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MCSE 70–290 Certification Primer

By Whizlabs Software Pvt Ltd

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Microsoft Certifications are one of the most widely acclaimed, pursued, and achieved technical certifications in the IT industry. The demand for Microsoft Certified Professionals in the job market is increasing every year.

Microsoft offers a number of certification levels depending on specific areas of proficiency and nature of job. Some of the certifications pertaining to networking are

1. Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP)
2. Microsoft Certified System Administrator (MCSA)
3. Microsoft Certified System Engineer (MCSE)

Each certification level has certain exams associated with it. You can decide the appropriate certification exam based on your experience, skills, and interests.

Benefits of Microsoft Certifications

1. Microsoft Certifications provide a standard method for testing employee skills. The certifications provide employers a valid benchmark for evaluating the employee's abilities. This will provide you the recognition and reward as per your expertise.
2. Microsoft Certifications offer prospective employers a baseline to judge your knowledge, skill, and expertise in the field. Certifications can provide added advantage if you are at the same level of experience as another person without certifications.
3. Certifications are a valuable tool if you have no or very little experience. The certifications that you hold can prove and reassure your employers and consultants about your knowledge in the field. This will help you secure good job as well as negotiate a good salary.

Pre–Requisite Experience (Recommended) for Microsoft Certifications

To pursue this certification you should have at least 1 year of experience in:

1. Implementing and administering a network operating system in environments with 50 to 26,000 supported users, in approximately 3 to 150 physical locations.
2. Implementing network services and applications such as file and print services, database services, messaging services, proxy server or firewall services, dial-in server services, and Web hosting.
3. Implementing and administering a desktop operating system.
4. Designing a network infrastructure with 3 or more domain controllers.

Significance of Microsoft Certifications for Microsoft Windows Server 2003

Microsoft has developed independent certification requirements for Microsoft Windows Server 2003.

An aspirant can certify directly for MCSE/MCSA in Windows 2003 if they are new to certification process. If the aspirant is already a certified MCSE /MCSA in Windows 2000, then they can follow the upgrade path for MCSEs in Windows 2000 to secure Windows 2003 Certifications. If the aspirant certifies in MCSE for Windows NT4.0, they can earn MCSE in Windows 2003 by following the upgrade path for MCSEs in Windows NT4.0.

The exams are slightly more challenging than their Windows 2000 counterparts, but they will actually test your hands-on knowledge since that is the most important part of ensuring that a certification is credible.

Exam 70–290: Managing and Maintaining a Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Environment

Exam 70–290 is the first in the series of the core exams for MCSE certifications.

When you pass the Managing and Maintaining a Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Environment (MCSE 70–290) exam, you achieve Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) status. You also earn credit toward the following certifications:

§Core credit towards Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator (MCSA) on Microsoft Windows Server 2003 certification

§Core credit towards Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer (MCSE) on Microsoft Windows Server 2003 certification

MCSE 70–290 exam objectives are

Objective 1: Managing and Maintaining Physical and Logical Devices

In this objective you will need to demonstrate expertise in managing and maintaining physical and logical devices. As an administrator, you should understand Basic and Dynamic disks, RAID configuration and troubleshooting, driver signing, and the use of tools, such as Device Manager and Hardware Troubleshooting Wizard. Familiarize yourself with Device Manager and the warning and disabled icons found when problems are present on installed devices.

Objective 2: Managing Users, Computers, and Groups

This objective includes many topics, so you should be prepared to face many questions that fall into

this category. Have a healthy introduction to profile management, user and group accounts, permissions, and troubleshooting. Practice a lot on GPOs and perform a variety of administrative tasks, including configuration of desktop settings, control of security settings, assignment of scripts, redirection of folders, and software distribution. Also, get a clear understanding on inheritance and filtering.

Objective 3: Managing and Maintaining Access to Resources

Knowing how to configure, monitor, audit and troubleshoot NTFS permissions based issues are one of those most important areas that you need to know this concept thoroughly and also be sure to brush up on your share permissions and share/NTFS permissions interaction. Do not forget to brush up on how folder and file permissions can change or stay the same when copying or moving within a drive or between drives.

