

ICDL Saudi Arabia intensifies nationwide campaign to encourage SMEs to invest more on IT literacy programs

ICDL Saudi sheds light on the huge hidden cost of the absence of IT literacy.

December 27, 2009

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 called upon the commercial industry to invest more on IT literacy campaigns to avoid the hidden huge cost of IT Illiteracy on the long run.

ICDL Saudi Arabia cited an Italian study on the 'Cost of Ignorance' wherein it was discovered that ICDL certification gives a total return on investment of €2,261 (around SAR 14,000) per person annually as well as 47 per cent competence increase from pre-training levels. Moreover, the study confirmed that digitally literate employees add real value to an organisation through increased overall efficiency and productivity, greater ability to achieve specific goals and objectives more effectively, reduction or elimination of unnecessary administrative burdens, substantial enhancement of internal and external communication, and greater uptake and utilisation of technology resulting in greater returns on investment in that technology.

ICDL Saudi Arabia announced that it has recently launched a nationwide campaign urging small and medium enterprises (SME) to increase productivity by embracing modern digital tools and technology. ICDL KSA further revealed that it has developed special digital proficiency programs catering to the specific needs of SMEs and has been encouraging companies to enrol their employees in the program.

Dr. Sulaiman Al-Dhalaan, Consultant, ICDL Saudi Arabia said: "SMEs will greatly benefit from the ICDL certification because it will help them ensure that their staff are qualified to handle modern IT tools that help drive business performance. ICDL certification provides objective verification of employees' skills and demonstrates their competency to a recognised standard. Moreover, SMEs also benefit by being able to clearly define the set of skills required for employees to be effective, having greater ability to assess workforce skills and build a training plan, providing added motivation for employees, and offering a clear measure of the return on investment in training."

ICDL Saudi Arabia's intensified IT literacy strategy for 2009 seeks to complement the KSA Government'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, allocating up to USD 20 billion in yearly ICT expenditure, according to recent reports.

ICDL is an integrated digital literacy program recognised worldwide. The program empowers individuals with the essential skills and knowledge of computer and practical use of common desktop applications. The program is based on a recognised global standard acknowledged through testing and proves that the certificate holder has fundamental skills in IT, using the computer and managing files, word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and information and communication (Internet and e-mail). ICDL is endorsed by education ministries, universities and government organisations and it is accredited by more than 168 countries and is available in more than 40 languages.