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**Management Development Program,
Information Technology**

***Knowledge Management for SMEs with Particular
Emphasis on the Tourism Industry***

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Certificate

I certify that this thesis has not already been submitted for any degree and is not being submitted as part of candidature for any other degree.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me and that any help that I have received in preparing this thesis, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

Michael Mannington

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Abstract

Knowledge Management has captured the attention of management and IT vendors are hastily bringing products to market. The interest in Knowledge Management is understandable given the moves towards knowledge based economies and workplaces.

Large organisations have begun to understand the value of the knowledge held within their organisation. Nowadays, the value of an organisation may be based on its intellectual capital and this is demonstrated by organisations being sold for many times its worth in terms of hard assets. The concept of being able to store and use the 'knowledge' that is generated inside an organisation has obvious appeal. However, the management of this 'knowledge' and the ability to use it for an advantage requires careful planning and an understanding of knowledge inside the organisation and its workers. This process requires a mix of organisational, cultural and technology understanding.

Current research and vendor interest is focussing on large organisations. However, Small to Medium size Enterprises (SMEs) also have an explicit need to manage their intellectual capital. Research interest in large organisations is strong, but SMEs cannot always use the findings that are targeted to large organisations and will probably be unable to afford the specific Knowledge Management tools offered by vendors.

Nevertheless, SMEs can use the knowledge in their organisations to gain an advantage. In particular, the tourism industry has a significant knowledge component and Knowledge Management could provide substantial benefits. Many Knowledge Management principles apply to organisations irrespective of their size. How these can be implemented within a SME is the subject of this thesis.