

In today's global and highly competitive environment, businesses are striving for Boundaryless Information Flow™. They need to be flexible and able to quickly respond to changing market conditions irrespective of geographical boundaries, time zones, and organizational structures. The IT Specialist Certification (ITSC) program was developed in response to a variety of emerging trends: the increasing speed of technological innovation demanding greater agility in IT implementations; the globalization of IT initiatives, resource allocation and sourcing, and the collaboration thus required among and between diverse teams; our escalating reliance on IT Specialists' ability to develop and deliver ever-more complex solutions, and the manifest need to distinguish those professionals who are most competent and experienced.



Program Features

ITSC is designed to verify the existence of those qualities and skills in a professional that enable the effective development, implementation and operation of IT solutions. ITSC offers:

- t **A Variety of Certification Streams:** An IT Specialist typically concentrates on one of two Technical Focus areas: Solution Development or Solution Delivery. Within each of these two Technical Focus areas, various Streams and Sub-Streams are identified against which the individual IT Specialist may certify. Please see the ITSC Conformance Requirements for details.
- t **Two Levels of Certification:** Two levels of Certification are available, depending on the length and characteristics of the IT Specialist's experience.
 - **Level 1: Certified IT Specialist** — able to perform as a contributing Specialist with assistance/supervision, with a wide range of appropriate skills
 - **Level 2: Master Certified IT Specialist** — able to perform independently as lead Specialist, and take responsibility for delivery of solutions
- t **The Directory of Certified IT Specialists:** The credential can be verified online, where The Open Group maintains a secure listing of all IT Specialists currently certified.
- t **Accredited Certification Programs (ACPs):** Organizations seeking a large number of certifications can apply for accreditation to establish a third-party program to facilitate the process for their own employees. The conformance requirements for ACPs are the same as for the direct certification program — all ITSC certified professionals must meet the same criteria.

Differentiators

The Open Group IT Specialist Certification is distinguished from other credentials available to IT professionals, because it is:

- t **Peer-reviewed:** A review board comprised of certified IT Specialists ensures that the skills and experience of each candidate meet the rigorous qualification standards.
- t **Vendor-neutral:** ITSC was developed by a consortium of globally-recognized industry leaders and is warranted through administration and oversight by a vendor-neutral organization.
- t **Global:** The Open Group ITSC program offers a worldwide set of standards for qualifying the skills, knowledge and experience of IT Specialists
- t **Portable:** Because it is global and vendor-neutral, The Open Group ITSC certification is "portable." It is applicable wherever the IT Specialist may choose to use it to distinguish his or her skills and experience. It is useful to organizations employing or retaining the services of IT Specialists, wherever they may be deployed.

The IT Specialist

Deployed in either the development or delivery of IT solutions, an IT Specialist is a service, support, sales or training professional able to bridge the gap between client concerns and technical challenges.

An IT Specialist's role and responsibilities may range from implementer on up through management levels.



Certification Benefits

Establishing a global, vendor-neutral set of certification criteria for verifying the skills and experience of IT Specialists brings a number of benefits to the industry, to certified professionals, their employers and clients:

- t A globally-recognized standard, backed by certification, helps ensure development and recognition for the IT Specialist profession and, thereby, raises the bar for qualifications across the entire industry.
- t Certified professionals wield a portable credential verifying their experience and competencies and augmenting their expertise in vendor-specific products and solutions; a credential which, by acknowledging their value and contributions, can aid in career advancement.
- t Employers are well served by a globally-recognized set of standards by which to benchmark, speeding time to hire and assuring quality of hires, as well as providing a clear career path for employees and a guide for selecting the most qualified individuals for critical roles and responsibilities.
- t Solutions providers deploying certified IT Specialists through their service organizations gain a competitive advantage.
- t To assure quality of service, clients can require staffing by certified IT Specialists in requests for project proposals, procurement specifications and service level agreements.
- t All parties benefit from the ease with which the credential can readily be verified via The Open Group Certification Directory.
- t Organizations with Accredited Certification Programs gain credibility and increased stature with clients, partners and employees.

Please see the ITSC Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for more detail on benefits for IT Specialists, their employers and clients.

The Certification Process

The Open Group supports two different routes to IT Specialist Certification. Certification criteria are the same for both:

- t **Via Direct Certification:** Application is made directly to The Open Group. The Direct route is available to individual practitioners, as well as to IT Specialists working in companies or organizations that do not have an Accredited Certification Program.
- t **Via Accredited Certification Programs (ACPs):** IT Specialists applying for certification via an ACP must be employees of the accredited organization. Application is made through the ACP.

To learn more about the certification process, fees and eligibility, please review the Certification Documents at www.opengroup.org/itsc/cert.

Getting Started

Whether you are interested in certification for yourself or accreditation for your organization to establish an Accredited Certification Program for employees, the place to begin is on The Open Group website. Please visit www.opengroup.org/itsc/cert to download the documents you need to learn more about the program and to apply for certification or accreditation.

For More Information

If you need additional guidance, please contact The Open Group at: itscinfo@opengroup.org

“Lufthansa Cargo welcomes the introduction of the IT Specialist Certification program by The Open Group. ITSC will provide an element that is currently missing in the IT industry; a single world-wide set of professional level standards that allow organizations to benchmark against the required skill level, experience and knowledge, and select the right people for the job. We fully support this new initiative and can envisage making this a requirement for IT professionals in our organization.”

Antonio Mastrodorito
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