as for the future. These modules are grouped as inter-related clusters which together give you a holistic understanding of e-commerce. Within this framework, however, you are given a lot of flexibility to design your own study portfolio based on your career aspiration or requirements.

Our instructors are subject specialists drawn from various disciplines and specialized areas in the University and other prestigious overseas institutions. They are in constant touch with the business world – writing up cases, consulting and undertaking research, or as expert witnesses in information technology-related law cases. They regularly incorporate their findings to update the curriculum to ensure its relevance to business.

Our instructors are also known for their use of interactive teaching formats, including lectures, smaller group seminars, case studies analyses, group project presentations, and laboratory exercises. So learning is not just limited to you sitting passively in class to listen to lectures. They demand your participation and sharing viewpoints and experiences with them and your fellow students, in order to stimulate your critical thinking on the topics' relevance to your profession, both in the short-term and medium-term.

The programme is subject to an annual external review by a senior faculty member from another university, as required by university regulations. But we also have a rigorous internal system of annual micro evaluation, the instruments being student feedback, faculty self-appraisal, and specially commissioned consultant review of every module. Findings are acted upon summatively, to enable improvement in the next round of teaching. The summary of student evaluation of modules are also posted to the Intranet and shared with all students, so before you enroll in a module, you can check up first on the findings of the last evaluation.
Programme length

The MSc(ECom&IComp) programme is offered in both part-time and full-time modes. For the part-time mode of study, the curriculum normally spans two academic years of study, and the maximum period of study is three years. For the full-time mode of study, the normal period is one academic year, and the maximum period is two years.

Study pattern

Students must complete 12 modules to graduate. They can do that by studying 8 modules plus a dissertation (equivalent to 4 modules) or 12 modules.

Class schedule and venue

Some modules are taught intensively by overseas instructors over a two to three weeks period. Other modules taught by local instructors usually spread over ten weeks. The contact hours for all modules are 30 each. Some may have more if there are additional lab-based activities and tutorials.

Classes are held on weekday evenings from 6:45 p.m. to 9:45 p.m., and sometimes there are also whole-day or half-day classes on Saturdays and Sundays. Teaching takes place mostly in Graduate House at the University’s main campus.

Making life easier

The MSc(ECom&IComp) Programme has been designed to ease the pressures on students who also hold a full-time day job. The Programme Office provides services such as those below to make life just that little bit easier that allow you to focus on earning your master degree:

▶ All class enrollment is done through the MSc(ECom&IComp) Intranet which contains the fullest information, including past assignment samples and past course evaluation.
▶ For modules with prescribed textbooks, the Programme Office will order and purchase them free of charge for enrolled students.
▶ For students who must miss a class when away on business, most classes are audio taped and made available in streaming media for online listening.
▶ Students are provided with a MSc(ECom&IComp) email account to facilitate communication with faculty, staff and other students.
▶ Pre-recorded lectures on the more basic and more advanced topics for self-study are sometimes used to allow students to spend more time in class for peer and faculty interaction.
▶ Some modules have a specially compiled study guide for handy reference.
▶ Nearly all teachers are supported by a teaching assistant who can also handle student requests and queries if they run into any difficulties.
The MSc(ECom&IComp) curriculum provides an integration of technology with businesses, and consists of modules (courses) falling into two major and related areas: electronic commerce (ECOM) modules and Internet computing (ICOM) modules. Students are encouraged to take modules in both areas, provided they have the necessary pre-requisite knowledge for the particular module.

The modules are prefixed with either an ECOM or ICOM code, followed by the module numbers, e.g. ECOM6004, ICOM6012. The ECOM-prefix ed modules are on the whole more business oriented. They give you a foundation on the impact of the Internet and the web on e-commerce, and a broad overview of e-commerce technologies. However, these modules never lose sight of your need to understand technology. The ICOM-prefix ed modules require more technical entry knowledge. They help you expand your system development and design skills as well as giving you some fundamental understanding of their business applications. They are, however, not dry, programming modules.

We have 8 fundamental (previously termed as core) modules for you to choose from. Students are required to select at least 4 fundamental modules (can be any mixture of electronic commerce or Internet computing discipline). These modules enable students to develop the knowledge and skill set. The remaining are elective modules. With dozens of modules to choose from, students can custom-make their own study portfolio.

For those of you who wish to cover the technology in more depth, you may select at most two taught postgraduate level modules offered by other curricula in the Faculty of Engineering. The popular MSc(CompSc) programme, also managed by us, has 30 modules for your selection. Details can be found at: http://www.cs.hku.hk/msc. In this way, you can customize a personal portfolio to meet your particular needs, interests and career goals.

We generally advise new part-time students to take a maximum of only two modules in their first semester of studies and four for new full-time students, so that they do not take on more than they manage successfully, and can develop a strategy to cope with the academic demand. They can enroll in more modules in later semesters.

The following is a sample of module enrolment by a part-time student and a full-time student.

