Microsoft IT Academy

How to Promote your ITA Academy Program

Templates for press releases, blogs, newsletters, Twitter, Facebook

On behalf of Microsoft, thank you for becoming a part of the Microsoft IT Academy program. We are thrilled that you and your students will have access to resources and training to gain the future-ready information technology skills they need as next steps in their academics and to be successful in an IT career!

This document provides suggested communications you can use to help you announce your new membership in the Microsoft IT Academy program to school leadership, educators, students, parents and your community. The materials provided in this document include:

- Two press release templates
    - Announcing your new Microsoft IT Academy to your community
    - Announcing key Microsoft Certification milestones to your community
- Blog guidelines to develop and send us your Microsoft IT Academy success stories
- Newsletter and Facebook content, Tweets, and blog article samples
- Microsoft IT Academy overview & approved messaging

Please note that this document is covered by the nondisclosure agreement between Microsoft Corp. and your school; please do not share this document with unauthorized individuals. You may only use the content in this document to announce your membership in Microsoft IT Academy program.

If you have any questions concerning the information provided below or would like other guidance surrounding your announcement, feel free to contact the Microsoft IT Academy social media team at ITASuccessStories@microsoft.com

Press Release Template #1

Use this when you are announcing your new Microsoft IT Academy to your community.

For Release: [time] [time zone] [date]

[Your Institution] Launches Microsoft IT Academy Program to Help Equip Students with 21st Century Skills for Success

-IDC estimates that there will be almost 30 million IT positions by 2015needing skilled employees *- .

[CITY, State] / [Date] / [Your institution] today announced the launch of the Microsoft IT Academy program in [location/impacted schools] to equip students with real-world technology skills needed to thrive in the 21st century economy. [Your Institution] joins more than 15,000 Microsoft IT Academies around the world. [Briefly describe the highlights of your announcement such as specific features/benefits of your program and/or the number of students/teachers/schools participating.]

[Quote from a school official at your institution that speaks to how students will benefit, e.g.] "We're committed to providing our students with the most up-to-date knowledge and skills so they can pursue higher education, and secure jobs that contribute to the statewide economy and their communities," said [name of official or representative with their title and the name of your institution]. "Our membership in the Microsoft IT Academy program, enables us to provide a road map to technology proficiency and industry-recognized Microsoft Certification credentials keeping pace with what today's employers are looking for and sets our students up for future success."

In 2012, IDC released a global study focused on 600 IT hiring managers and the challenges faced in hiring skilled workers. According to the study, lack of certification, training and experience were the three top reasons given by the hiring managers for unfilled positions.* The Microsoft IT Academy program bridges this gap and connecting the worlds of education and work. It is a comprehensive program that supports ongoing technology education for students, teachers and other education professionals spanning computer basics to high-level programming, along with information and communications technology management using Microsoft technologies. The program's resources include access to online learning content, Official Microsoft Course titles course materials and curriculum and instructor tools.

"Microsoft is committed to empowering students and teachers around the world to reach their full potential," said Alison Cunard, General Manager for Microsoft Learning Experience. "By combining education and cutting-edge technology, the Microsoft IT Academy helps enable success and prosperity in an evolving global economy."

Microsoft IT Academy will provide a convenient and flexible learning environment where students can get hands-on experience with the latest technology to gain a competitive edge in today's job market or the next step in their academics. [Briefly elaborate on how your institution is implementing IT Academy, e.g., the specific resources you're using and benefits for students/teachers/your institution/the community as appropriate. Some other areas to consider highlighting: certifications students can earn, number of certified students, student/teacher/employer testimonials.]

[Briefly describe your plans for the future of your IT Academy program as appropriate.]

[Insert your institution's boilerplate.]

For more information for press only: [Name of your PR contact, your institution, phone number, e-mail address]

*–(IDC, Climate Change: Cloud's Impact on IT Organizations and Staffing, Nov 2012)

Press Release Template #2

Use this when you are announcing key Microsoft Certification milestones to your community.

