

Solartech Delivers First Microsoft Official Distance Learning Course with Unprecedented Results

Innovative distance-learning product from Microsoft features real-world scenarios for IT professional and developer training.

HASBROOK HEIGHTS, New Jersey – June 13, 2007/PRNewswire/ - Solartech, a leading provider of live, eLearning solutions has taken yet another step in demonstrating their leadership in the IT training market. Recognized by Microsoft for multiple high quality learning innovations, the company has delivered the first courses in the expanding library of offerings within the Microsoft Official Distance Learning (MODL) portfolio.

The Challenge

Solartech's customers are increasingly demanding innovative training solutions for their IT professionals. They need the benefits of instructor led training (ILT) but without ever increasing travel expenses and critical time away from the workplace. Also, they require the ability to acquire immediately demonstrable skills to put into practice once they return to their jobs, all without spending endless hours in a classroom or in traffic. Additionally, the demands of their jobs create frequent last minute cancellations and mid-course dropouts due to the full time, week-long commitments required from a traditional class.

The Solution

Solartech needed a solution that combined the key elements of effective learning; instructor facilitation, self paced content, hands-on experience and on-line assessments to accurately track student performance and progress. Plus, they required the flexibility to fit the training around their student's jobs to improve the employees work "quality of life". Securing this key combination of components significantly increases the effectiveness of the learning experience with the benefit of improved retention of the subject matter when and where it matters most – back on the job.

Once Solartech saw how well MODL could address their customer's needs, they knew they had found the solution which provides a learning experience superior to other industry offerings, and gave maximum flexibility to both Solartech's students and instructors.

Microsoft Official Distance Learning blends the effectiveness of the classroom experience with the convenience of self-paced e-learning in an engaging and interactive live environment. MODL is ideally suited to those who want a relationship with a live instructor but who prefer to learn at their own pace, in their own environment. MODL allows students who don't have the time to attend a classroom training course to maintain and upgrade their skills; or wish to access consistently high-quality learning regardless of particular geographic, travel or

expense limitations.

“It is Solartech’s mission to provide quality training services to our clients. MODL allows us to deliver to our customers the skills to succeed, wherever they happen to be located”, said Victor Liang, CEO of Solartech. “The Day in the Life, experiential nature of the Scenarios, from Microsoft partner Toolwire, effectively provides an accelerated technology apprenticeship for our students providing them with knowledge and skills that they can utilize the very next day, on the job.”

MODL also has had a significant impact on Solartech’s business. The distance modality allows Solartech to lower their classroom costs and expand their geographic reach, appealing to students that can now attend classes from a distance. As a result MODL has become a key strategic component of Solartech’s people-ready enablement portfolio and fully half of their future learning business is expected to come from this new methodology.

Industry Leading Results

Using Metrics-That-Matter, an industry-wide assessment technology used to measure all components of course delivery, the scores for Solartech’s delivery of MODL were all in the 9.5+/10 range, a substantial increase over comparable traditional industry ILT scores. Additionally, students in their classes voted unanimously they would recommend MODL to others.

The students, who included participants from leading companies such as Konica/Minolta, Merck, ADP and the State of New York, were very impressed with the results from their first MODL experience.

“I want to congratulate Solartech as the first CPLS partner worldwide to launch the new Microsoft Official Distance Learning course”, said Lutz Ziob, General Manager of Microsoft Learning, part of the company’s Server and Tools business group. “Solartech is a leader in distance learning and we are excited to build on our already strong and longstanding partnership with them going forward”.

What is Microsoft Official Distance Learning?

MODL is an innovative new learning platform blending online classroom training, live discussion and team collaboration facilitated by an expert Microsoft Certified Trainer.

MODL leverages a next-generation instructional design called **G-E-A-R** that delivers learning in short modules with up to 10 times the number of student interactions and collaborations of a traditional classroom environment

Using real world scenarios designed for a specific IT role, students solve business problems and translate workplace requests into network administration solutions using live servers, application platforms, and desktops. Students learn,

collaborate, and practice in an engaging, production-like environment with the systems access of a server administrator. Students are continually check-pointed on their progress closing the loop from their first interaction through the final assessment. The GEAR method helps lower costly in-field mistakes and increases retention significantly for students using this approach.

About Solartech

Solartech, founded in 1996 is a Microsoft-managed Gold Certified Partner for Learning Solutions, servicing major Fortune 500 companies in the United States, such as ABC, AIG, UPS, Prudential, Sony, Morgan Stanley, and many others. In addition to traditional classroom based training, Solartech is the pioneer in delivering 100% live virtual classroom technology enabling students to participate in hands-on live Microsoft official classes right from the home or office. Large enterprise clients with multiple office locations leverage this technology to train team members while eliminating travel and expenses. For more information, please visit www.solartech.us.

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