

CISCO NETWORKING ACADEMY PROGRAM

Dragostina Grancharova

Abstract: *Changing the Way People Learn. The Cisco Networking Academy Program is a comprehensive e-learning program, which provides students with the Internet technology skills essential in a global economy. The Networking Academy program delivers Web-based content, online assessment, student performance tracking, hands-on-labs, instructor training and support, and preparation for industry standard certifications.*

Key words: *e-learning, Web-based, training, assessment, certifications*

Changing the Way People Learn

Launched in 1997, the Cisco Networking Academy® Program has grown to more than 10,000 Academies in more than 150 countries, with a curriculum taught in 9 languages. More than 400,000 students participate in Academies in high schools, colleges and universities, technical schools, community-based organisations, and other educational programs around the world.

The Academy program utilises a blended learning model, integrating face-to-face teaching with a challenging Web-based curriculum, hands-on lab exercises, and Internet-based assessment. Over 198,000 Academy graduates globally are prepared for networking and IT-related careers in the public and private sectors, as well as for higher education in engineering, computer science and related fields.

The Internet and Education are the Great Equalisers

By combining educational opportunity with powerful networks, the Cisco Networking Academy Program empowers individuals to overcome the digital divide and transcend the boundaries of geography, race, gender, or socioeconomic status. Investing in an IT workforce today prepares individuals, communities, and countries for economic development and innovation. Cisco has partnered with international organisations to establish Academies in 34 of the world's 49 least developed countries (LDCs). Academies have opened in 63 developing countries including Jordan and Afghanistan. Through the Gender Initiative, Cisco and the Cisco Learning Institute work with Academies to increase female enrolment and retention.

Get Ready for the Future

Each Academy has certified instructors who deliver standards-based, high quality curriculum in specially equipped Academy labs, where students practice on standard equipment. Students everywhere access the same online curriculum resources, simulations, and assessment to master in-demand, Internet technology skills. The curriculum is regularly updated with information about new technologies and improved instructional techniques. IT is a growing industry, essential to economic and business development.

According to IDC analysts: The IT industry will grow by six to seven percent in 2004 and the Internet will have one billion users by 2006 and support \$6 trillion (USD) in commerce. New technologies such as converged devices, smart handhelds, wireless games, embedded devices in every day durable goods will be on the rise. A study conducted by Fairfield Research, Inc. and Certification Magazine on the correlation between industry certifications and earning power shows, "the more certifications the Cisco Networking Academy Program IT professional has, the more he or she tends to get paid." (Gary Gabelhouse, "CertMag's Salary Survey," Certification Magazine, December, 2002.) Employers value certifications as proof of mastery and Cisco was ranked the best overall certification program by CertCities.

A Curriculum Designed for Success

Academies offer a range of courses for a variety of careers in network design and administration, technical support, programming or software engineering, database development and administration. The associate level CCNA® course covers the basic foundation of networking. The professional level CCNP® course builds on CCNA with more complex network configurations, and network diagnosis and troubleshooting. The Fundamentals of Network Security course teaches students to design and implement security solutions to reduce the risk of revenue loss and vulnerability. Fundamentals of Wireless LANs is an introductory course about the design, planning, implementation, operation, and troubleshooting of wireless networks. Additional courses sponsored by IT industry leaders include:

- Fundamentals of UNIX and Fundamentals of Java Programming, sponsored by Sun Microsystems
- Fundamentals of Voice and Data Cabling, sponsored by Panduit
- IT Essentials I: PC Hardware and Software and IT Essentials II: Network Operating Systems, sponsored by Hewlett-Packard

Worldwide Partnering for an Education Ecosystem

Cisco partners with schools, colleges and universities, businesses, non-profit organisations, international organisations, unions, and government agencies to strengthen the Academy experience and invest in the potential of students. Ecosystem partners include Adobe Systems, ADTRAN, CompTIA, Fluke Networks, Hewlett-Packard, Panduit Corporation and Sun Microsystems. Additional alliances include Communications Workers of America (CWA), International Telecommunications Union (ITU), International Youth Foundation, Organisation of American States, United Nations Development Programme, and World Bank Group. The Cisco Career Connection program links Academies with local employers that provide real-world learning experiences including field trips, job shadowing, internships, and apprentice-ships. The Career Connection job search and matching tools benefit students and enable businesses to support education while helping prepare their future workforce.

This is the Power of the Network. Now.

The Cisco Networking Academy Program has become the leading innovator in e-learning. The Global Learning Network consists of learning management and course authoring tools available over a scalable, reliable, secure and distributed network. Students experience personalised learning. Teachers and administrators easily track learning outcomes. Communities invest in talent to increase productivity, improve economic growth, and manage costs.

Visit the following Web sites for more information:

Cisco Networking Academy Program
www.cisco.com/edu/emea
Locating a Networking Academy program
www.cisco.com/edu/academylocator
Cisco Career Connection
www.cisco.com/go/careerconnection

CONTACT

Dragostina Grancharova, Cisco Systems Bulgaria, Sofia, Bulgaria, 18/20 Gogol str.,
Phone: +359 2 9375920, E-mail: dgranchara@cisco.com