



## STUDENT SUCCESS STORY Christopher: A New Opportunity...

The Virtual Enterprise Australia (VEA) program is designed to provide students with new and different opportunities of learning, such as working alongside a real business. The virtual enterprise has virtual products and money, but the business skills it provides such as budgeting, sales, team work and leadership are real. Working with the VE's business mentor, the students also gain an insight into new industries and how real businesses works.

Christopher Sommer embraced the opportunities this style of learning can provide, and in fact enjoyed the experience so much that he applied for (and got!) a job with his business mentor! Toll Australia has been engaged with the VEA program for many years, giving students the opportunity to see a successful transport and logistics business from the ground up. Christopher did so well as a student, and an employee he has quickly climbed the corporate ladder and is now the Internal IT & Projects Manager for Toll IPEC WA Australia. Now that is one of the unique opportunities offered by the VEA program!

**Name:** Christopher Sommer  
**Current Job Role:** Internal IT and Projects Manager, Toll IPEC WA  
**Course:** Certificate II Transport and Logistics  
**Virtual Enterprise:** Toll Virtual VE, Southern River College, WA



### **Why was working in the VE beneficial to your career?**

The VE introduced me to the Logistics industry. Without starting at Toll Virtual I would not have gone into an office environment or started my career in IT, so the VE provided me with a career goal that I was able to obtain in just a few short years.

### **What were the most useful business skills you gained?**

The most useful skill I gained was the understanding of what is required to keep a company functioning; an insight to each department, not just what can be seen from the outside. Another advantage was learning and developing a professional code of conduct, this enabled me to effectively move up the corporate ladder to where I am now today.

### **What was the no. 1 experience that made a difference for you when you joined the workforce?**

Getting to go out to my mentor company and work with them allowed me to get a taste of my chosen profession. They also gave me the opportunity to continue on with them after I had finished school.

### **How do you feel your time in the VE prepared you for the workplace?**

VE gave me a chance to look at the different aspects of each department within a company to decide where I would like to start my career.

### **Is there anything else you would like to say about this program?**

I feel the relationship formed with my mentor company helped me out the most during my time at the VE. Having the opportunity to experience the operation of a company and question how things were run with my mentor company gave me a much larger insight than I feel I could have obtained by purely studying at school.