

## Foundation skills open doors to a new career

Curtis Beard was bored at work last year, and feeling stuck. Now he's in a career he enjoys, thanks to industry-recognised certification from CompTIA, the leading global IT trade association.

Curtis began his professional life installing specialised security systems for banks and other institutions. "I sort of fell into the area, but once I was there, I loved it!" he says. "At that time it was more about electronics than computing - we were installing motion sensors, complex alarm systems and entry security."

Curtis' electronics background took him into the growing audio-visual industry, where he worked with the technology as it changed from analogue components to digital, software-controlled systems. After a number of years in the industry both in the UK and the US, Curtis was ready for a new challenge. He wanted to move into more general software development, but found that his skills weren't recognised by potential employers. Most of his knowledge was very specific to AV systems. While he was confident he could pick up new skills on the job, employers wanted something more.

The more companies he spoke to, the more he realised that there was one certification that everyone asked for. CompTIA A+ was developed in consultation with the association's 20,000 worldwide members - companies that develop systems and software and are big employers of IT specialists. CompTIA A+ certification covers the basics of computer software and hardware support, so it helps non-specialists make the leap into mainstream IT support.

Curtis realised it was time to retrain. He enrolled at Motherwell College and began the process of updating his skills. "I'd been looking to move industries for a while, without much luck," he explains. "CompTIA A+ helped me recognise how much I had picked up on the job, which boosted my confidence. It also let me build on the knowledge I did have, and really broadened my skills."

While he was studying for the CompTIA A+ exam, Curtis lined up a job in technical support, subject to his certification. Before this, Curtis' IT experience had been almost entirely focused on audio-visual systems. His new certification shows employers that he has the skills to perform a variety of IT jobs.

Curtis is continuing to study, and in the long term thinking about getting into security systems again. "I like designing ways to let the right people in and keep the wrong people out. The work now is very different than when I started; it's a lot more about server security than safes and CCTV. But with CompTIA A+ behind me, I know I've got the skills - and employers can see that too."

PERSONAL  
SUCCESS STORY

CURTIS BEARD



Getting CompTIA A+ certification has enabled Curtis Beard to broaden his career horizons from audio-visual systems to a wide range of IT-related jobs.

## About CompTIA

CompTIA is the voice of the world's information technology (IT) industry. Its members are the companies at the forefront of innovation and the professionals responsible for maximizing the benefits organizations receive from their investments in technology. CompTIA is dedicated to advancing industry growth through its educational programs, market research, networking events, professional certifications, and public policy advocacy.

For more information, please visit [www.comptia.org](http://www.comptia.org).

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### CompTIA certifications

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