Objective 4: Managing and Maintaining a Server Environment

In this objective you'll find questions from topics, such as Event Viewer, System Monitor, software updates (including the functionality of Microsoft's Software Update Service or SUS), Remote Assistance, disk quotas, print queues, performance objects and IIS 6.0. Spend time understanding IIS topics around Web sites, Virtual and physical directories, files and host and cname records in DNS. New to Windows Server 2003 is SUS. Understand clearly how SUS is used for deploying and managing client and server critical updates.

Objective 5: Managing and Implementing Disaster Recovery

In this objective you'll find questions on ASR, VSS, backing up files and system state data, configuring security for backup operators, verifying backup jobs, managing media, restoring and scheduling backups and recovering from server hardware failures. You should take some extra time to get familiar with the various types of backups that Windows Server 2003 supports, as well as the various configuration options that are available to you. Practice making backups of different types and then practice restoring them.

MCSE 70–290 Exam Model

Most of the questions in the MCSE 70–290 exam are multiple choice type. The questions require the "best" answer from several close responses. Other questions may present an implementation scenario, requirements, and a proposed solution and then ask if the solution meets all of the requirements or combinations of the primary and secondary requirements. Microsoft has introduced some testing innovations for the certification exams. These question types present a more realistic visual representation of the tasks a MCSE would do in future. These are

§Hot Area Questions

This type of question requires indicating the correct answer by selecting one or more elements within a graphic.

§Active Screen Questions – This type of question asks you to configure a dialog box by changing one

or more elements.

§Drag and Drop Questions – This type of question asks you to drag source objects to appropriate targets within a work area.

§Build List and Reorder Questions – This type of question asks you to indicate the correct answer by building an answer list. In a Build List and Reorder question, you need to build a list by dragging the appropriate source objects to the answer list and then placing them in the correct order based on criteria defined in the question.

§Create a Tree Questions – This type of question asks you to create a tree structure. You indicate the correct answer by dragging source nodes to the correct locations in the answer tree. Nodes consist of text and a small icon.

§Windows Simulation Questions – This type of question asks you to indicate the correct answer by performing specific tasks such as configuring and installing network adapters or drivers, configuring and controlling access to files, and managing hardware devices. Many of the tasks that systems administrators and systems engineers perform can be presented more accurately in simulations than in

most traditional exam question types.

You can get hands–on experience on new set of questions that are available in Whizlabs MCSE 70–290 Exam Simulator. This will help you plan your study regime to ensure success.

Passing Score

Microsoft has normalized scoring for all MCP exams, so the same passing score applies to all exams. 700 is now the minimum passing score for all MCP exams. However, the maximum score (which used to top out at 1000) varies per exam, depending on the complexity of the skills measured.

Time Limit

The exam duration is 175 minutes with 45 questions. You will have plenty of time to answer the exam questions, so there is no need to rush. If you have spare time available, you can double check the questions and ensure that you have read them correctly and actually answered the question as intended.

Exam Result

Instead of reporting results based on major categories for exam objectives as it used to, Microsoft is now providing numerical scores and bar graphs for "skills clusters". Visually, the bars in the exam report show you how well you fare in each skills cluster. If bars that represent cluster scores are close to one end of the graph, they indicate stronger skills; bars near the other end indicate weaker skills. Please store your exam results in both paper and electronic format for later reference.

How to Prepare for Microsoft Certification?

Following are the steps to prepare for Microsoft certification.

1. MCSE exams are not easy, as advertised on many websites. The MCSE Certifications are tough, so plan to put in a lot of time and effort getting ready for your certification exams. Get all information you can about the certification exams and then start working towards your goal.

2. Get hands on experience. The first step in the preparation for any Microsoft Certification is hands on experience with the related product. For MCSE, the aspirant needs to have at least a year of working experience and for MCSA, the minimum recommended time of experience is 6 months. If you are not working anywhere, it will help, if you can volunteer your IT skill services to gain valuable experience.

3. You can set up a small network at home to practice. Setting up the home network will give a great opportunity to learn. You can practice the lab exercises in the home network as and when you study. This will give you a better understanding of the theories than just studying the exam guides.

