Esri Technical Certification

Building a community of highly skilled GIS professionals

Why does Esri Technical Certification matter?

Jim Tochterman—GISP, vice president of research and development at Bradshaw Consulting Services, Inc. (BCS), and an Esri Certified Enterprise Associate—offers some insights on this question from his perspective. He explains how the new Esri Technical Certification program will help build a community of highly skilled professionals who can develop, sell, service, support, and use Esri solutions.

Question: Why does your company feel that certification is important?

Tochterman: At Bradshaw Consulting Services, Inc., we believe the Esri Technical Certification program is important because it validates that not only do people who pass one of the certifications know and understand a set of products, but that they also understand the technology and GIS principles behind those products.

Question: How will you leverage certification for your business?

Tochterman: We will leverage the new certification program to ensure that staff skills and knowledge are leading edge, which in turn will help us gain a competitive advantage by differentiating ourselves and reassuring our customers that our staff are up-to-date in using Esri best practices.

Question: What does your company value most about certification?

Tochterman: After having taken the certification exams, we see value that it is in fact a true certification program. "True" in that not everyone will pass by just studying materials. To take and pass any of the exams, the person will need to have the knowledge and skills in the exam they are taking.

Question: How do you feel certification will help your customers?

Tochterman: The Esri Technical Certification program will provide customers a way to validate the knowledge, quality, and competency of a consultant—whether they are simply implementing new software or designing new solutions.

Question: How do you think customer trust will differ for vendors/partners who have staff that are certified versus ones that do not?

Tochterman: Typically, customers looking for trustworthy or experienced vendors/partners have had to rely on word of mouth, previous project experience, and interviews when selecting someone to contract with. This process is very time-consuming and quite often still does not help in obtaining trustworthy vendors/partners. Now, with the certification program, a potential customer can immediately know if a vendor/partner truly has the experienced staff necessary for a successful project or software implementation.

Question: How many of your staff members have earned certifications so far, and which certifications did they earn?

Tochterman: Presently, four of our staff members have taken and passed Esri Technical Certification exams. Those certifications include Enterprise Administration Associate, Enterprise Geodatabase Management Associate, ArcGIS Desktop Professional, and ArcGIS Desktop Associate. As new certification exams become available (such as mobile), we will have more staff members taking those exams as well.

Question: Will your company consider certification during the hiring process? If so, to what extent?

Tochterman: We most definitely will consider a candidate's certifications. Today, there are many more qualified people in the GIS job market than there have been in years past. Having to evaluate a person's competency at interview time can be time-consuming and laborious. If they have obtained one or more certifications, we will know they already have a certain level of knowledge, and we can move on to a more in-depth evaluation of that candidate.

Question: What is the number-one reason why people should consider getting certified?

Tochterman: Recognized proficiency. There are lots of people who truly have substantial ArcGIS knowledge and experience. There are also an even larger number of people who simply claim to have substantial ArcGIS knowledge and experience. How would you tell these people apart? The quickest and easiest way a potential employer or customer is going to be able to tell the difference is through certification.

Quick Facts about Esri Technical Certification

- Esri Technical Certifications recognize expertise in desktop, developer, and enterprise use of Esri technology.
- Exams are offered worldwide at 5,000 Pearson VUE (Esri's global testing partner) locations in 165 countries.
- Seven certification exams are now available: ArcGIS Desktop Associate, ArcGIS Desktop Professional, ArcGIS Desktop Developer Associate, Web Application Developer Associate, Enterprise Geodatabase Management Associate, Enterprise System Design Associate, and Enterprise Administration Associate. Six more certifications will be added to the program later in 2011 and in 2012.
- Esri certifications do not expire. Once you are certified for a specified version, you always hold that certification.

For More Information

Esri Technical Certification Website
esri.com/certification

Exam Registration
pearsonvue.com/esri

Desktop Certification Skills Review Classes
esri.com/skillsreview

About BCS

BCS is an Esri Gold Tier partner that provides total GIS solutions to business, industry, and government clients throughout the United States. From design and implementation to full application development, BCS creates turnkey solutions for clients ranging from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies.

Jim Tochterman, vice president of research and development at BCS

Esri Welcomes "Deepsea Dawn" Aboard

Ocean scientist, geographer, and notable authority in geographic information science, Dawn J. Wright, aka Deepsea Dawn, joins Esri as its chief scientist.

"In her capacity as chief scientist, she will interface with government, business, industry, and the public and collaborate with them to understand and find solutions for our planet," said Esri president Jack Dangermond. In this position, Wright will help formulate and advance the intellectual agenda for the environmental, conservation, climate, and ocean science aspects of Esri's work and represent Esri in the national/international scientific community.

For the past 16 years, Wright has combined her expertise as a geographer and GIS user to map the seafloor, design geospatial solutions for coastal mapping and charting, and advise organizations on oceanography and fisheries. Wright has teamed with scientists worldwide in using GIS to map and analyze terrains, ecosystems, and habitat and worked with the GIS community in developing data models and creating solutions for analyzing the ocean. She serves on the National Academy of Sciences Ocean Studies Board.

Wright, currently a professor of geography and oceanography at Oregon State University, will continue to be affiliated with the university. Her research interests include geographic information science; ocean informatics and cyberinfrastructure; benthic terrain and habitat characterization; and the processing and interpretation of high-resolution bathymetry, video, and underwater photographic images.

Named US Professor of the Year for the state of Oregon by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education in 2007, she is also a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a new fellow of the Stanford University Aldo Leopold Leadership Program in science communication.

Wright received a doctorate in physical geography and marine geology from the University of California, Santa Barbara; a master's degree in oceanography from Texas A&M; and a bachelor's degree with honors from Wheaton College in Illinois. She is also certified by the GIS Certification Institute as a GIS professional (GISP).