

SCS launches IT outsourcing certification

SCS has launched the region's first certification programme for IT outsourcing management. Called the Certification in Outsourcing Management for IT (COMIT), the certification will be managed by SCS in partnership with ISS and supported by IDA.

The certification is intended for professionals who are planning to make a career as an IT Outsourcing Manager, whether it's in a service provider or client environment. It is also intended for experienced IT professionals who want to attain a recognised professional qualification.

This programme places strong emphasis on practical experience. Candidates will be assessed through submission of a service competency report to demonstrate their professional competence in the practical development of the project undertaken.

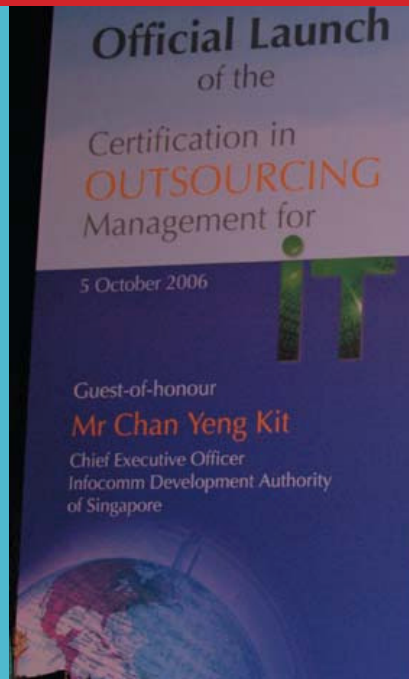
Those interested can apply for either the COMIT (Associate) or COMIT, depending on experience and qualification. Alternatively, candidates who have yet to acquire sufficient years of outsourcing management experience can be examined by sitting for the COMIT Examination conducted by the National University of Singapore's Institute of Systems Science (ISS), SCS' appointed examination agent.

ISS is also the official training partner and offers the IT Outsourcing Management for Practitioners Course and the COMIT Preparation Course. The former enhances the practitioners' skills and provides an update on the latest industry trends and best practices, while the latter prepares candidates for the examinations.

COMIT was launched on Thursday 5 October at the HDB HUB Auditorium. The first batch of 176 IT outsourcing professionals from 30 organisations received their COMIT certification from the guest of honour, Mr Chan Yeng Kit, the Chief Executive of Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore.

Mr Chan shared how Singapore cannot compete solely on costs but must compete on value too.

"Singapore infocomm professionals will need to look at higher end, higher value-added jobs that builds on Singapore's other business advantages," he said. "Certification of competencies will be an important differentiator for us,



because it gives businesses assurance of an individual's capability, and his or her ability to bring value to the organisation."

Mr Lee Kwok Cheong, President of SCS, had this to say about the certification: "SCS is committed to raising the bar for

our IT professionals and according them the recognition their skills deserve. I would strongly urge every IT outsourcing professional in Singapore to seek COMIT certification. It's a worthwhile investment and the recognition will prove invaluable to you and your company."

"I believe that COMIT can do for outsourcing professionals and their organisations what the Certified IT Project Manager (CITPM) programme has done for project managers and their employers," he added. "Launched in 1998, that programme has achieved enrolment growth of 40% with more than 1,000 CITPMs in 2005."

Enrolment for COMIT takes place in May and November each year, while the examinations are held in January and July. Those who have been certified have to renew their certification status every five years, to ensure they remain upgraded and updated on the latest trends in IT outsourcing management.

Those interested can visit www.scs.org.sg/comit/ for more information, or contact the SCS Certification Secretariat at 6226 2567 ext 17.

Key facts on COMIT

The Certified Outsourcing Manager for IT Programme (COMIT) is set to be the widely recognised standard for IT Outsourcing competence and professionalism. It is designed for those who are involved in IT Outsourcing and wish to have their competencies assessed. The COMIT designation will be recognised by IT outsourcing managers worldwide as a mark of quality.

The certification examines the candidate's competence in 12 areas of IT outsourcing, namely:

- Outsourcing Planning and Preparation of RFP
- Vendor Evaluation and Selection
- Contract Formulation and Negotiation
- Contract Initiation, Transition and Transformation Management
- Service Quality Management and Performance Monitoring
- Contract Migration and Handover Management
- Cost Management
- Risk Management
- Human Resource Management

- Communication Management
- Interpersonal
- Relationship Management and Dispute Resolution

Candidates will be assessed through the submission of a service competency summary. The service competency summary will help demonstrate the professional competence in the practical development of the project undertaken by the candidate.

Alternatively, candidates who have yet to acquire sufficient years of project management experience will have to go through a preparatory course, a practitioner course as well as sit for a qualifying examination.

Institute of Systems Science has been officially appointed by SCS to administer the examination and provide preparatory course and practitioner course for these candidates.

To find out more on outsourcing in courses and examination, kindly contact ISS at 65165777 or visit <http://iss.nus.edu.sg>. The programme is open for enrolment twice a year, in May and November.



Smiles all round at the COMIT Official Launch



How did COMIT come about?

Mr Lau Soon Liang, the Chairman of the IT Outsourcing Resource Panel, answers questions on the developmental work in bringing COMIT to IT professionals in Singapore.

How did the idea of a certification for IT Outsourcing come about?

We started discussions about a year and a half ago. We had been successful with the CITPM programme, which has been running for seven years. However, we saw that there was a difference in the kind of skillsets required for a project manager and an outsourcing professional. We conducted an informal poll among some outsourcing professionals. At the same time, we also investigated whether there was any certification available for outsourcing professionals regionally. All our findings reinforced our belief that there was a need for a certification programme focused on outsourcing management. So

the SCS Executive Council decided to start a task force to look into it.

Who is in the taskforce?

The taskforce is made up of leading professionals from IT service providers, hirers of IT services and education institutions.

What preparation work was involved and how long did this take?

We took a year to plan and launch COMIT. Firstly, we set up different focus groups, each assigned to a specific task. One group was tasked to look at the skillsets an outsourcing professional should have to excel in his career. Another group did research on local demand for such a certification programme, surveying local organisations. A third group looked at what kinds of courses partnering training institutes needed to organise to complement COMIT. Defining the skillsets took the longest, because everyone in the task force had a differing opinion. But in the end, we were able to agree on the 12 that were most suitable.

How has response been so far?

We received a good response following our soft launch in August. We received close to 2000 nominations from over 30 companies including NCS, SCS, IBM, HP and Accenture. We also had nominations from public sector agencies like IDA, HDB and IRAS.

What plans do you have for COMIT following its launch in Singapore?

We'll be working on a COMIT Book of Knowledge. This is a guidebook for outsourcing professionals. It will be developed by a taskforce consisting of various leaders from the IT industry. We already have a something similar for CITPM, and it was well received. We will also continue discussions for accreditation with local and overseas universities, to ensure the recognition of COMIT. We're also speaking to a few outsourcing associations located overseas to explore cross-recognition of our certification programmes.