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MCSE v/s MCSA

By Whizlabs Software (P) Ltd.

Technology is advancing rapidly with each passing day. The world of Information Technology today is a forever growing vast expanse. Infact, the IT Certification industry has witnessed a significant turn in the past few years. In today's arena, certified professionals are considered a step higher compared to others. Certification (

<http://www.whizlabs.com>

) in the relevant IT technology has become an effective way to augment your career in that domain.

Certifications, offered by various vendors are a good way for IT professionals to seek validation for their skills. In today's arena, there are lots of vendors offering specialization in particular domains. Professionals often get confused about which certification to go for as some of them have as little as hair thin difference between them. It is best to first identify your job role, the knowledge and skills required and accordingly select to take a particular certification to ensure career success.

Let us in this article try and get some clarity between two major certifications of Microsoft i.e. MCSE and MCSA which are often confused upon.

Why MCSE?

For a MCSE (

<http://www.whizlabs.com/mcse-exam/mcse-exam.html>

) candidate, it is preferable that he

should have at least two years of experience in implementing and administering desktop and network operating systems, and designing a network infrastructure in the typically complex computing

MCSE v/s MCSA

environment of medium-to-large organizations. The candidate should also have at least one year of experience administering Exchange Server environments involving multiple physical locations, mixed connection protocols, and Internet messaging.

MCSE has two tracks Microsoft Windows 2000 and Microsoft Windows 2003. The 2003 track requires 6 Core Exams, 1 Elective Exam and 2 Upgrade Exams to be cleared.

Core Exam include:

Group I: 70-290, 70-291, 70-293;

Group II: 70-270, 70-210; Group III: 70-297, 70-298.

Elective Exams include:

70-086, 70-227, 70-228, 70-229, 70-232, 70-281, 70-282, 70-284, 70-285, 70-297, 70-298, 70-299, and 70-301.

Upgrade Exams include:

70-292 or 70-296.

Either CompTIA Security+ or Unisys UNO-101 can be substituted in place of the elective exams.

Why MCSA?

The need for qualified system administrators is very real in today's business market and the excitement for MCSA (

<http://www.whizlabs.com/mcsa/mcsa.html>

) is growing daily. A candidate for MCSA should

have at least one year of experience working with a desktop operating system, a network operating system, and an existing network infrastructure. As soon as candidates pass their first qualifying exam for the MCSA program, they achieve a Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP) certification.

MCSA also has two tracks Microsoft Windows 2000 track and Microsoft Windows 2003 track. MCSA 2003 requires 3 Core Exams, 1 Elective exam and 1 Upgrade exam to be cleared.

Core Exams include:

Group I: 70-290, 70-291

Group II: 70-270, 70-210

Elective Exams include:

70-086, 70-227, 70-228, 70-284, and 70-299

Upgrade Exams include:

70-292

What's the difference between MCSE & MCSA?

Let us look at a few major differences between the two certifications which will help you get a clearer idea about them:

MCSA (

<http://www.whizlabs.com/mcsa/mcsa.html>

) when compared to MCSE (

<http://www.whizlabs.com/mcse-exam/mcse-exam.html>

) is a basic level certification. As an MCSA you

must know every thing about implementing, managing, and troubleshooting the existing network and system environments based on the Microsoft Windows Operating Systems. However, you will not be responsible to set up new networks and systems as a part of your job function. But as a MCSE knowledge about designing and deploying new networks and systems is necessary.

Being an MCSA professional means that you will be able to implement, manage, and maintain the typically complex computing environment of medium-to large-sized companies. On the other hand, being an MCSE professional you will be able to plan, design, and implement Microsoft Windows server solutions and architectures in medium-to large-sized companies.

The experience that is required for both these certifications is also different. MCSA requires 6-12 months of experience of administering client and network operating systems while MCSE requires at least one year of experience in implementing and administering network operating systems and desktop operating systems.

Jobs for an MCSA include systems administrator, network administrator, information systems administrator, network operations analyst, network technician, or technical support specialist. For an

MCSE jobs include systems engineer, network engineer, systems analyst, network analyst, or technical consultant.

MCSA provides you with a credential that represents a set of skills which will be advantageous if you

plan to pursue MCSE Certification. Therefore, earning an MCSA will qualify you with the option to use these credentials and acquire MCSE through Upgrade path to MCSE.

If you look carefully, both these exams although similar to each other specialize in different domains. A clear understanding of both the certifications is necessary before you decide which one to opt for. So make the right choice and get going!!

