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Republic Polytechnic, Red Hat and IBM Collaborate to Ready Next Generation of Singapore IT Professionals

Launching ASEAN’s First Linux on IBM System z Training Programme Made Possible by A Combined Investment of S$5.45M

Republic Polytechnic (RP), the tertiary institution that approaches learning with a difference, announced today their business partnership with Red Hat (NYSE: RHT) and IBM (NYSE: IBM) to offer Linux training for RP students and industry professionals. This ‘Red Hat Enterprise Linux on IBM’s System z mainframe’ training earns RP the honour of being the first-ever educational institution in ASEAN to embrace the Red Hat Academy and IBM System z Academic Initiative programmes jointly. RP expects to train up to 150 students and 75 industry professionals over the next three years.

The collaboration complements the current System z Operating Systems (z/OS) training offered by RP’s School of Information and Communications Technology (SIT) and aims to offer skills enablement for the next generation of entrepreneurs, IT specialists and business leaders. The new training programme will ensure RP graduates and industry professionals are well-trained in open standards-based technologies and Open Source software used by many employers and help pave the way to an expanded pool of trained personnel ready to meet the growing demand for Open Source skills and enhance Singapore’s greater competitiveness. This programme was made possible through a combined investment, over three years, of S$5.45m to cover hardware, software licenses, services and maintenance support.

As part of this new programme, RP upgraded their System z mainframe server to support the running of Red Hat Enterprise Linux on the system. This upgrade included the addition of the z/VM operating system which enables the virtualization of system resources to support running multiple Linux servers on the single mainframe. Red Hat and IBM also injected additional assistance and resources into the Centre, including the training of RP academic staff on Red Hat Enterprise Linux and System z curriculum, structuring the necessary Open Source technology course curriculum and employable skills training, and collaboration opportunities with Mainframe and Open Source end-users.

"Industry research companies have identified several major trends in the data centre – server consolidation, virtualization and the growing acceptance of Linux. These trends are also being seen by our partners Red Hat and IBM in Singapore and the region. They lead to an increased need for trained IT professionals who are conversant in Linux and virtualization technologies, and on IBM’s System z mainframe as well," said Mr. Mervin Beng, Director, RP School of Information and Communications Technology.

According to a recent report by global freelance service marketplace oDesk (www.odesk.org), Linux related jobs surged from 128 in 2006 to 2014 jobs listed in its service in 2009. In addition, over the past two years, Red Hat, the only IT vendor named in the leader's category of IDC’s IT Education and Training 2009, has seen a two-fold jump in overall registrations of their Red Hat Certified Technician (RHCT) and Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE) courses in Singapore alone, signifying an immense growth in interest and adoption of Open Source technologies.

Worldwide Linux server shipments have increased by 35% since 2003. Currently, one out of every five servers runs on Linux and the adoption of Linux servers is expected to grow. The adoption rate will increase by almost 8% by 2012. According to a report, IDC Multiclient Study, Server Virtualization On the Move 2007, by 2011 more than half of customers’ workloads will be deployed in virtual machines. With each new advancement in this area, like integrated hypervisors for example, the need to intelligently control the data centre is strengthened. Data centre managers need to know how to build a unified infrastructure combining both the virtual and physical environments.

Spearheaded by SIT, the new training programme is an extension of the RP Enterprise Computing Learning Centre that was launched in 2006 with support from IBM to provide mainframe education in Singapore. The Centre houses an IBM System z890 mainframe that will be used for training RP students up to the level of Red Hat Certified Technician (RHCT) or Red Hat Certified Engineer (RHCE). According to IBM’s Mainframe Charter, IBM aims to produce 20,000 mainframe-skilled professionals globally by 2010.

"IBM mainframe has long embraced Linux and open standard technologies. We are focused on delivering mainframe offerings to clients and investing in the skills and people who are going to run these mission critical platforms," said Ms. Cheah Saw Pheng, Country Manager, IBM Systems & Technology Group, Singapore. "This new academic programme is another unique way that IBM teams up with business partners and colleges as part of the larger ecosystem, to educate the up-and-coming mainframe programmers of tomorrow."
“The recruitment of RP as a Red Hat Academy Partner is a new milestone for Red Hat’s Open Source Collaborative Innovation (OSCI) initiative in Singapore. Demand for Open Source skills is rapidly growing in Singapore and across the region. Through OSCI, Red Hat collaborates actively with the government, education institutions and the industry to ensure a steady stream of skilled open source professionals and availability of Linux skills,” said Mr. Alan Ho, Manager, Services, ASEAN, Red Hat Asia Pacific. “The IT industry is changing and Singapore's next generation of entrepreneurs, IT specialists and business leaders now truly understand that if they want to be part of the future, they would need to expand their skills by embracing Open Source technology.”

The mainframe continues to play a central role in the daily operations of most of the world’s largest corporations. Eighty percent of the world’s mission-critical data is stored on and accessed by mainframes. While other forms of computing are used extensively in business in various capacities, today’s mainframe is still growing in popularity in the industry and its unparalleled security and 24/7 availability have made it a desired platform in today’s e-business environment.

The increase in rising energy costs and environmental concerns are also putting increased pressure on growing computer data centres that process everything from banking and retail transactions to managing health care records. Organisations these days are looking for increased demand for mainframe technical expertise to support this transformation.

The adoption of Red Hat Enterprise Linux on IBM System z mainframe server by governments and companies worldwide is accelerating. Companies are taking advantage of the security, scalability and low operating costs of the joint platform. The initiative underscores the commitment by RP, Red Hat and IBM to produce industry-ready graduates and equip Singapore’s workforce with relevant technical skills in Red Hat Enterprise Linux on IBM System z servers.

Sources:

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About Republic Polytechnic

The first educational institution in Singapore to adopt the Problem-Based Learning approach for all its diploma programmes, Republic Polytechnic (RP) has six schools and one centre offering thirty diploma courses in Information and Communications Technology, Engineering, Applied Science, Technology for the Arts, Sports, Health & Leisure, Events and Hospitality, and Culture and Communication. RP's School of Information and Communications Technology offers five diplomas in a broad spectrum of ICT, preparing graduates for careers in the industry, as well as for further studies. The School is well-equipped with systems, tools and enterprise applications that allow students to gain experience on industry-accepted solutions, with many graduates attaining professional certification in industry accepted programmes from Cisco, IBM, ITIL, Microsoft, SAP and others. For more information, visit http://www.rp.sg.

About Red Hat, Inc.

Red Hat, the world's leading open source solutions provider, is headquartered in Raleigh, NC with over 65 offices spanning the globe. CIOs ranked Red Hat as one of the top vendors delivering value in Enterprise Software for five consecutive years in the CIO Insight Magazine Vendor Value survey. Red Hat provides high-quality, affordable technology with its operating system platform, Red Hat Enterprise Linux, together with applications, management and Services Oriented Architecture (SOA) solutions, including JBoss Enterprise Middleware. Red Hat also offers support, training and consulting services to its customers worldwide. Learn more: http://www.redhat.com.

About IBM

For more information about System z, visit http://www.ibm.com/systems/z
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