

Switching from MCSE on 2003 to Server 2008

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This month, Microsoft will officially launch its eagerly awaited Server 2008 platform. But what is it – and what does this mean for IT, HR and businesses as a whole?

Server 2008 will be introduced as a replacement for Server 2003 and is essentially a more stripped-back version of its predecessor. Designed to increase business functionality, Server 2008 will work best with the Microsoft Vista operating system.

So what has changed? Following user demand for increased functionality, Server 2008 will offer improved security and fewer pre-installed applications. Ultimately, this creates a more stable platform that allows companies to use only the relevant elements, rather than being burdened by running useless applications.

IT leads the way

The switch to Server 2008 is likely to be a gradual one that will take place over the next two or three years. But in order to take advantage of the new platform fully, the IT department must lead the way and pre-empt the changes by ensuring their MCSE and MCSA skills and qualifications are fully up-to-date.

Firstly, IT professionals will need to upgrade their existing Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) qualification to the MCTS (Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist) certification. This upgrade involves an exam and is the most basic-level qualification to demonstrate expertise in core areas of Microsoft technology.

Existing MCSE training courses will still be available for IT professionals wishing to work with Server 2003. However, the MCITP (Microsoft Certified IT Professional) qualification will eventually replace the MCSE altogether. The MCITP will reflect the move towards Server 2008 and will disregard Server 2003 completely, and with it, the MCSE.

The MCITP (replacing the MCSE) will be more closely linked to specific job roles and will cover operational processes, operational procedures and the analysis of business problems. The next (and highest) step is the MCA (Microsoft Certified Architect) qualification, which covers technical breadth and depth, communication, strategy, organisational politics, progress and leadership.

Keeping IT up to speed

The biggest change for the IT department in terms of training, however, will be the introduction of a certification lifecycle policy. Like other software providers including Cisco, Microsoft will now require its users to update their qualifications (i.e. the MCP, MCSP, MCSA, or MCSE) every three years. However, this rule will only affect the new generation of trainees and not those who are already qualified.

The lifecycle policy will be advantageous for both IT professionals and business. IT staff will be able to prove they have relevant, up-to-date skills for the future, both in their current position and as their career progresses. Simultaneously, employers can be confident that their IT staff are up-to-speed with technological developments.

The MCTS qualification will open up a world of new opportunities for IT workers as companies move towards Server 2008. While the new qualifications will not change the way Microsoft integrates with other systems, they will provide a certain amount of regulation within the IT industry – and currently, an MCSE-qualified IT professional earns an average of £39,000 a year.

What does this mean for HR and business?

The new platform and its associated training requirements will also impact on the HR department. The HR team will need to understand how to maximise the potential of existing staff and employing fully qualified Server 2008 professionals in the future. This will then have a knock-on effect on training budgets.

The HR department will need to ensure that all applicants for IT jobs possess the up-to-date qualifications necessitated by Server 2008. Certifications like the MCTS, MCIPT and MCA (replacing the MCP, MCSA, and MCSE) will provide essential indicators that both current staff and future applicants can cope with the requirements of the new platform.

But as ever, companies will need to assess what kind of qualifications their staff need according to the size, sector and projected growth of the business. And as new qualifications become more and more specialised, bosses will need to provide relevant training for their staff.

Ultimately, IT is constantly evolving. In order to compete in tough markets, businesses cannot afford to stand still for long – particularly when it comes to training. Replacing MCP, MCSA and MCSE skills needs to be top priority for companies this year, regardless of their size. For developments like Server 2008, it's wise to act sooner rather than later.

About the MCSE/MCSA/MCP Program:

Every day, IT professionals are asked to make network infrastructures more efficient, keep everyone productive, and deliver more applications. Firebrand Training's Microsoft MCSE 2003 Training Course for Microsoft Windows Server™ 2003 validates your ability to perform these tasks on Microsoft's latest server operating system and identifies your expertise to employers, clients, and peers.

Our 14 day accelerated Microsoft MCSE 2003 Training Course provides information technology professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to install, configure, support, and troubleshoot Microsoft® Windows 2000- and 2003-based networks with a focus on information security in the enterprise. This is an accelerated, residential, fully-immersed MCSE course, designed for computer professionals that require effective, real-world skill-building and timely certification.

You will live, learn, and test on-site to become an MCSE.

Our Microsoft MCSE 2003 Training Course delivers the greatest value on the market for Windows 2003 Certification Training.

During the MCSE program, students will achieve the following certifications

- Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP)
- Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA)
- CompTIA Security+
- Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE)

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About Firebrand Training (www.firebrandtraining.co.uk)

Firebrand Training is challenging the way in which professional training is delivered.

Firebrand Training, formally known as The Training Camp, has pioneered Accelerated Learning courses for busy IT professionals. The organisation's innovative approach to course delivery has led to its status as the Institute of IT Training's "IT Training Company of the Year" for the three years – something no other IT Training company has achieved.

Students are totally immersed in the subject matter, receiving an average of 12 hours intense tuition per day at a residential training site. Subject experts implement a range of teaching methodologies designed to fit with how we best understand and retain information during different periods in the day.

Accelerated Learning is an attractive proposition for contractors, whose time commands very high premiums, and employers who need to minimise staff absence. Firebrand Training has an above average pass rate of 85% - confounding critics' claims that Accelerated Learning fails to produce results.

Firebrand Training was founded by Robert Chapman and Stefano Capaldo in Summer 2001 as The Training Camp. Stefano was a former student in the US and rated the company's approach so highly that he decided to launch a programme of courses in the UK.

The organisation has since been recognised by Microsoft as a Gold Partner for Learning Solutions (MCPLS) and over 12,000 students have been trained in the UK to date. The success of the company enabled the management team to relaunch as Firebrand Training, which is focused on delivering training courses specifically designed for a European market.

Firebrand Training offers a range of courses covering all major vendors such as Microsoft, Cisco, Oracle, Sun, and Novell, as well as specialist certifications in the areas of security, business intelligence, project and business process management.

[You can find this press release here](#)