(a) Sample Study Calendar for a part-time student

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sem 1</td>
<td>- E-business transformation#</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- E-commerce technologies#</td>
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<td>Sem 2</td>
<td>- Electronic payment systems</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Legal aspects of IT and e-commerce#</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Supply chain and e-logistics management#</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sem 3</td>
<td>- E-marketing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Data mining^</td>
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<td>- Developing business models for digital media and online games</td>
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<td>- Web 2.0 strategy and innovation</td>
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<td>- Customer relationship management: business strategies and techniques</td>
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<td>- Developing apps for smart mobile phones</td>
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<td>- Mobile and pervasive commerce</td>
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(b) Sample Study Calendar for a full-time student

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<td>Sem 1</td>
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# Fundamental module

^ Elective module from other TPG curricula in the Faculty of Engineering
The modules, both in terms of range and syllabus, are not only updated and revised continuously. The list of modules is also subject to change because, based on the findings of the annual curriculum review, occasionally we may not offer a particular module in one year to make way for some new ones.

Some modules (marked with an * asterisk) have been approved by the HKSAR government as reimbursable courses under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF). If you are a local student, you can save up to $10,000 in fee provided that your attendance record and the results are satisfactory.

The 23 modules are grouped into four clusters as below.

**Infrastructure & technology cluster**
- ECOM6013: E-commerce technologies
- ECOM6016: Electronic payment systems*
- ECOM6024: Mobile and pervasive commerce
- ICOM6012: Internet infrastructure technologies
- ICOM6034: Website engineering*
- ICOM6039: E-business architecture
- ICOM6041: An introduction to cloud computing
- ICOM6042: Designing apps for smart mobile phones

**E-business & applications cluster**
- ECOM6008: Supply chain and e-logistics management*
- ECOM6014: E-marketing*
- ECOM6020: Customer relationship management: business strategies and techniques
- ECOM6023: E-financial services*
- ECOM6029: E-business transformation
- ECOM6030: Web 2.0 strategy and innovation
- ECOM6035: Developing business models for digital media and online games
- ECOM6036: Entrepreneurship development

**Security & legal cluster**
- ECOM6004: Legal aspects of IT and e-commerce
- ECOM6032: E-discovery and digital forensics
- ICOM6027: E-crimes: digital crime scenes and legal sanctions
- ICOM6045: Fundamentals of e-commerce security

**Data management cluster**
- ICOM6040: eHealth information technologies
- ICOM6043: Information architecture
- ICOM6044: Data science for business
Module descriptions

**ECOM6004. Legal aspects of I.T. and e-commerce #**
This module provides an introduction to some of the main legal problems generated by recent developments in information technology and e-commerce, and their possible solutions. Topics to be covered include copyright, patent protection for software and business methods, domain name disputes and other intellectual property issues on the Internet, contractual issues of on-line trading, public key infrastructure and electronic transactions, privacy and data protection.

**ECOM6008. Supply chain and e-logistics management #**
The module is designed to prepare you to apply business strategies, analytical methodologies and information technology in supply chain management. Traditionally industries have focussed on operation evaluation and performance improvement of mainly the manufacturing process; however, the deficiency of supply chain coordination results in severe downgrade of business competitiveness. With advent of information technology, computers not only improve manufacturing operation and management and also strategic decision-making as well. This module focuses on the systems approach to the planning, analysis, design, development, and evaluation of supply chain and e-logistics management.

**ECOM6013. E-commerce technologies #**
This module provides an overview of those technologies currently used in electronic commerce and an introduction to some likely to play a major role in the future. Topics include (but are not limited to) networking systems, social networking and media, computer and network security, payment systems, data mining and "big data", the Internet of Things, mobile systems and digital media technologies.

**ECOM6014. E-marketing #**
This module considers how to create customer centric strategies for e-businesses. Marketing focuses on the interaction between the producer and the consumer. This focus remains unchanged in e-marketing, but our ability to foster this interaction with technology has been dramatically increased. The Internet provides new forms of communications like web sites, e-mail, social media, and mobile communications. However, these technologies do not necessarily replace traditional marketing vehicles like mass media, direct mail, and telephone marketing, but instead augment them to improve the customer experience. The basic premise of this module is that these technologies can be used to fulfill the goal of a customer-centered marketing strategy.

**ECOM6016. Electronic payment systems #**
The module covers banking systems, e-payment security, foreign exchange, Internet banking, wireless payments, stored-value cards, micropayments, peer-to-peer payments, electronic and virtual currencies such as Bitcoin, large-scale B2B payments and the future of money. Particular attention is given to Hong Kong and Mainland China banking and payment systems.

**ECOM6020. Customer relationship management: business strategies and techniques #**
The objectives of this module are to understand CRM concepts; CRM business strategies; typical business applications for CRM; and the process to implement CRM projects.

**ECOM6023. E-financial services #**
This module provides students with the fundamentals in the operations as well as the management of electronic commerce in the financial service industry. It presents an overall picture of e-commerce applications in the financial sector and also the future development trends in e-finance. Specific topics include managerial financial knowledge before e-finance, creative destruction & framework of e-finance; the recent development of e-banking, e-brokerage, e-warrant, e-insurance, e-wealth management, valuation of technology, value based management as well as current issues in e-finance. Various cases will be studied.

**ECOM6024. Mobile and pervasive commerce #**
With over 4.5 billion mobile phone users worldwide, new wireless and pervasive computing applications and services are changing the way enterprises interact with their customers and employees. The explosion in smartphone ownership and other smart devices (e.g., activity bracelets, smart thermostats, Google glasses) along with the deployment of 4G networks is leading to a slew of new mobile applications and services. They range from mobile commerce services to wireless enterprise apps and mobile social networking apps, all the way to more futuristic Internet of Things scenarios.

