



"CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Server + have led to an improved profile and greater acceptance of IT support roles as professions within the information technology industry."

*- Pat McCarthy
Computing, CIT*



Case Study: Cork Institute of Technology

Business Situation

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT) is a third Level Educational Institute with more than 1200 full and part time staff providing day and evening courses for 17,000 full and part time students five miles from Cork City Centre. CIT's courses span five main fields - Science, Business and Humanities, Engineering, Art and Music. Undergraduate qualifications include Higher Certificates, Bachelor's degrees and Honours Degrees. Post-graduate study leads to Master's and Doctoral (Ph.D.) awards. Also, CIT offers a thriving and internationally-recognised suite of trade craft courses designed to give their students the best chance of future success.

Benefits provided by CompTIA

In its search for ways to improve the recruitment and retention of its students, CIT wanted to increase the number of professional development courses offered on a part time basis. After analysing the options available at a practical level for IT support professionals, and those looking to enter the IT support area, CIT administrators recognised that CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Server+ certification would be attractive qualifications for their students as industry and globally recognised qualifications in their areas of expertise. CIT identifies that the CompTIA certifications are used by leading companies including IBM, Xerox and Hewlett Packard and would further enhance the future employability of their students.

"We decided to teach the CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Server + through the Cisco Network Academy's IT Essential 1 and 2 programme because it provides an excellent learning structure of Theoretical Modules and practical labs," said Pat McCarthy, computing, CIT, who championed the initiative. "It is taught through a series of online modules, accompanied with practical and online Exams. It is also very focused towards the accreditation exam itself." This track also is very focused on the certifications, which many employers require or prefer for employment or advancement.

CIT became a CompTIA E2C (Education to Careers) member in order to offer further benefits to its students. As the largest not-for-profit trade association for the technology industry, CompTIA provides the industry and its members with the information, tools and resources necessary to be successful in the recruitment, training, certification and retention of IT workers worldwide. CIT's CompTIA E2C membership facilitated increased certification testing by providing them with academic certification vouchers and the continued support from CompTIA.

CompTIA Skills
Development
Products

CompTIA A+

CareerID

CompTIA CDIA+

CompTIA CTT+

CompTIA HTI+

CompTIA i-Net+

CompTIA Linux+

CompTIA Network+

CompTIA Project+

CompTIA RFID+

CompTIA Security+

CompTIA Server+

TechCareer
Compass

Results

The CIT administration has determined that the implementation of the CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Server+ curriculums into their IT education programme has led to vast improvements from their students. "I have noticed improvement in technical proficiency, productivity and efficiency," said McCarthy. Students engaged in hardware and software maintenance feel that the CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Server+ certifications have helped provide a solid theoretical and practical perspective.

The CompTIA certifications have helped CIT from both a staffing and student perspective, "Acquiring CompTIA A+ and CompTIA Server+ certifications has greatly improved the profile and standard of IT support roles and has further led to IT support and networking becoming accepted professions within the IT industry," said McCarthy.

A study of businesses employing CIT students revealed that individuals completing the educational track and certifications were more efficient and competent in troubleshooting problems and had greater confidence in dealing with a wide range of support-related issues. According to a recent survey most IT managers (78.1 per cent) believe that CompTIA certifications provide on-going benefits to the organisation by clearly identifying needed skills and training content and a vast majority believed that they are able to deliver a high level of service to their customers (93.3 percent) through the achievement of CompTIA certifications.

Due to the success and effectiveness of the CompTIA certifications and the demand that exists in the industry, CIT is planning to increase levels offered by expanding to implement CompTIA Linux +, CompTIA i-Net+ and CompTIA Network +. The skills and knowledge of certified students leaving CIT's IT support courses has raised CIT's profile among potential employers. This attractiveness to potential employers has raised the recruiting and retention effectiveness of CIT's IT programme.

"CompTIA has helped increase the profile of CIT's Evening Computing Programme and has opened up a number of opportunities for students who have graduated from these courses in the areas of Technical support and Networking," said McCarthy.