Open up your Career

Skills and Experience-based IT Certification for IT Professionals
Step ahead

Set yourself a step ahead of the rest with a globally recognized, vendor-neutral IT certification simply by demonstrating the skills and experience you already possess without additional training.

One of the main objectives of The Open Group is to develop and operate the IT industry’s premier certification programs and to encourage the procurement of certified products and services.

IN TODAY’S challenging and highly competitive environment both organizations and individuals need to be able to develop and deliver complex IT solutions that are both innovative and consistent on a global basis. To do this organizations need experienced and business-aware IT professionals to plan, design, implement, and operate these solutions to a recognized quality standard. If you can prove that you have the necessary skills and experience to meet these requirements then you can immediately differentiate yourself from the competition – a crucial factor in the current economic climate.

There are currently a large number of IT certifications available for individuals to prove that they have knowledge of a specific product or process. To achieve certified status you usually have to attend the relevant training course or read the appropriate self-study material before passing an industry recognized examination. However, passing the test does not necessarily mean that you can perform the tasks you are “qualified” to do.

The Open Group has developed two certification programs that require no training courses or examinations and focus purely on the skills and experience that an IT professional has developed while working on relevant IT projects. The programs are therefore based on an assessment of an individual’s people skills, technical skills, and capabilities. The fact that they are global and vendor-neutral makes them unique within the IT industry and they are fast becoming much sought-after certification programs.

The Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA) certification program (formerly ITAC) and The Open Group Certified IT Specialist (Open CITS) certification program (formerly ITSC) allow individuals to differentiate themselves from other IT professionals by achieving a certification that is:

Peer-reviewed
A board of certified IT Architects or IT Specialists ensures that the skills and experience of each candidate meet the qualification standards.

Vendor-neutral
Developed by a consortium of globally recognized industry leaders, the programs are administered by The Open Group – a vendor-neutral organization.

Global
The programs adhere to a worldwide set of standards.

Portable
Certification applies to the individual not the organization and is therefore fully transferable.

Why go for The Open Group certification?

The Open Group skills and experience-based programs offer both IT Architects and IT Specialists a unique opportunity to stand out from the crowd as individuals who not only have expertise in vendor-specific products, but also have proven business skills and have made significant contributions to running successful projects.

As most employers are looking for experienced professionals the Open CA and Open CITS programs provide them with a globally recognized benchmark for both their internal recruitment requirements and for deploying third-party personnel on business-critical IT projects. Therefore, achieving Open CA or Open CITS status will improve your career prospects and if you are a contractor it could be the differentiator when it comes to winning those elusive new contracts.

In a recent article on www.inforworld.com by Tom Kaneshige of IDC entitled “Hot tech certifications in a cool job market” The Open Group Open CA program is identified as one of the leading certification programs in the IT industry.

The article points to a Foote report of 22,000 IT professionals covering 170 IT certifications and it suggests that in terms of pay growth, Open CA is one of the top five must-have certifications.
Open CITS
The Open Group Certified IT Specialist (Open CITS) program (formerly ITSC) provides IT professionals with an element that is currently missing in the IT industry: a set of globally recognized standards that allow organizations to benchmark against skills, knowledge, and experience and therefore select the right people for the job.

The program was designed to validate the existence of those qualities and skills in a professional that enable the effective development, implementation, and operation of IT solutions.

The program is split into three levels of certification:
Level 1: Certified
Level 2: Master
Level 3: Distinguished

The program is made up of four parts:
- Core Foundation Skills
- Client Focus Areas
- Technical Focus Areas
- Experience

For details of the accreditation process and conformance requirements, please visit www.opengroup.org/opencits.

Open CA
The Open Group Certified Architect (Open CA) program (formerly ITAC) was designed to validate the existence of those qualities and skills in a professional that enable the effective practice of IT Architecture. Launched in 2005, there are now over 2,300 people certified worldwide and the program is now recognized as the premier skills and experienced-based certification for IT Architects.

The program is split into three levels of certification:
Level 1: Certified
Level 2: Master
Level 3: Distinguished

Level 3 applies to Lead Architects, Enterprise Architects, and IT Architect Professional Leaders.

The program is made up of four parts:
- Core Foundation Skills
- Experience
- Professional Development
- Contributions to the Architect Community

For details of the accreditation process and conformance requirements, please visit www.opengroup.org/openca.

How does TOGAF® relate to Open CA

TOGAF® The Open Group defines TOGAF as a detailed method and set of supporting tools for developing IT and Enterprise Architecture.

There are many architecture frameworks, but TOGAF is unique in containing a method for developing architecture – the TOGAF Architecture Development Method (ADM).

TOGAF is non-proprietary and is the result of best practice, as gathered by The Open Group Architecture Forum.

TOGAF certification programs exist for both organizations and individuals. However, TOGAF is not a prerequisite for the Open CA program.

TOGAF has been refined over the years and the latest version to be published is TOGAF 9 - released in 2009.

For further information visit www.opengroup.org/togaf.

By following industry best practices, The Open Group has defined an outstanding benchmark for IT Architects and IT Specialists, which makes it easier to identify the highly skilled and experienced professionals that Credit Suisse is looking for. In addition, I am very much in favour of The Open Group’s efforts to certify skills and experience, rather than academic qualifications only.

Andreas Buzzi
Head of Software Engineering, Credit Suisse
About The Open Group

The Open Group is a vendor-neutral and technology-neutral consortium, which drives the creation of Boundaryless Information Flow™ that will enable access to integrated information within and between enterprises based on open standards and global interoperability.

The Open Group works with customers, suppliers, consortia, and other standard bodies. Its role is to capture, understand, and address current and emerging requirements, establish policies, and share best practices; to facilitate interoperability, develop consensus, and evolve and integrate specifications and open source technologies; to offer a comprehensive set of services to enhance the operational efficiency of consortia; and to operate the industry’s premier certification service.

Key facts include:

- Over 350 member organizations, with over 20,000 participants in The Open Group activities from 80 countries. Our platinum members are: Capgemini, HP, IBM, Kingdee, Oracle, and SAP.
- 47% of members from North America, 34% from Europe, 12% from Asia-Pacific, and 7% from the Middle East and Africa; all constituents work together in an open process.
- Services provided include strategy, management, innovation and research, standards, certification, and test development.
- Vision of Boundaryless Information Flow™, with enterprise architecture as a critical element for making the vision a reality; the TOGAF Architecture Development Method (ADM) provides an important toolset.
- Making Standards Work®, extensive experience and track record in facilitating consensus to develop standards and operating the premier certification service.

Further information on The Open Group can be found at www.opengroup.org.