# Fundamental modules
ECOM6029. E-business transformation #

The Internet has shortened business transaction cycles, expanded market reach, and allowed companies to build and manage customer relationship more effectively. Today almost every company is trying to find out how best to deploy the Internet throughout its value chain to improve operational effectiveness, entrench strategic position, and ultimately create sustainable competitive advantage. Transformational initiatives, however, are difficult to implement and prone to failure as companies must grapple with a whole host of strategic, organizational, technical and increasingly global issues.

This module builds on the basic principles of business and economics to examine the role of the Internet as a strategic necessity. It provides a roadmap for transforming companies into inter-networked enterprises where proprietary and shared infrastructures are used to link customers, suppliers, partners and employees to create superior economic value. You will learn how the Internet can provide firms with the necessary infrastructure needed to align their business strategy with IT strategy, streamline front-end and back-end processes, manage relationships and partnerships, and adapt to emerging global issues such as outsourcing and offshoring.

ECOM6030. Web 2.0 strategy and innovation

This module covers the fundamental principles of Web 2.0 Strategy and Innovation, providing a systematic framework, business cases and hands-on experience with the online internet and social media business models that have transformed society, business, nonprofit and government worldwide.

ECOM6032. E-discovery and digital forensics

This module will give the students an in-depth understanding of the current IT management and e-business litigation practices involving e-discovery and digital forensics, and will help them to take a leading role in the management team to work with the legal counsel, auditor and department managers to prepare and implement an effective Incident Response Strategy to address various IT-business and legal problems in today’s global competition and innovation driven economy.

ECOM6033. Geospatial information and technology for location-based services

Location-based services (LBS) are the collection of data and technology that drive popular applications such as in-car navigation, mapping of nearby points of interest on cell phones, automatic notification of weather hazards as they impact travel along a highway route, location-based advertising, geosocial networking, and tracking of inventory in warehouses. These applications leverage the user’s or object’s physical location to locate and access additional relevant information. LBS is enabled by the nexus of the Internet, wireless and geospatial technology realms. While geospatial technology is perhaps the least understood of these, geospatial content and services comprise the majority of the value component in LBS. To help students explore the full value of LBS, this module examines how to identify, obtain and manage the location-based information that users need and the geospatial technology and content behind LBS called Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

ECOM6035. Developing business models for digital media and online games

The module introduces digital media cases and platforms that are used as a foundation for student work to design business models for media concepts. The module specifically explores business models focused on social media and content apps for handheld devices. This means not only smart phones, but also notebooks and tablets such as the i-Pad as well as devices and controllers used for electronic games. Special attention will be paid to developments in Hong Kong and Mainland China.

Agile methods like effectuation and the business model development canvas are applied to identify, develop, and argue the case for launching an innovative digital media product. The aim of the module is therefore to ensure that students have the necessary competencies to select and further develop an appropriate business model for a digital media innovation of their choice should they want to join the media industry.

ECOM6036. Entrepreneurship development

The scope of this module would be mostly on Venture Design: the stages from idea creation to the formation of a start-up company, with successful venture capital funding and management team in place. The perspective should be that of a potential entrepreneur wanting to start up a company, or start up entrepreneurial activities within a large company. Special attention will be put into topics on people who make decisions, handle deals, analyze problems, allocate and mobilize scarce resources and succeed in a local and international context. Some Asian and China cases are carefully chosen to reflect the special situation of starting businesses in Asia/China.

ECOM7000. Dissertation (4 modules)
ICOM6012. Internet infrastructure technologies

This module takes a systematic approach to study the various components which form the infrastructure of the Internet. It provides a comprehensive coverage of existing and emerging Internet technologies and applications. Topics include: access and backbone network technologies; IP addressing and routing architectures; standard transport and application protocols; operating principles and internals of network entities. We will focus not only on how the Internet works but also its design rationale and engineering tradeoffs.

ICOM6027. E-crimes: digital crime scenes and legal sanctions

This module helps participants to grapple with crimes in the electronic age from both technical and legal points of view. It addresses three important aspects of the subject, namely, technologies adopted in e-crimes, legal sanctions and management of e-crimes scenes. Topics covered include: trends in e-crimes; different types of e-crimes, tools and technologies for committing e-crimes; laws relating to e-crimes and criminal sanctions; digital forensics, post-incident crime scene management, and covert operation/live-forensic crime scene management, chain of evidence, collecting and collating digital evidence.

ICOM6034. Website engineering

This module will introduce the standards, the software technologies and some good practices for implementing websites and web applications. It aims at covering an "end-to-end" picture of content delivery and presentation on the web, that is, from the "server-sides" where data is stored, adapted or integrated, to the "client-sides" with various demands and capabilities. It will suit students who wish to have a technical understanding on the subject or a career in website engineering, as it will introduce the techniques for building maintainable, extensible, interactive and mission-critical websites and web applications, using state-of-the-art standards and open-source tools.

