Industry News from IT Skills Research (Oct 07)

BCS ANNOUNCES AWARDS FINALISTS

The British Computer Society has revealed the finalists for its 2007 IT Industry Awards. Over 600 nominations were received for the 23 awards, of whom 200 survived the first round of rigorous judging and will now go forward to the final stages. The winners will be announced at a gala event in London in December. Finalists in the IT Trainer of the Year category include candidates from QA-IQ, Xpertise Training, Learning Tree International (2), LogicaCMG and five other providers. Oct 2007

GLOBAL KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS WITH FOX IT FOR ITIL

Global Knowledge has signed a partnership agreement with Fox IT, a global provider of IT Service Management and Governance solutions and services, to provide a complete range of learning services and consultancy solutions for corporate and public sector clients. Global Knowledge will now run a wide-ranging Service Management public course schedule on behalf of the two companies while Fox IT will focus on developing consultancy and private training engagements in the UK and across EMEA. In terms of publicly-scheduled courses Global Knowledge's portfolio will also include ISO 20000 and COBIT training delivered from its centres across the UK. Oct 2007

QA-IQ LAUNCHES ITIL v3 BRIDGING COURSES

Service Management professionals can update their ITIL qualifications with two newly launched bridging courses from QA-IQ. The courses – for the Foundation and Manager's Certificates respectively – are accredited by ISEB on behalf of the APM Group, and QA-IQ says they are ideal for holders of certification from earlier ITIL versions who want to quickly gain a good overview of the new content of ITIL version 3, as well as achieving the certification. Oct 2007

ONLINE GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS FUNDED TRAINING

e-skills UK is offering a free online guide for employers, the *Training and Development Guide*, highlighting funded or subsidised ICT training and development opportunities in the UK. The new facility allows employers to gain quick access to the UK's most comprehensive database of funding opportunities for a number of purposes including training. Oct 2007

CISCO CERTIFICATION HOLDERS RECEIVE FAST-TRACK IET MEMBERSHIP

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), the professional society for engineering and technology, and Cisco have announced they are working together "to promote professional development in the IT industry". Under their terms of the agreement, holders of a Cisco certification will be eligible to receive fast-track entry to IET membership. Oct 2007

ASSIMA SECURES FIRST DEAL IN FAR EAST

Assima Plc has secured its first contract in China, less than two months after announcing its expansion into the Asia Pacific region. The deal with Ping An, the country's largest insurance company, will see the deployment of Assima's unique Software Simulation tool, the Assima Training Suite (ATS), for several internal HTML applications. Shenzhen-based Ping An employs 40,000 full-time employees, 200,000 agents and operates more than 160 internal applications. The introduction of ATS is a result of Assima's new partnership with eLearn Consult Ltd - one of the leading e-learning consultancies in the region. Oct 2007

NEW CLIENTS FOR INFORMATION TRANSFER

Information Transfer has won business from three more new clients. PZ Cussons, a leading FMCG company, has asked Information Transfer to train, coach and support its internal training team to develop e-learning modules on a new system. For Trinity-Chiesi, a pharmaceutical company, Information Transfer is reworking existing training materials on a new product range for the field sales team. And it is working with services, maintenance and building group Interserve to develop e-learning materials to support the induction of new staff. Oct 2007

ENSURE SKILLS ARE IN PLACE FOR VISTA DEPLOYMENT IN 2008
QA-IQ says many companies are waiting for Service Pack 1 to be released for Microsoft's Windows Vista before beginning deployment. Over 70% of attendees at QA-IQ's recent Vista Deployment Summit said they are more likely to deploy Vista following its first significant update, currently scheduled for early 2008. But the company says they should already be considering the skills that their teams will need to deploy and support the new operating system: "The changes to both Windows Vista and the 2007 Microsoft Office System mean that organisations can't rely on their staff immediately adapting to the new systems – training will ensure that productivity maintained", it says. Oct 2007

HAPPY COMPUTERS SHORTLISTED AGAIN
Happy Computers has once again been rated as one of the best companies in the UK for customer service. Happy, a past winner, is one of four companies short-listed in the business-to-business section of the 2007 UK Customer Experience awards, which aim to identify which companies are industry leaders in terms of serving customers. The judging process includes visits to the companies, mystery shopping and talking to customers. The winners will be announced in a supplement to the Sunday Times on 11th November. Oct 2007

KNOWLEDGEPOOL STRENGTHENS SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM
KnowledgePool has made three new appointments and says it has formalised its client relationship and customer service functions to provide improved support to clients at both the corporate and individual levels. Lindsay Grieve joins from Centrica as COO; Sean Craig, previously an account director, has been promoted to the newly-created position of Head of Client Relationship Management; and Suzanne Brewer has been appointed to the new position of Head of Customer Services. Oct 2007

iPHONE TO FUEL CONTRACTOR SHORTAGE
The Association of Technology Staffing Companies (Atsco) says demand for content and applications for the Apple iPhone will push up the cost of hiring IT contractors skilled in developing software for mobile devices when it is launched in the UK and Europe later this year. Atsco's research shows that rates for contractors in the telecoms sector have risen by 16% in the last 12 months due to the shortage of software engineers experienced in developing for platforms such as Windows Mobile, and it predicts this pressure will increase with the launch of the iPhone . Oct 2007

