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Supporting the needs of the job market through Digital Business and Management Programme

A study about the views of Finnish employers on digitalization organized by the **Finnish Institute of Occupational Health** concluded that digitalization has impacted nearly all Finnish companies and public institutions with more than 10 employers. However, the extent of this impact depends considerably on the company and industry. In addition to this, the results indicate that due to digitalization there was a 75% growth in the companies' services and products, 82% arranged work differently, and 48% hired new employees.

In 2019, **Novia University of Applied Sciences** introduced the new [Master's Degree programme Digital Business and Management, MBA](#). The Head of Degree Programme, **Rosmeriany Nahan-Suomela**, says that this programme was established as a result of research conducted in the Vaasa region that identified the demands about the skills of the workforce in the job market:

" We conducted a study about the needs and competences in working life in Vaasa region and the result from the study emphasized communication, leadership, digitalization, and more, which we have included in designing our curriculum."

Another reason why skills and knowledge developed in this programme are necessary is also because of the rapid advance of technology, which is an important aspect for the companies as well. Apart from this, the curriculum is designed very much different from Master's degrees in academic

universities, as it does not involve just basic research, but it is more applied science, says **Nahan-Suomela**.



“The curriculum it is tailored in blocks, for example, we have digital tools in business, digital business communication, digital business management such as sustainable leadership, sustainable financial decision making, etc. So the profile is for students who would like to progress in their career and boost their personal and professional development.”

When the programme was launched in 2020, there were 105 applicants for 20 study places, whereas in January 2023, there was a significant increase of interest as it received 924 applications for 30 study places. The students are from different cultural and professional backgrounds. Except from Finland, they come from 21 different countries such as Italy, Sweden, USA, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria, Iran, India, China, Vietnam, Bangladesh, etc., and they have all been part of working life for some time.

“The background of students is very diverse. They have a Bachelor’s degree in different fields, but mainly people from the business and engineering sectors are interested in digitalization. Apart from this, they are all professionals in various fields, as one of the criteria of admission to this programme is to have at least two years of work experience. ”

There is a need for new education programmes on digitalization

A report published by the Confederation of Finnish Industries states that digitalization allows new types of companies to evolve, which subsequently must be flexible and active to quickly adjust to the

shift of customer demands. Additionally, a new type of companies also secure that business processes are adjusted for the digital world, and they are also the base for success in the future.

Furthermore, the report also recommends that education needs to invest more in life-long standard studies by offering reskilling and upskilling that meets the demands of the job market. Additionally, education must meet the requirements of working life in an agile way to support life-long standard studies. Moreover, stronger collaboration with the main businesses is demanded in order to develop study catalogues according on customer demands.

Digital Business and Management an attractive field for international students

Among many international students who studied in Novia University of Applied Sciences is also **Quang Truong** who moved to Finland in 2021 to continue master studies in Digital Business and Management.

“ I chose to study this field because I think that digital transformation management is an inevitable trend in the future, and that the business world is changing constantly with the rapid adoption of digital technology. ”

Due to the fact that digital transformation is very important for many businesses, it encouraged me to dive deep inside this field by pursuing this study program, and explore the main issues and the complex interactions in the management of business and identify important trends within the changing regulatory environment of digital corporations, says **Truong**

Before moving to Finland, Quang had a long work experience in the banking field of Vietnam where he worked for eight years in different roles.

“I have worked as Customers Specialist, responsible for analyzing, evaluating and proposing granting credit. Later on I also worked as Compliance and Risk specialist in analyzing and assessing corporate or institutional-based credit risks based on the policies, procedures, and so forth.”



During eight years of work experience in banking field in Asian market, he achieved “Excellent Employee” award in years 2016 - 2018, and 2020, as well as a certificate of merit from the Board of Management in 2019.

Quang has an interest in getting into the job market in the Vaasa region. His background of work experience, and education align with the requirements of the job market in his field, says **Truong**. “I have been trained and developed in banks for more than eight years, so I have accumulated a decent amount of knowledge and experience in the banking field, and also the skill competition that I have developed in the Digital Business & Management programme align with the requirements of banking, business, and finance sector.”

This article is written by Donjeta Jashari, Project Assistant, Vaasa International Talents at Novia UAS.

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