The topics covered will be organized into four parts: (1) Website development basics (enabling standards and technologies, responsive web design, basic web security); (2) Design and implementation of web applications (rich Internet applications, client-side frameworks, MVC design patterns and libraries, content management systems); (3) Interoperability of web applications and services (web API protocols, mashups, cloud services for web development); and (4) Optimizations (traffic analysis, search engine and performance optimization techniques).

ICOM6039. E-business architecture

Every proper e-business system has an architecture. The objectives of this module are to help students understand the components of e-business architecture and to design an architecture for efficient and effective e-business applications.

To do that, students will first need to learn how to identify the business needs/requirements, and how to design e-business applications using such leading edge methodologies as the Model Driven Architecture (MDA) from the Object Management Group (OMG); the Architecture Standard from IEEE (IEEE 1471); and Service oriented architecture (SOA) from various industry leaders. Secondly, they must also learn about the enterprise architecture (EA) and the Component Business Modeling (CBM) to address business requirements and design business architectures. In addition, they will learn how to use architecture patterns such as e-business patterns in the technology architecture design. To help students to understand the e-business architecture practice, we will also cover the selected architecture designs case studies for various e-business applications.

Given newly emerging technologies such as cloud computing and the Internet of Things (IoT) are becoming increasingly prevalent and important, we will lastly and briefly discuss how to make architecture design by using these technologies for e-business applications.

ICOM6041. An introduction to cloud computing

This module offers an overview of current cloud technologies, and discusses some issues in the design and implementation of cloud systems, and the impact cloud computing on business.

Topics include some basic understanding of cluster hardware architecture (e.g., multicores, GPU, high-speed network), cluster middleware for realizing the concept of single system image (e.g., software distributed shared memory) and virtualization techniques (e.g., Xen, KVM, VMware) used in current data centers. We will discuss three types of Cloud computing platforms, including SaaS, PaaS, and IaaS, by providing motivating examples from major cloud computing players such as Google, Amazon, and Microsoft. We will also introduce Map/Reduce programming paradigm for large-scale data analysis.
ICOM6042. Designing apps for smart mobile phones

Smart phones have dominated the technology market in recent years, led by the major brands of iPhones, Android, Symbian and Windows phones. These increasingly powerful phones are supported by a whole range of applications (abbreviated to “Apps”) developed and uploaded for commercial or free distribution by professional as well as aspiring programmers that a whole new worldwide market has sprung up. More and more of these apps have been specially designed and developed for corporations that they are now beginning to play an important role in e-business operations.

This module introduces the design principles of these apps, their development, testing, and marketing as well as the technology platforms and programming languages for use on small screens. Hands-on practice is provided for students to gain confidence and some expertise, so that they can be on their way to exploit this new emerging career opportunity.

ICOM6043. Information architecture #

This module covers the technical and strategic approaches of Enterprise Information Architecture that cover the conceptual, logical and implementable views of information and data-driven applications and services to support effective enterprise and domain interoperability. This module will develop the critical skills to understand and apply information architecture techniques and frameworks from structured to semantic information modelling, data and metadata management, linked open data, ontologies and knowledge management, information governance principles, and to develop information architecture technology strategies.

ICOM6044. Data science for business

The emerging discipline of data science combines statistical methods with computer science to solve problems in applied areas. In this case we focus on how data science can be used to solve business problems especially those in electronic commerce. By its very nature e-commerce is able to generate large amounts of data and data mining methods are quite helpful for managers in turning this data into knowledge which in turn can be used to make better decisions. These data sets and their accompanying quantitative methods have the potential to dramatically change decision making in many areas of business. For example, ideas like interactive marketing, customer relationship management, and database marketing are pushing companies to utilize the information they collect about their customers in order to make better marketing decisions.

This module focuses on how data science methods can be applied to solve managerial problems in marketing and electronic commerce. Our emphasis is developing a core set of principles that embody data science: empirical reasoning, exploratory and visual analysis, and predictive modeling. We use these core principles to understand many methods used in data mining and machine learning. Our strategy in this module is to survey several popular techniques and understand how they map into these core principles. These techniques are illustrated with case studies. However, the emphasis is not on the software for implementing these techniques but on understanding the inputs and outputs of these techniques and how they are used to solve business problems.

ICOM6045. Fundamentals of e-commerce security #

This module provides an in-depth understanding of basic security problems and relevant e-commerce solutions, while helping students implement today’s most advanced security technologies, such as designing secure Web, e-commerce, and mobile commerce applications, securing corporate internal network, and providing secure employee/user authentication.

ICOM7000. Dissertation (4 modules)
THE FACULTY

An international faculty of distinction and wide interests

One of the corner stones of our Programme's success is its faculty. The Programme Directorate, right from the start in 1999, decided that our students deserved nothing but the keenest minds and the best practitioners to share with them an understanding of what was to come and how to exploit the opportunities and challenges presented by such insights into the future of technology-enhanced businesses.

The teaching staff of our programme comprises a mix of full-time HKU academics together with industry professionals selected on the basis of their subject knowledge, experience and their teaching ability. They understand the challenges of change, and they are well informed about best practices in leading companies. This ensures that our students are exposed to a variety of perspectives and approaches, crucial to developing well-rounded knowledge and skills.