EMPLOYERS MUST CLOSE TRAINING DIVIDE, SAYS TUC
Britain's employers must act quickly to close the training divide between graduate and unskilled workers if Britain is to compete successfully in the global economy, according to a new TUC report. *Time to tackle the training divide* analyses the latest official data for training take up in the UK, to show that last year 41% of graduate employees took part in work-based learning compared to only 12% of their colleagues who left school without any qualifications. The report also highlights the fact that over a third of UK employers (35%) systematically fail to offer their staff any training at work, and says this is a key reason why the UK has such a long way to go before it has a highly-skilled workforce. Oct 2007

ORACLE EDUCATION FOUNDATION LAUNCHES THINKQUEST
The Oracle Education Foundation has launched ThinkQuest International 2008, a global project learning competition open to students aged 9-19 from around the world. The competition encourages participants to team with peers in other regions to create educational websites and develop valuable skills. Entries are due on 2 April 2008, allowing teams several months to build their websites. Oct 2007

SHORTLIST ANNOUNCED FOR E-LEARNING AWARDS
The finalists have been announced for this year's E-learning Awards, organised by e.learning age. Among those shortlisted for the eleven awards are Academy Internet, Atlantic Link, Epic, MyKnowledgeMap, RedTray, Saffron Interactive and ThirdForce. The winners will be announced at an awards ceremony in London on 8 November. Oct 2007

WOLCE 2007 MARKS STEP-CHANGE FOR ASSIMA (DACG)
To coincide with the forthcoming WOLCE exhibition, Assima (DACG) is launching a new version of its Assima Training Suite, with new Outlook/Vista look and feel, in-built collaborative workflow, enhanced

plug and play, and an enhanced Tutorial Content Builder. It will also unveil an enhanced version of the Assima Performance Suite – including advanced analytics which allow businesses to identify which learners have problems in the live application, where, and how often – and is show-casing its new Assima Change Management Suite. Oct 2007

UK CONTACT CENTRES WASTE £2.53 BILLION PA, SAYS KNOWLEDGE SOLUTIONS

A growing training and support gap in the UK's 6,000 contact centres is impacting customer service for the worse, according to Knowledge Solutions. Exacerbated by high rates of staff churn (nearly 25%) and the need to train new starters, it claims this is costing the industry £2.53 billion in unnecessary time and resources – and that the solution lies in flexible e-learning. "The true picture may be even worse than our figures show," says CEO Adrian Palmer-Geaves. "It is impossible to quantify the damage to brand when agents are unable to navigate applications and provide fast answers to customers. Additionally, for organisations looking to roll-out new applications or even update existing ones flexible knowledge transfer is critical to their success or failure, meaning that e-learning should be central to their deployment."Oct 2007

ATLANTIC LINK ROLLED OUT AT BT RETAIL

BT has extended its uptake of Atlantic Link's rapid e-learning software tools, rolling them out to BT Retail. Following a decision to standardise on e-learning authoring tools, BT selected Atlantic Link's collaborative authoring system for creating, managing, and tracking learning content. Atlantic Link says the system has empowered subject matter experts to create their own training; expanded the use of e-learning to new applications; and decreased costs. Oct 2007

INFORMATION TRANSFER DEVELOPS E-LEARNING FOR NHS

Information Transfer has developed a course on financial management for Leeds Teaching Hospitals, the NHS' largest Trust. The e-learning module, written for non-financial staff in the Trust, covers Payment by Results, a central element of the health service financial system. Oct 2007

BRIGHTWAVE EXPANDS TEAM

Brightwave has made several new appointments to its team at its new Brighton office as a result of continued project growth and expansion of existing client contracts. Client management now has an additional Account Manager, Carl Mason (formerly of Thomson NETg), and a Project Account Manager, Victoria Cooper. The technical department is now headed by a new Technical Manager, Paul Burns, who was previously Development Manager at Futuremedia. Oct 2007

WILLIAMS TO RUN VERHOEF FRANCHISE

Huw Williams has taken on the European franchise (excluding UK) of Verhoef Training to develop the business into new countries and geographies. Williams was at Amdahl Education until it was taken over by RSM, and in the last few years has worked closely with Verhoef USA on a number of projects and initiatives, including a major project to develop a new generation of system programmers for a leading US bank. Oct 2007

ECHELON ENROLS NON-EXEC DIRECTOR

Alistair Morrison has joined Echelon as a non-executive director. He was managing director of learning content producer Skillchange Systems, and one of the leaders of the UK's embryonic e-learning industry in the 1990s. Morrison was previously an operational board director at defence and space specialists Vega, and later marketing director at Lorien Customer Focus. Oct 2007

UNIVERSITY ADDS PRINCE2 FROM MAVEN TRAINING

Maven Training has announced a partnership with the University of Westminster to provide specialist project management training for students enrolled in the School of Informatics at the University's Central London campus. Students will now be able to pursue the PRINCE2 Foundation and Practitioner qualifications. Oct 2007