Output from consultation with DCA members:
Proposal for **"DCA Accredited Colocation and hosting Essentials"** 2 week introductory course

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Proposal (DC Owners and Operators)

In response to action identified from the "DCA summit" luncheon held in late January 2012, the subsequent workshops and the output of the DCA White paper on this subject; planning work on the initial DCA accredited course is now under way as per short term action 1, listed within the paper.

Short term action:
1. Meet specific urgent need for colocation and hosting sector entry level – with a tailored DCA "accredited" course.

DCA accredited course for colocation & hosting sector

Sponsorship Opportunity - Introductory 10 day course for Data Centre Colo and Hosting Sector

The DCA has indentified a need for specific training for inexperienced people who wish gain entry to employment in the data centre, colocation and hosting sector. In partnership with University of East London the DCA plan is to provide a 10 day accredited course, sponsored by leading data centre, colocation and hosting firm(s) to meet the growing demand for high quality entry level staff resources. The plan is to run a pilot at the University's Docklands Campus, close to the Olympic park, in November 2012. The course will be free for candidates after successfully passing an interview/screening process.

The main objectives and aims are to provide:
1. An introduction to the industry relating specifically to the colocation and hosting sector.
2. An understanding of the role of data centre within IT and commerce.
3. Overview of typical mission critical systems, components and environments.
4. Overview of the commonly used industry terms and acronyms.
5. Overview of the types of work and roles undertaken within this sector.
6. Overview of trends and best practice
7. Practical insight into a typical data centre operation
8. Introduction to current and future customer drivers and service provider offerings
9. Introduction to the "golden rules" of good customer relations
10. Eligibility for work, test score and vocational talent profiling report supplied for all candidates

An appropriate test and pass level would be developed to create an accredited candidate who would then be available for interview or selection. It is envisaged to leverage and collaborate with the DCA's university partners to deliver the programme in targeted areas. The pilot will be held within the Docklands area in conjunction with the University of East London. This will capitalise on the Olympic legacy plan for re-generation based on digital services industry and the "inspire a generation" theme.

The current outline draft plan is as described below **and we call upon all interested members to provide specific input and requirements.**

DCA Accredited Course outline (v1.1 draft)

Scope of the course is designed to produce 20-25 DCA Accredited candidates.

Week 1

Day 1	What is a data centre and what is its role in business and industry? Why do we need data centres? Overview of the environments and computing equipment (IT hardware and software)
Day 2	The critical parts of the data centre infrastructure Part 1 - Power and cooling (M&E/HVACs)
Day 3	The critical parts of the data centre Part 2 - Telecommunications and Networking
Day 4	The critical parts of the data centre Part 3 – BMS, DCIM and Access control Plus Data centre tour
Day 5	(AM) Importance of energy efficiency of data centres (PUE etc.) (PM) Summary review of week 1 topics

Week 2

Day 6	Data Centre services, colocation, dedicated servers, managed hosting and cloud.
Day 7	Customer drivers and SLA's/OLA's, Customer and Service provider's responsibilities
Day 8	Customer service training - verbal and written communication practices and initial exercises (do's and don'ts).
Day 9	Customer service case studies and role plays
Day 10	Full Review of week 2 Course summary Final Accreditation Exam

Membership Sponsorship

To support the initial course the DCA are requesting the following from its participating membership:

- Input for topics (especially re environmentals, operational SLA's for generic publication and Customer handling guidelines).
- Input on specific requirements to be covered
- Funding assistance to cover:
    1. Costs of course production/material.
    2. Facility costs (University of East London site proposed for initial course).
    3. Costs of presenters (labour).
    4. Cost of accreditation production
    5. Promotion, publicity and delegate screening

We have draft costs currently on these items but wish to enlist the support of our members and ensure that we are addressing the needs correctly in line with the stated internships and work experience requirements.

Internships and work experience

Various DCA members have had positive experiences with working with university interns etc. on an ad-hoc basis and we also wish to capture these to ensure that the DCA offer complimentary services and can benefit from members advice with such programmes.

As stated the DCA has made it possible for members to post their requirements within the Career Centre for entry level people (whether internships or employment) for review and action by the DCA and similarly for student membership type (Associate) where under or post graduates can upload their CV and details about their work or experience that is relevant to the data centre industry.

DCA Career Centre

The DCA have developed the Career Centre capability within the DCA web portal www.data-central.org to provide the central repository for lodging both the specific member's requirements and the core candidate pool for selection. This will be managed on a secure and confidential manner as is required within best practices within this business.

Pilot Costs

Costs are based on a draft plan including:

- Training costs to be drawn from industry experts
- Venue, refreshments and materials
- Development and admin costs
- Advertising activity
- Screening costs
- Dissemination of information

A breakdown of costs is shown as follows:

25 Candidates	QTY		
			Total Cost
3rd party outsourced trainers		£	5,500.00
Venue + refreshments lunch etc		£	6,000.00
Online Test, certificate and materials		£	3,000.00
Advertising and publicity		£	3,000.00
Processing of Applicants/entry screening		£	3,800.00
Strengths finders, anaylsis and report		£	350.00
DCA trainers, admin and transport		£	3,600.00
Course content, Syllabus Development		£	4,750.00
Contingency			
		£	30,000.00

The pilot will of course include elements of one off costs that will enable future replication of the course to be achieved; however the intention is to keep the total funding required to 30K

It is envisaged that the DCA as an industry association, enables cost sharing to benefit the sector as a whole; therefore an option exists to divide the costs three ways for an £10K per sponsor.

Sponsor Benefits

The main deliverable of the project is to increase entry level candidate quality which is key to driving an improvement in longer term retention rates. In addition the programme aims to widen the awareness of the specific needs and opportunities the colocation and hosting sector has to offer, which will assist in attracting more suitable candidates who are dedicated to this sector as a career choice. The aim is to provide skills appropriate for entry into sales, customer service, administration, support/NOC and technical roles.

Sponsors will also benefit from various project outputs and from association with the programme, including:

- Name/branding on all materials
- Exposure on advertising materials
- Exposure on media channels via DCA
- Ability to shape and determine the course content
- ROI is highly likely over existing methods
- First refusal on successful candidates including profiles and reports with no further recruitment fees should candidate(s) gain employment

Action Required

The pilot requires sponsorship funding and calls for interested employers to contact stephend@datacentrealliance.org

The programme will also benefit from further endorsement from public bodies and related institutions to increase the visibility of the scheme.