The following is a list of the Faculty on our Programme:

CHAN, HILTON K.H., PhD HKUST
Chairman, Centinel Limited, Hong Kong
Adjunct Assistant Professor, HKUST
Guest Lecturer, Department of Computer Science, HKU

Programme Director, MSc(Comp&MEng), HKU
Managing Director, Versitech
Professor, Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering, HKU
Associate Vice President, HKU

CHIM, T.C., MPHil & PhD HKU
Instructor, Department of Computer Science, HKU

CHOW, K.P., MA & PhD UC Santa Barbara
Associate Director, MSc(Comp&MEng), HKU
Programme Director, MSc(CompSc), HKU
Associate Professor, Department of Computer Science, HKU

FARHOOMAND, ALI, MBA Concordia, PhD McGill
Professor and Director, The Asia Case Research Centre
School of Business, HKU

HO, ROY C.C., MPHil & PhD HKU
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KOU, WEIDONG, PhD Xi'an University, SMEEE
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Assistant Superintendent, Customs & Excise Department
Honorary Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, HKU

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Professor, Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering, HKU

LAW, FRANK Y.W., PhD HKU
Guest Lecturer, Department of Computer Science, HKU

LAU, FRANCIS C.M., MMath & PhD Waterloo
Professor, Department of Computer Science, HKU

LEE, SAMPSON Y.W., MBA HKBU
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Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, HKU

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YEUNG, LAWRENCE K., PhD CUHK, SMEEE
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For the profile of our faculty, please visit our website at: https://www.ecom-icom.hku.hk/faculty/instructors.asp
In this annual publication, we usually introduce some of our faculty to the public. This year we profile two of our eminent faculty: Michael Shamos and Kevin Pun. Professor Michael Shamos is the expert in his respective field of electronic payment. Dr Pun points out the issues in coping with technologies under the existing law. Students have to really enroll early to get accepted into their modules because they are just so popular that we have to cap the enrolment due to the classroom size!

We have also included a feature by Associate Professor Peter Looms, another one of our very popular teachers. He is widely known to the local news and print media because he was formerly a Multimedia Director of the Danish Broadcasting Cooperation in Copenhagen and an international consultant to the media industry and governments

**Professor Michael Shamos**

Michael Shamos, who teaches the module “Electronic payment systems”, has been voted consistently over the last ten years by our students as one of the most popular teachers. They were amazed by his minute grasp and depth of knowledge about e-payment systems in Hong Kong and China, and long before PayPal came to the attention of anyone outside the US, he predicted its rise and dominance and demonstrated the system in class in a vivid way by instantly crediting a couple of students’ bank accounts with small sums of his own money! Recently he delivered an Expert Address on Bitcoin and attracted over 100 people from the business world to his talk in town. He just made the topic so easy to understand. Articulate and uncompromising, he delivers lectures which are nevertheless fun, full of surprises and fascinating examples. Not many realize though that this professor is also an excellent billiard player and has published a number of authoritative articles and books on the subjects of pool and billiards, as well as electronic voting and the arcane science of numbers.

The research interests of this renaissance professor range from digital libraries, language identification, electronic voting, electron negotiation, Internet law and policy, to experimental mathematics. He has reviewed scientific papers for Communications of the ACM, Mathematical Reviews, IEEE Computer, IEEE Transactions on Computers, Information Processing Letters, and Journal of the ACM and the Journal of Computational Physics. He has also served as an arbitrator in computer-related disputes for the American Arbitration Association and expert witness in computer software and electronic voting cases.

Michael is now Distinguished Career Professor and Co-Director of the Institute for eCommerce in Carnegie Mellon University and Director of the Master of Science in Information Technology eBusiness Programme. He teaches E-commerce Technology, Electronic Payment Systems, E-commerce Law and Regulation and Electronic Voting.

**Associate Professor Kevin Pun**

Kevin Pun is one of those far-sighted computer scientists who knew that sooner or later the law would have to catch up with information technology, so what did he do? He took time off in 1992-93 to go and study and obtained an LLM from the University of London, specialising in intellectual property (IP) law and information technology (IT) law. He was called to the Hong Kong Bar in 1999.

Kevin teaches the very popular module on “Legal aspects of IT and e-commerce”, and “E-crimes: digital crime scenes and legal sanctions”. Our students flock to his class because of his expert knowledge and teaching style. His lectures, assignments and examinations deal with practical issues which stimulate and challenge their mind and comfort zones, and to them, it is true learning.

Kevin is on the faculty of both the Computer Science Department and the Law Department. He has been selected seven times for the Computer Science Department annual Teaching Excellence Award since the award was introduced in 1996. In 2002, he became the first member of the Engineering Faculty to be appointed as a University Teaching Fellow, an honour awarded in recognition of his teaching excellence and contribution to university education. During 2000-2011, apart from teaching in the Computer Science Department, he also taught in the Law Department lecturing in Intellectual Property Law and Information Technology Law.

