

ICDL Saudi Arabia wins “Programme Implementation” category at 2009 ECDL Foundation Best Practice Awards

Honoured for adoption of ICDL as an official academic curriculum for orientation year students in Saudi universities.

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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), won the ‘Programme Implementation within an Organisation’ category at the recently-held 2009 ECDL Foundation Best Practices Award. It was honored for its successful affiliation with major universities who adopted the ICDL program as a mandatory or equivalent course for orientation year students.

Around 20,000 university students in the KSA are taking ICDL as a mandatory course due to the efforts of ICDL Saudi Arabia. The figure is expected to double in a few years as ICDL Saudi Arabia continues to approach other universities to integrate the ICDL program into their curriculum. ICDL is currently a mandatory academic course in five leading universities and is being delivered as an equivalent course in six institutions. Of the latter, two intend to shift ICDL certification to become a mandatory academic course.

“The number of universities in Saudi Arabia has grown from 10 to 32 in less than 10 years, showing the vital role of education in national development. ICDL Saudi Arabia is aware of its ability to influence positive change in society through education and specifically IT literacy, which is why we have been intensifying efforts to promote our program as an official academic curriculum.

This recognition is a very strong motivation for us to continue advocating greater IT proficiency across the KSA’s higher educational institutions,” said Dr. Sulaiman Al-Dhalaan, Consultant, ICDL Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, ICDL Saudi Arabia has highlighted the importance of computer literacy while citing the Q4 2009 report on Saudi Arabia’s information technology market by Business Monitor International (BMI). BMI predicts that per capita IT spend in the Kingdom will reach USD180 by 2013, with PC penetration rising to nearly 30 per cent. The report also shows that Saudi Arabia has the biggest IT market in the Gulf region, with a forecast value of USD 3.5 billion in 2009 expected to rise to US\$4.8bn by 2013.

The ECDL Foundation Best Practices Award recognizes the initiatives and projects of ECDL Foundation Licensees which are regarded as successful examples of best practices in the implementation of the Foundation’s certification programmes. The four award categories are Marketing and Public Relations, Operational Excellence, Social Contribution, and Programme Implementation within an Organisation. The last category honours licensees who successfully implement an ECDL Foundation programme within a public or private organisation, while winners are determined through licensee votes.

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.