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The Open Group Unveils Plans for IT Specialist Certification Program

New Program First to Certify IT Specialists Based on Independent Assessment of Skills and Experience

SAN FRANCISCO, September 17, 2007 – The Open Group, a vendor- and technology-neutral consortium focused on open standards and global interoperability within and between enterprises, along with Open Group Platinum Members, Capgemini, EDS and IBM today announced plans to launch a global certification program for information technology (IT) specialists. The Open Group IT Specialist Certification (ITSC) program will offer the first independent, comprehensive, global certification for determining the skills, experience and knowledge of professional specialists within several different technical focus areas.

The demand for experienced information technology specialists continues to grow in line with an increasing number of projects focused on business and IT alignment at large global organizations. The Open Group IT Specialist Certification program will enable these organizations to find and select the right expertise for their projects, a critical requirement brought on by regulatory compliance and rising industry expectations for quality of service. In addition, the new program will bring the assurance that other organizations within a company's business ecosystem acquire and possess comparable capabilities. For information technology specialists, certification against an open, global standard will provide a clear path for career development and offer portable credentials that will be recognized and accepted around the world.

“The Open Group's IT Specialist Certification program will provide an element that is currently missing in the IT industry,” said Allen Brown, president and CEO of The Open Group.

“Specifically, the program will deliver a set of recognized standards that allow organizations to benchmark against the required skill level, experience and knowledge, and select the right people for the job.”

“Capgemini, as one of the initiators of ITSC, believes that certification of information technology specialists against an open and global standard is crucial for our customers, employees and the industry at large,” said Ron Tolido, chief technology officer Continental Europe and Asia Pacific for Capgemini. “We expect that the defined set of worldwide standards for measuring the skills and experience of information technology specialists, motivating and empowering them with portable credentials will soon be accepted anywhere and will contribute to a further professionalism of the IT industry.”

“The success of an IT-enabled business highly depends on the proper abilities, experience and skills of its technical experts,” said Chris Moyer, chief technology officer, EDS EMEA. “EDS is fully engaged in this important Open Group work and supports certification of our employees in many technical and professional domains.”

Information technology specialists utilize product-, technology- and business-related skills to deliver high-quality solutions to clients in response to varying business requirements, often leveraging tools to manage, analyze, design and implement these solutions. The IT Specialist Certification program will make certification available to skilled and experienced IT professionals in a number of streams within two technical focus areas: Development; and Operations. In addition, four client focus areas, including Services, Technical Sales, Technical Support and Technical Training will also be made available for certification.

“Internally IBM has had a program that validated the technical skills, experiences, and knowledge of our IT Specialists for over a dozen years,” said Phil Stauskas, worldwide IT specialist profession executive and distinguished engineer at IBM. “In addition, our program has demanded our specialists meet documented standards related to *professional skills*, such as oral and written communications, and project management. In working with The Open Group on the development of ITSC, it was important to IBM that both technical and professional skills and abilities be assessed as part of the program – to allow for the development of well-rounded specialists that can offer our clients maximum value in a consistent fashion across a worldwide marketplace. The ITSC program provides for that holistic assessment.”

Available to practitioners during the first half of 2008, the program will allow for either direct certification by The Open Group or indirect certification by an accredited certification partner.

About The Open Group

The Open Group is a vendor-neutral and technology-neutral consortium, which drives the creation of Boundaryless Information Flow™ that will enable access to integrated information within and between enterprises based on open standards and global interoperability. The Open Group works with customers, suppliers, consortia and other standard bodies. Its role is to capture, understand and address current and emerging requirements, establish policies and share best practices; to facilitate interoperability, develop consensus, and evolve and integrate specifications and open source technologies; to offer a comprehensive set of services to enhance the operational efficiency of consortia; and to operate the industry's premier certification service. Further information on The Open Group can be found at <http://www.opengroup.org>.

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