With qualifications in both computer science and law, Kevin has acted as an expert witness in IP and IT cases involving computer software, and as counsel in IP and IT litigation including the appeal case of Chan Nai Ming v HKSAR before the Court of Final Appeal, the first criminal case in the world involving the use of BitTorrent on the Internet. Since 2007, he has been appointed/re-appointed by the Chief Executive as a member of the Unsolicited Electronic Messages (Enforcement Notices) Appeal Board. The appointment/re-appointment was notified in the Gazette.
Media accessibility: learning to see the wood for the trees

by Visiting Associate Professor Peter Looms

I am writing this feature on November 1, 2014, the day the public sector in Denmark stopped using the postal service in favour of digital communication. A small percentage of the population will be exempt, but the rest of us will have to be expected to file our tax returns and deal with central government and the local authorities online from our phones, tablets or laptops. Companies have been required to use digital communication for more than a year. When the MSc(ECom&IComp) programme started in 1999, few of us could have foreseen how big an impact digital communication would have on our everyday lives.

The challenge of digital communication is to design safe and easy-to-use IT systems that everyone can use, also elders for whom IT is often a bewildering nightmare. Around the world, the number of ‘offliners’ (people who have never used the Internet) is falling, but even in an affluent country like Denmark 4-5% are still offline. Offliners are predominantly 65+, female and with a modest school education. But elders are not the only ones who have problems with digital communication. The United Nations estimates that at least one billion people on the planet (15%) have disabilities that make the use of IT difficult or impossible. Languages also play a role. In countries like India or China with significant internal migration, the dominant local language may not be the mother tongue of the migrant. In India, there is still a problem with literacy, not just digital literacy.

The terms ‘disability’ and ‘accessibility’ tend to conjure up pictures in our minds of individuals who are blind or deaf, or of persons who get around in wheelchairs, small minorities who have functional impairments. I would argue this picture is too limited. Think about your own use of a smartphone outdoors in bright sunlight — you will most likely have difficulties reading the screen. What about understanding announcements on public address systems at an airport or train station? Depending on how well those systems are designed, many of us will struggle with contextual challenges — bright sunlight or ambient noise — in order to use them successfully.

The point I would like to make is that designing an accessible IT solution is more than interaction design. It requires us to understand both the users and the context in which the solution will be used. Ideally, we should be aware of the interests of all the key stakeholders involved. Rather than focusing narrowly on a few disabilities, we should come up with solutions that work for (nearly) everyone. We should strive to get the big picture, to design holistically, so we understand our users and our stakeholders. Only when we keep in mind the diversity of users and their needs and the contextual issues will we come up with solutions that work for all.

I have been working on media accessibility for the last ten years, and from 2011-13 headed a global initiative at the ITU in Geneva (a UN agency) to map out the legal, regulatory and standardisation challenges of making digital media truly accessible. I have been fortunate to work with colleagues on media accessibility round the world, not only in Europe but also in Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Japan and Korea, to identify the barriers and recommend how they can be broken down. The experience hammered home the importance of getting buy-in from all the key stakeholders for the solutions we were working on.

What makes the MSc(ECom&IComp) Programme unique is diversity and learning to think holistically. Lecturers offer a variety of models and methods based on their research and experience from around the world. Students get the opportunity to use a number of different perspectives and approaches to get the big picture, to come up with solutions and to communicate their ideas to decision-makers. In my module, the students also get hands-on experience of globalization when they analyse the work of students in Europe or get feedback on their own projects.

The government agency in Denmark responsible for digital communication has done a good job so far. But their planning did not take into account the rapid take-up of smartphones and tablets and the need to have a ‘Bring Your Own Device’ (BYOD) strategy. The result? Until recently, the national log-on solution required the use of Java, so only laptops were able to log on to borger.dk, the national portal. I am sure most of the MSc(ECom&IComp) students would have spotted that weakness!
STUDENT NETWORK

You will quickly discover that among the programme’s greatest assets are your fellow students and you will soon establish a network of friends and professional contacts before and after graduation. Smart, ingenious, energetic, ambitious – all of these are hallmarks of our current students, professionals with business experience who desire a career change or who are currently working in a technology-oriented field and want to enhance their I.T. knowledge and skills as well as their ability to solve business problems and facilitate solutions. They come from various professions including accounting, business management, education, engineering, hospitality, information technology and law. After class, students become resources for one another, benefiting through interaction and shared experience.

Our graduates and alumni members also help us welcome new students every year, so you can talk to them too for them to share with you their experience and “tips” for a successful study.

Now we would like you to meet some of them.

**Timothy Yuen • Class of 2014 • CEO, iLearners**

As guardian of a 40 years old publishing house, I knew I have to prepare myself for the changes ahead. Without any prior programming knowledge, it was hard for a mid-career executive to indulge in any technology focused curriculum. I was first attracted to this programme by its body of international faculty, each expert in his/her own area of e-commerce or Internet/mobile communication. Immersed in each intensive study module, I was able to interact with teachers and students, both online and in class, on the theoretical as well as practical aspects of the field. In retrospect, this programme is truly unique and life-changing for anyone seeking an up-to-date vision of this technological world.

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**Leo Lau • Class of 2014 • Assistant Manager, Digital Marketing, AIA**

Continuous development is a mandate in this competing world and a master degree is a better investment than chasing this or that certification on the market. In searching a master degree for my part-time study, I found that the MSc(Ecom&Comp) offered by HKU is the only programme offering what I was looking for and perfectly fitted my IT background and the current role in digital marketing. From the wide range of modules, I could select my preferred combination closely related to my day job and future development.