4. Get trained in the related product. If possible, try to get training in the related product in a Microsoft Authorized Training Center. You can use training resources to supplement your skills and experience. You can also use the Microsoft Official Curriculum for the related exam as well as Microsoft Press books that are available for the exam.

5. For Exam 70–290, the main areas that you need to concentrate are

- o Automated System Recovery (ASR)

- o Diskpart utility

- o Diskraid utility

- o Emergency Management Services (EMS)

- o File Replication Service (FRS)

- o Group Policy Management Console (GPMC)

- o Open File Backup

- o Password Backup and Restore Wizard

- o Remote Assistance

- o Remote Desktop

- o Shadow copying of shared folders

- o Software Update Services (SUS)

- o Virtual disk service

- o Permissions –Share and NTFS

- o Users, Computers, and Groups

6. Use the preparation guide of the exam that you want to take and read it thoroughly. You should know all the exam objectives of MCSE 70–290 covered in the exam preparation guide.

7. Use practice test software packages. Whizlabs MCSE 70–290 Exam Simulator is an example.

8. Do NOT use Braindumps. Braindumps might help you get the certification, but you will lack important practical knowledge about the product. Hence, your prospects of landing a good IT job will be less. Some brain dumps deliberately mislead you. So BEWARE!

9. You can participate in any online discussion forum, where you can participate in an ongoing dialogue and even ask doubts if you have any. You are sure to get the right guidance.

You've learned the details about the MCSE 70–290 Exam, its pattern, objectives etc. Download the MCSE Exam Preparation Guide to learn how Whizlabs can help you achieve the MCSE credential.

Whizlabs (<http://www.whizlabs.com>), an ISO 9001:2000 certified company, is a leading provider of IT skill assessment and certification exam preparation tools. Whizlabs' suite of offerings include "IT Certification Exam simulators and Instructor–led, Online Trainings" for various exams by Sun, IBM, Oracle, Microsoft, PMI, BEA, Cisco, and other leading IT vendors.

An Overview of MCSE -- Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer Program

By Colin P

A growing number of people are working at attempting to make a profession out of their involvement with computers, computer programming and related enterprises. To this end, a considerable lot of people are attempting to find methods through which they can make their services more marketable in today's competitive world. Consequently, many people are seeking training as an MCSE or Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer.

Perhaps you are one of the many people who is attempting to make a career in the field of computers, computer programming or in a related high–tech venue. You may have found yourself interested in exploring options such as obtaining an MCSE. However, you may not be entirely certain what an MCSE is and what is involved in obtaining an MCSE. Through this article, you are provided a very brief overview of an MCSE and what generally is involved in gaining this type of designation.

As the full MCSE moniker indicates (Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer) the designation is associated with Microsoft behemoth. A person who obtains a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer or MCSE certification or designation is a person who has passed certain exams about Microsoft products and software. The exams and attendant study materials are created under the auspices of the Microsoft Corporation.

With that said, there are now some private resources available to people interested in obtaining an MCSE through which they can prepare for the subject exams. These resources operate independently of the Microsoft Corporation. However, while these independent preparation resources now do exist, if you are interested in obtaining MCSE certification in the end, you need to take the certified training courses that are conducted by Microsoft at various designated locations around the world.

Microsoft frequently holds its training courses for MCSE certification at locations such as high schools, colleges and junior colleges in different locations around the world and throughout the year.

If you are unable to attend such a course, or if there is no course being offered in the brick and mortar at a location near you, you can also obtain self–study materials from Microsoft. (If you are involved in a self study course of MCSE, one of the private, independent study programs referenced earlier may be of great assistance to you.)

In addition, Microsoft now offers its MCSE training courses and educational materials over the Internet and World Wide Web. In other words, an interested person can work his or her way through the MCSE courses at his or her own pace on the Net.

If you are interested in obtaining an MCSE certification or designation, you need to pass exams in the following areas: MCSE(Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer) is someone who has passed exams about the Microsoft Windows NT operating system, related desktop systems, networking, and Microsoft's BackOffice server products.

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