

ICDL Saudi Arabia implements new IT literacy strategy for 2009 to complement Kingdom's high computer penetration rate .

Strengthens parallel initiative to improve IT skills of citizens in proportion with Saudi's strong gains as a digital society

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ICDL Saudi Arabia, the governing body and certification authority of the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) programme in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), has announced that it has rolled out an intensified IT literacy strategy for 2009 to complement KSA's huge investments in information and communications technology (ICT). ICDL Saudi Arabia noted that Saudi continues to be recognised as the Middle East's biggest regional investor in ICT, with recent reports indicating that KSA accounts for over USD 20 billion in yearly ICT expenditure.

The growing PC and Internet adoption rates are likewise concrete evidence of KSA's improving IT landscape, providing ICDL Saudi Arabia greater leverage to optimise its IT literacy program and involve a wider spectrum of the population. In 2007 alone, the number of Internet users in Saudi grew by 36.17 per cent and is expected to further consolidate with the growing popularity of broadband Internet connection, while the computer installed base likewise manifested strong gains with a 16.44 per cent increase, according to market intelligence firm Madar Research.

Dr. Sulaiman Al-Dhalaan, Managing Director, ICDL Saudi Arabia said: "Saudi Arabia has a very vibrant IT landscape because of proactive government support and large-scale investments. ICDL Saudi Arabia intends to build on the favourable IT conditions to expand our IT literacy program in the Kingdom. We believe that the IT proficiency of the Saudi population must be developed in proportion with the Kingdom's progress in ICT adoption. ICDL Saudi Arabia has prepared innovative campaigns that will be launched throughout the year to help citizens take advantage of the Kingdom's improving IT infrastructure."

ICDL Saudi Arabia also revealed that it will continue to support and establish strategic partnerships with both private and public sector organisations in the Kingdom that promote IT adoption at the grassroots level.

ICDL is a vendor-neutral digital literacy program that is acknowledged through testing and proves that the certificate holder has fundamental skills in IT, using the computer, managing files, word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and handling of the Internet and e-mail. The ICDL certificate is recognized and endorsed by education ministries, universities and government organisations with accreditations from over 168 countries and available in more than 40 languages.