In the two years of study, instructors demonstrated not only their knowledge but also the willingness to discuss on related topics during breaks and even out of class hours. They have theories on their topics, which all are sound and worth learning. Instructors were also open to discuss and readily accept challenges to their theories. That to me was the best way to learn. I was able to pick modules which interested me most from a wide spectrum within the Programme and even from other engineering programmes. With the interactive learning, I found that finishing the programme is not the end of study but the start of my own independent life-long learning.

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**Tiffany Huang • Class of 2014**

The programme is highly customisable to fit one’s need and work schedule. Diversity of people in the programme from different industries made case studies and team work interesting and dynamic. One of the biggest challenges for me was applying these theories to actual practices without the relevant work experience in the Internet industry. However, it provided me the tools and knowledge to communicate in the professional context. The result of the programme was possibilities that help you enhance my career development or even start my own business.

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**Aleksander Ciepiela • Class of 2014 • Director, Benissimo Limited**

Before coming to Hong Kong, I lived already in Poland, Italy, Spain and China. I wanted to experience something new and studying at The University of Hong Kong was a great opportunity for me. I found MSc(Ecom&Comp) suited my goals and interests. I wanted to continue studying business and also learn more practical approach.

Some courses were very demanding while some were not really too hard for me. Sometimes I had to stay overnight in the library trying to solve the difficult tasks but I enjoyed every moment of it. I highly recommend all full-time students taking some ICOM technical modules. It is very hard and you have to pay more effort but you will also learn a lot.

After graduating with credit from the programme, I started a company with one of the graduates. We have the chance to use our e-commerce knowledge on daily basis and we work together with many of our classmates.
Our students' first degrees are drawn from the following:

- HKU
- CUHK
- HKUST
- Dalian University of Technology
- London Business School
- Peking University
- University of Auckland
- University of California
- University of Cambridge

- University of London
- University of Melbourne
- University of Michigan
- University of Science and Technology of China
- University of Toronto
- University of Washington
- University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Xian Jiaotong University

*and more...*

Employers of our MSc(ECom&IComp) students

- Alibaba.com Hong Kong Ltd
- Automated System Limited (HK)
- Bank of China
- Bank of Communications
- Bank of East Asia
- China Citic Bank Int'l Ltd
- China Mobile Hong Kong Limited
- CLP Power Hong Kong Limited
- Dah Sing Bank
- Dairy Farm International Holdings Limited
- eBay International Hong Kong Limited
- Ernst & Young LLP
- Esri China (Hong Kong) Limited
- Gold Dragon Technologies Ltd
- Industrial and Commercial Bank of China
- Hang Seng Bank
- HK Electric Investments Limited
- Hong Kong Aircraft Engineering Co. Ltd
- Hong Kong Economic Times Holding Ltd
- Hong Kong Police Force
- Hospital Authority
- Intel China
- Jardine Shipping Services
- KPMG
- PayPal
- PCCW Solutions Ltd
- Ping An Bank Co., Ltd
- Quam Group Private Wealth
- Sa Sa International Holdings Ltd
- Samsung Electronics H.K. Co., Ltd.
- Schneider Electric Hong Kong Limited
- South China Morning Post Publishers Ltd
- Strategy &
- The Hong Kong Jockey Club
- The Hongkong Electric Co., Ltd.
- Yahoo Hong Kong Limited

*and more...*
The Alumni Association

Professional growth and lifelong networking are natural extensions of the MSc(ECom&IComp) experience. Apart from the student-to-student networking with classmates, students also get to know their instructors, other students in the University, and more importantly, members of the Alumni Association.

Educational, social, or professional – however you regard it, the HKU MSc. in E-commerce and Internet Computing Alumni Association is a lifetime one. It is an active grouping of over 450 graduates who share a common experience – studying at MSc(ECom&IComp) Programme.

The MEICOM Alumni Association actively recruits not just new graduates each year, but an unusual feature of the Association is that we also invite new and current students to join them before their graduation, so as to build up bonding within the community through regular social and sporting events and professional development seminars.

On your graduation, should you need continuing professional development, you can enroll in the new modules at half fee, a special offer to Alumni, which some have taken up to keep themselves abreast of the times.

Message from MEICOM President

Welcome! So you're on your way to getting a head start through this Master's Programme. What's next? Well, you may consider making the most out of your degree by joining our Alumni Association, MEICOM. Because on the journey to success, knowledge alone isn't enough—a strong professional network that can open your eyes to opportunities and industry experience is just as important. MEICOM understands this important agenda and brings people and technology together.

This year, our board of directors and I have lined up a whole host of activities for us to achieve this together. Through our workshops and seminars, MEICOM members are learning about the latest tech trends, building their professional reputations and finding partners for entrepreneurial ventures. At the same time, we believe in becoming your best self through having fun and making friends. You will find plenty of opportunities to mingle with like-minded people at our social events.

Don't limit yourself to classes and textbooks. Give your career and personal development an edge and join us. My team and I are looking forward to meeting you.

Ivan Law
President
HKU M.Sc in E-Commerce and Internet Computing Alumni Association
A D M I S S I O N S

Things to consider before applying

The programme is for working professionals who are able to manage a serious academic commitment in addition to their personal and professional obligations. The coursework is challenging, and the demands can be intense.

