

## **ICDL Saudi Arabia to introduce new training programs targeting youth, e-transactions & health sector**

### ***Focused programs to expand IT literacy among various segments of Saudi society***

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ICDL Saudi Arabia, the governing body and certification authority of the ICDL program in the Kingdom, plans to introduce new IT literacy programs targeting youth, users of governmental and non-governmental e-transactions and the health sector to further expand IT literacy among specific community segments, in line with comprehensive government efforts to move towards a digital society.

There are currently only a few IT training opportunities for Saudi youth, who represent a large and important segment of society. ICDL Saudi Arabia understands its responsibility towards these segments and set a plan to introduce a comprehensive, engaging and up-to-date program that can provide children and young adults with proper IT knowledge and skills.

Similarly, the organization plans to launch initiatives for improving e-governance and capabilities to use e-transactions through a specified training program. Saudi Arabia Information Technology Report Q1 2010, by Business Monitor International, specifies that an estimated 14.26 per cent of the domestic population engages in e-transactions, with online airline and hotel bookings and e-government transactions gaining greater popularity.

The e-Government Program was developed by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology in coordination with the Ministry of Finance and the Communication and Information Technology Commission (CITC). Its goal is to transform the Kingdom into an information society. Its specific objectives are to enhance the productivity and efficiency of the public sector; facilitate better and user-friendly services for individuals and businesses; increase return on investment (ROI); and provide information in a timely and highly accurate manner.

ICDL Saudi Arabia will also create specialized certification programs for the country's medical sector. ICDL's health-focused programs have been successfully implemented worldwide in countries such as the UK and Italy. Increasing the IT skills of Saudi doctors would build up their competitiveness in line with top global standards.

"The Saudi Government has been highly instrumental in increasing awareness on the importance of information and communications technology (ICT) in national development. However, there are a number of important sectors that need basic ICT skills to be able to contribute effectively to the

establishment of a knowledge-based society. Our new training programs represent positive steps towards opening up the availability of the ICDL program to the larger population, and to key segments such as children, healthcare practitioners and those who engage in online transactions,” said Dr. Jamal A. AlHefdhi, General Manager, ICDL Saudi Arabia.

ICDL Saudi Arabia is the local arm of the International Computer Driving License, the world's largest vendor-neutral end-user computer skills certification initiative. Endorsed by education ministries, universities and government organizations in more than 168 countries, ICDL’s regional and country branches certify enrollees on fundamental IT skills, use of basic computer applications, and internet use.