Whizlabs (

www.whizlabs.com

), an ISO 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, BEA, Cisco, and other leading IT vendors and "IT skill Assessment Management Solution" for Corporations, Training Institutes, and Universities.

In its first 3 years of inception Whizlabs has helped 300,000 software professionals in realizing their dream of acquiring IT Certifications of their interest.

Whizlabs offerings have fuelled the career growth of IT professionals working in 321 Fortune 500 companies spread in 118 countries across the globe.

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Turn About On Certification

By Richard Lowe

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On October 11th I was reading my email as usual when I opened one which stated something so unbelievable that I had to read it three times. I will admit the news was nothing compared to the events going on in the rest of the world (the September 11th terrorist attack and aftermath). However, it was very welcome nonetheless.

Microsoft has changed their policy on retiring certifications.

If you will remember, over a year ago Microsoft had announced that the

Windows NT 4.0 certifications were being retired on December 31st, 2001. This meant that everyone who had slaved for months or even years to pass their exams had to rush to take the new exams for the newest operating system (Windows 2000).

Needless to say, this announcement caused quite a stir in much of the computer industry. There were hundreds of thousands of MCSE's, and all of them were effected by this decision. What made it even worse was the fact that most of us were not even upgrading to Windows 2000 anytime in the near future. Thus, we had to get certified yet we didn't really need to get certified to do our jobs.

There were quite a few announcements. The two regarding MCSE's state exactly what I had suggested in a previous article "Microsoft's ^@&^#&@ W2K MCSE Policy", so I was very happy indeed.

<http://www.internet-tips.net/Microsoft/W2KMCSEcertification.htm>

...on Windows NT 4.0, which designates the related certification as based on Windows NT 4.0. This designation applies to the following certifications: MCP, MCSE, MCSE+I, MCP+I, and MCP+Site Building. Thus, this MCSE would formally be called "MCSE on Windows NT 4.0."

...on Microsoft Windows 2000, which designates the related certification as based on Windows 2000, Windows XP Professional, or Windows Server .NET. This designation applies to the following certifications: MCP, MCSE, MCSA, and MCDBA (except for the latter, it's called "MCDBA on SQL Server 2000" instead). Here, this MCSE would formally be called "MCSE on Microsoft Windows 2000."

The bottom line is simple. Those of us who have the MCSE certification do not need to worry about losing it at the end of the year. It also makes

things much easier for me as an employer – now I will be able to look at a certification and get a little more information. Instead of just finding out someone is an expert on Microsoft operating systems, I will now find out exactly which operating system.

Microsoft also added a new certification, called MCSA, or Microsoft Certified Systems Administrator. This certification is great news, as it provides something between MCP and MCSE. Why is this necessary? The new MCSE for Windows 2000 is a very tough exam and it might take someone (especially those of us who work for a living) quite some time to get it done.

The MCSA certification requires three core exams and one elective. The

certification is actually very well designed, and should serve as a useful guide for employers.

Why the change? Well, I think there are a number of reasons. The biggest reason? The terrorist attack and its effect on the economy.

My peers and I have seen, in just a month, our budgets disappear, especially for things like upgrades and certifications. My boss put it very well to me last week, "if you have the choice between upgrading and laying people off, what are you going to do?" The answer is obvious. At my company, we have postponed upgrading until next year at least, which means we do not need to get certified.

Another big reason is that MCSE's have jobs, and I don't know about you, but I have trouble finding time to take the classes and tests to continue certification. It's hard enough just to keep the wife happy, write some articles, and maintain the job. So the certification, testing and learning will wait.

On top of that, Microsoft has been very unsuccessful in trying to force the computer industry to upgrade to Windows 2000 and beyond. Yes, my company did install Windows 2000 on all of our laptops, but we've found Windows NT 4.0 works very well on our other servers and workstations. We have no intention or need to upgrade our hundreds of systems for the next several years, unless there is a valid business reason.

Even more importantly, even though we may upgrade our systems to Windows 2000, we have no intention of installing Active Directory anytime soon. Why not? This is a huge change and we simply don't want to support it at this time.

Finally, the industry backlash on Microsoft has been huge, and the power of 400,000+ MCSE's and their supervisors should not be underestimated.

Personally, I am happy that Microsoft has made this change. Now I can concentrate on important issues like polishing our disaster site, upgrading our security measures, ensuring our backups work properly and making our systems work better for our users.

Richard Lowe Jr. is the webmaster of Internet Tips And Secrets at <http://www.internet-tips.net> – Visit our website any time to read over 1,000 complete FREE articles about how to improve your internet profits, enjoyment and knowledge.



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