This is not a programme for people who want to complete credits and “just get their degree”. It is interactive and engaging, and this forces students to stretch themselves intellectually. Everything in the programme is done with the intent of sharpening students’ critical abilities.

This is not a programme for people who want to write a programming language or to learn in depth a particular piece of software. They can do that through evening continuing courses with other providers. Our instructors are more interested in students acquiring an understanding the aims, outcome and impact of the use of the technology for any particular purpose in a business context.

There are three ways to get more insight into our programme

(1) Visit our website. Find comprehensive programme information including module descriptions, faculty biographies and admissions requirements at http://www.ecom-i-com.hku.hk.

(2) Attend an information session. To help you decide if you’re ready to take the next step, attend an information session. Information sessions allow you to learn more about the programme’s strengths and the application process. The sessions also provide an excellent opportunity to talk to the Programme Director. For the upcoming information sessions, please visit the MSc(ECom&IComp) website for dates and reservations.

(3) Attend the ECom-IComp experts address series. You will have the opportunity to experience the participative classroom environment and interact with our faculty. Please visit the MSc(ECom&IComp) website for more information.

Recent experts address topics:

- Limitations of Big Data for Solving Business Problems
- Linked Open Data: A Way to Extract Knowledge from Global Datastores
- Creativity Inc is coming to a Mega-City near you
Admission requirements

Applicants should meet the following requirements:

1) hold a Bachelor’s degree of this University in a relevant field; or any other relevant qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another university or comparable institution accepted for this purpose; and

2) have a good TOEFL/IELTS result if English was not the language of instruction at undergraduate level.

Details of General Regulations and Syllabuses can be downloaded from our website at <http://www.ecom-icom.hku.hk/admission/regulations.asp>.

Applicants who wish to be admitted on the basis of a qualification from a university or comparable institution outside Hong Kong where the language of teaching and/or examination is not English is required to obtain:

a) a score of 550 or above (paper-based test) or 80 or above (Internet-based) in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). An applicant who took the TOEFL should request the Education Testing Service (ETS) to send an official score report to the University directly. For this purpose, the HKU TOEFL code number is 9671. Test scores more than two years old will not be accepted.

b) A minimum overall band of 6 with no subtest lower than 5.5 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS); or

c) Grade C or above in the Overseas General Certificate of Education (GCE); or

d) Grade C or above in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE); or

e) Grade C or above in the Cambridge Test of Proficiency in English Language;

unless in exceptional circumstances they are exempted from this requirement.

Transcripts

An official transcript should be requested from every college or university you have attended, except those undertaken in The University of Hong Kong. Photocopies of the transcript request form may be used to request transcripts from additional institutions. The official transcript with the transcript request form should be sent directly by the registrar of the institutions to the MSc(ECom&IComp) Programme Office before the application deadline. Please note that the University will only ACCEPT originals and copies of the documents that have been duly declared as true copies before a notary public.
How to apply

**On-line application**
http://www.als.hku.hk/admissions/tpg

Applications can only be submitted via HKU taught postgraduate online application system. To speed up our consideration of applications, applicants are encouraged to upload copies of their credentials on the online application system whenever possible. Other supporting documents must be submitted by mail, and reach the MSc(ECom&IComp) Programme Office by the application deadline.

Early submission is highly encouraged as qualified applicants may be admitted before the application deadline.

**Supporting documents required**

The following documents should be sent directly to the MSc Programme Office by the institutions / parties concerned:

- Officially certified degree certificate(s) and transcript(s) of your graduate and undergraduate studies (transcripts not in English should be accompanied by a certified translation in English)
- Official score report on an English Language proficiency test, such as TOEFL or IELTS (if applicable)

**Application fee**

The application fee is HK$300 (non-refundable). Payment should be made online by VISA or MASTER card.

**Application period**

Now through April 2015. Short-listed candidates will be invited for an interview. Overseas and PRC candidates will be interviewed by phone or in person, whichever is suitable.

**Programme fee**

The composition fee for each module is HK$12,000. The dissertation, which counts as four modules, has a composition fee of HK$48,000. Total composition fee for the two study modes are therefore as follows:

- 12 modules: HK$12,000 x 12 = HK$144,000
- 8 modules + dissertation: (HK$12,000 x 8) + (HK$12,000 x 4) = HK$144,000

The fee covers prescribed texts and software and the use of a computer laboratory and the University libraries.

Fees for enrolled modules are paid on semester basis. The first installment of composition fees of two modules is payable at the time of acceptance of an offer of admission.

The composition fees for cancelled enrollment are not refunded, but can be used to pay for another enrolled module or carried over to the next semester as credit.

**Financial assistance**

Hong Kong residents may be eligible to apply for The Extended Non-means Tested Loan Scheme (ENLS Loan) for financial assistance. You could visit the website of Student Financial Assistance Agency for further information: http://www.sfaa.gov.hk/eng/schemes/nlls.htm. Moreover, some of our modules have been approved by HKSAR Government as reimbursable courses under the Continuing Education Fund scheme. This provides reimbursement up to HK $10,000 for those who fulfill the criteria. More details are available at: http://www.sfaa.gov.hk/cef/index.htm.
CONTACT US

For further enquiry about the MSc(ECom&IComp) programme, please contact:

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