STAFF MEMBERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Systematic IT Training and Certification as a Key to Success

Companies like Bosch, Volkswagen, Lufthansa and Siemens can not be wrong: they are all customers of the Thomas-Krenn.AG – Europe's leading Online Store for servers, server solutions, and quality hosting. Like no other company in this business, Thomas-Krenn.AG combines comfort and speed of online purchase with highly professional customer service: Within 24 hours, customized servers are delivered all over Europe. How can Thomas-Krenn.AG do this? With systematically trained and certified IT staff.

Companies should invest „more in systematic training of employees and less in headhunting graduates and foreign workers". This has been demanded already in 2002 by the Director of Berlin's Frauenhofer Institute for Software and Systems Engineering (ISST), Herbert Weber. One background of this statement: According to their study, even then, IT knowledge had only a half-life of approximately one year. Besides rapid technological developments, companies employing IT professionals have a second challenge to overcome: the skills shortage. Therefore, according to the new BITKOM study „Weiterbildung in der ITK-Branche 2011" (Training in the ICT industry) 88 percent of the surveyed executives and HR managers declared that they believe further training is an effective measure against skills shortage.

One Certification per Year and Employee
The Thomas-Krenn.AG sees themselves as „The Server Experts". There is a reason for this: the online store for servers, server solutions and quality hosting is the only one of the industry, which is able to deliver customized servers all over Europe within 24 hours. „Without systematically trained and certified employees, we simply would not be able to reach this goal. Our staff members make the difference", explains founder Thomas Krenn. Continuous training and IT certification are taken for granted by his company's technical staff. As rule of thumb: every employee should complete at least one certification each year. „with these certification we secure our high quality standard. Certifications make our employee's knowledge transparent and assessable. This is important, after all, our customers entrust us with the heart of their company, their server", declares Thomas Krenn. But Thomas Krenn has also an entirely different reason to rely on certification: „Our ambitious goals can only be reached by highly motivated staff. Every new certification is a motivation for the whole Team."

The Plan Secures Success
A concrete certification plan secures that further training and certification are transparent and have a system within Thomas-Krenn.AG. This plan is divided into two levels „Basics" and „Specializations". The four basic certifications on the first level, which are mandatory for all technical staff members, guarantee a common knowledge base: CompTIA Server+, LPIC-1, VTSP and CompTIA Network+. If there are new employees, they complete these basic certifications first – if they do not have them already. On the second level of the certification plan individual specialization takes place: LPIC-2, MCTS, VCP, Citrix, QLogic, NetApp, and many more. In order to keep the plan up to date, it is reviewed every three months and updated if necessary.
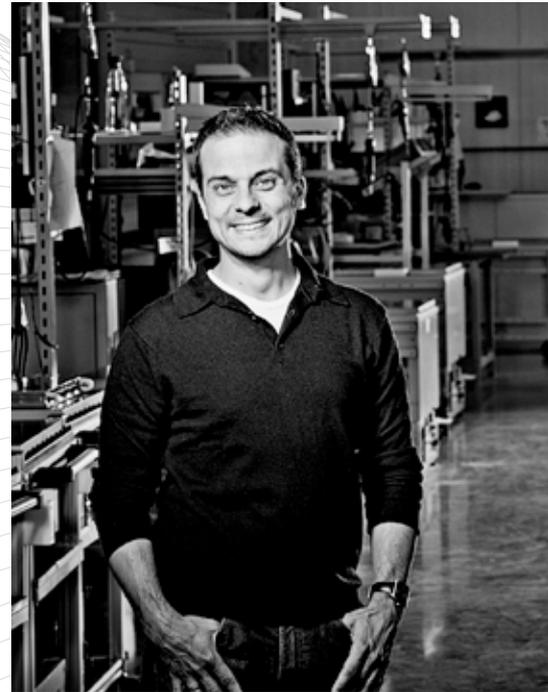
Guideline for Your Certification Plan

1. Survey the current state. Which certifications have been completed by your employees?

2. Collect proposals for certifications. Ask your staff which certifications would be valuable for their daily work.

3. Create the certification plan on basis of these proposals.

4. Update this certification plan continuously, at least once every year.

5. Document the completed certifications. Independent of the company's seize, it is important to know which knowledge employees have. Certifications are best documented on the intranet, or a generally available training tool.

Advantages of Certification
IT Certifications

> increase knowledge transparency in your IT department
> simplify the process of hiring IT professionals
> enhance you IT team's productivity
> reduce IT-related downtime
> create world-wide quality standards
> motivate and enhance identification with your company
> improve communication between IT staff
> bind IT staff to your company

About Thomas-Krenn.AG:

The Thomas-Krenn.AG is Europe's leading online store for server, server solutions and quality hosting. The portfolio ranges from rack server, silent server to solutions for HA clustering, virtualization, storage ans system solutions.

Network enclosures, TFT bays and a rich network equipment complete the range of products. It is the only company of the industry that delivers customized servers all over Europe within 24 hours.

www.thomas-krenn.com

FACTS

Location of the company:
> Besides headquarters in Freyung, Germany, the company is also represented in Austria and Poland.

Employees:
> about 100 employees, 50 of them technical staff

Turnover 2011:
> 22 million Euros

Number of customers: > currently 13,000

Certifications used:
> Basic certification: CompTIA Server+, LPIC-1, VTSP, CompTIA Network+

> Specialization: LPIC-2, MCTS, VCP, Citrix, Qlogic, NetApp u.v.m.

Certifications each year:
> about 40 certifications

ABOUT OPEN SOURCE BUSINESS FOUNDATION (OSBF)

The expert group „HR Certification ICT", operating within the framework of the Open Source Business Foundation (OSBF), campaigns information and advice about „certifying IT professionals", and wants to counteract against increasing skills shortage. The group consists of recognized experts in IT education and training, as well as companies, that rely on certified employees, because of quality assurance, and when recruiting new professionals. Together they want to explain the possibilities and opportunities of HR certification ICT, and make it more transparent to the market. www.osbf.eu

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