For Release: [time] [time zone] [date]

[Your Institution] Achieves [Insert Number] Certification Milestone

Momentum reflects student appetite for technology skills to help them reach their educational and career potential.
[CITY, State] — [Date] — [Your institution] today announced that students participating in the Microsoft IT Academy program have achieved more than [insert number] certification credentials that validate technology mastery. [Your state] announced deployment of the Microsoft IT Academy program in [Month, year] in [insert where the Microsoft IT Academy is available, such as in high-schools statewide, libraries, etc.]. Today's milestone reflect a [insert percentage increase/metric indicating increasing certifications], reflecting strong student interest in industry-recognized credentials that validate expertise with technologies regularly used in college and the workforce.

[Your institution] worked with Microsoft to implement the IT Academy program in order to equip students with real-world technology skills needed in higher education and in the workforce. [Briefly describe the specific issues or concerns in your district or state that the program was deployed to address, such as workforce readiness for select industries, ties to existing or new educational initiatives, etc. Make sure to describe how the milestone supports these goals.]

[Insert a quote from a spokesperson at your institution that acknowledges the milestone, and speaks to how students have benefitted from the training and certification, e.g.] "We are extremely pleased with the performance of the IT Academy program, and the appetite that students/teachers have for the training and certifications. This milestone represents the skills that our future workforce and professionals will bring for the benefit of our state," said [Name, title]. "We are committed to providing our students with the most up-to-date knowledge and skills, and this program supports that priority. Statewide, students have now earned [insert milestone number] of Microsoft certification credentials that will help set them up for future success.

The Microsoft IT Academy bridges the world of education and work. It is a comprehensive program that supports ongoing technology education for students, teachers and other education professionals spanning computer basics to high-level programming, along with information and communications technology management. The program's resources include online learning content, official Microsoft course materials, and curriculum and instructor tools.

"Microsoft is committed to empowering students and teachers around the world to reach their full potential," said Alison Cunard, general manager of Microsoft Learning Experience. "By combining education and cutting-edge technology in an effective way as the IT Academy program does, we look forward to promoting success and prosperity in an evolving global economy. We congratulate [insert name of your institution/state] on achieving this milestone."

[Name of your program] will continue to provide a convenient and flexible learning environment where students can get hands-on experience with the latest technology to gain a competitive edge in today's job market or the next step in their academics. [Briefly elaborate on how your institution is implementing IT Academy, e.g., the specific resources you're using and benefits for students/teachers/your institution/the

Sample Social Media Content

SAMPLE TWEETS:

General:

- #Microsoft #IT Academy is providing students & teachers access to the latest & greatest Microsoft technologies to help them be job ready. [link to your program]
- #Microsoft #IT Academy provides cutting-edge tech & education to help students be successful in the 21st century! [link to your program]

Institution Perspective:

- We're proud to announce #Microsoft #IT Academy [on our campus/in our state/in our country]! Our students & teachers are now empowered by tech @MSLearning [link]
- Today we announced the newly implemented #Microsoft #IT Academy in our [schools/other] to help ensure our students' futures in tech. [link]

Teacher Perspective:

- [Your region/institution] announced that #Microsoft #IT Academy is now here – I'm excited about the opportunities for our passionate #STEM students! [link]
- [Your region/institution] worked w/ #Microsoft to put the latest & greatest Microsoft technology into the hands of our students via #IT Academy! [link]

FACEBOOK CONTENT:

"We're teaming up with Microsoft IT Academy to provide [Your institution] students with hands-on experience with the latest Microsoft technology help them gain a competitive edge in today's job market or the next step in their academics. To learn more about the program and enroll in classes, visit [URL]."

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE OR BLOG POST:

"[Today/This week/This month] [Your institution] announced its membership in the Microsoft IT Academy program to provide technology education for [students/teachers/other target audience] spanning computer basics to high-level programming, along with information and communications technology management. [Name of your program] will provide a convenient and flexible learning environment where students can get hands-on experience with the latest Microsoft technology to gain a competitive edge in today's job market or the next step in their academics. To learn more about the program and enroll in classes, visit [URL]."

OTHER RESOURCES:

Send your success stories to ITASuccessStories@microsoft.com and we will post it on the ITA Blog

Stay up to date by subscribing and reading the Microsoft IT Academy blog

Stay connected with ITA Facebook

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