

GSTF spreading its wings in Asia

The local IT training content and certification provider has appointed partners in the Philippines, Vietnam and India, reports **AMIT ROY CHOUDHURY**

[SINGAPORE]

LOCAL IT training content and certification provider Global Science and Technology Forum (GSTF) is looking to expand regionally and has appointed partners in the Philippines, Vietnam and India. These partners will use GSTF content to deliver training and the students will be certified by GSTF upon successful completion of the course, including exams which are offered both online and on-site.

Speaking to BizIT, Anton Ravindran, GSTF's founder and president, said his organisation develops content and offers training and certification programmes in cloud computing, business analytics and big data. In August, it will launch a certification programme on the Internet of Things (IoT).

The mission of GSTF, which Mr Ravindran set up four years ago, is to leverage technology to transfer knowledge.

"We aggregate and disseminate research publications and provide training and certification programmes on various technologies. Our training programmes are offered both online as well as in the classroom," he said.

GSTF launched its digital library in early 2009 to disseminate training content, research publications and content as well online certification programmes. GSTF also publishes around 20 academic and scientific journals on a quarterly basis, and these are available online through its digital library as well as in partnership with Springer, an international publisher specialising in IT subjects. The journals are also available in print form.

"We also administer and produce nearly 40 academic conferences annually and all accepted research papers are available both online and in print form to the research, academic and professional

community."

GSTF partners a large number of universities for specific conferences and other academic activities. Its various academic and review committees comprise 1,000 academics from around the world. "In addition, GSTF has about 538 members and growing, and our committee members are from leading institutions around the globe," Mr Ravindran said.

He noted that GSTF's training and certification programmes are vendor-neutral and technology-based. Its cloud computing and business analytics programmes are approved and supported by the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore's (IDA) Critical Infocomm Technology Resource Programme (IDA CITREP) funding scheme. Singapore citizens and permanent residents can apply for the IDA CITREP grant to do these courses.

"We have also collaborated with EXIN – a global leader in IT certification programmes, with a network of offices and partners in more than 125 countries – to offer our cloud computing specialists programme globally. Under this partnership, GSTF has trained instructors from 17 countries (this includes instructors from far-flung countries such as Brazil and Spain) to leverage on our content and deliver training in their respective countries."

The company is also in the process of launching a partnership with another European IT training organisation to distribute its content globally, Mr Ravindran added.

On GSTF's future plans, he spelled out his organisation's growth strategy. "We don't see the trend of increasing need for IT training and certification, seen over the past 2-3 decades, abating any time soon. In fact, we think the demand will only go up.

"GSTF will continue to develop content and certification pro-



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grammes in leading-edge technologies and offer these through conventional models. Apart from this, we will also leverage diverse online channels including mobile."

Mr Ravindran noted that from a research and research publications standpoint, the Open Access Movement has gained both momentum and credibility among the research community and funding organisations, including government agen-

cies globally.

"We aim to remain a key player in the Asia Pacific region and leverage on technology to become a leader in aggregation and dissemination of research and research publications. This will include our digital library, online journals and e-books, in addition to print media," he added.
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