

FEBRUARY 2012

FACTSHEET: Infocomm Accessibility Centre

The Infocomm Accessibility (IA) Centre was set up in July 2008 to help persons with disabilities improve their independence and better integrate into the mainstream society. It is the first infocomm training facility in Singapore that offers structured certification path and industry-relevant infocomm training across disability types. Managed by the Society for the Physically Disabled (SPD), and supported by Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA), Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS), National Council of Social Service (NCSS), Singapore Tote Board and industry partner, Microsoft Singapore, the IA Centre is the fruition of a people-public-private sector collaboration.

1. The IA Centre comprises three computer labs for various levels of infocomm technology courses and four training rooms for the apprenticeship programme. It also houses the first ever Assistive Technology (AT) Loan Library in Asia catering to persons with disabilities. Through IA Centre, persons with disabilities will benefit from:
 - a) Assistive Technology (AT) tools to aid them as they learn and interact;
 - b) Affordable training and customised courses from basic to intermediate level and some will lead to industry certification. The cost of training ranges from \$35 to \$48 after 80% subsidy. For those who cannot pay the balance amount, further assistance by the Society for the Physically Disabled (the operator appointed to run IA Centre) may be provided after means testing is carried out;
 - c) Availability of AT tools for loan so that they can overcome the barriers to access a computer and also assess the suitability of the equipment prior to purchase; and
 - d) Hands-on workshops, apprenticeship training, vocational assessments and job placement facilitation to enhance their employability and create new employment opportunities (for trainees who show good potential). As of November 2011, 128 trainees have received apprenticeship training and 32 have successfully secured open employment.

2. The following details the key features of the IAC:

(i) Customised and Structured Courses

a) Basic Level:

- Computer Fundamentals
- Digital Card With Powerpoint
- Poster Design with Powerpoint
- Digital Media Fundamentals
- Digital Music - Basic Digital Piano 1
- Digital Music - Basic Digital Piano 2
- Digital Music - Basic Digital Piano 3
- Digital Music - Basic Digital Piano 4
- Digital Music - Beethoven
- Digital Music - Music-4-Movie
- Effective Computer-Assisted Learning
- Internet & Blogging
- Internet & World Wide Web Fundamentals
- Mouse & Keyboarding Skills
- Social Media - Facebook
- Social Media - Twitter
- PC Maintenance (Software & Troubleshooting)
- PC Upgrading (PC Hardware)
- Presentation Fundamentals
- Robotics Training
- Spreadsheet Fundamentals
- Stop Motion
- Word Processing Fundamentals
- Digital Manga Art
- Mix & Mash
- Digital Stomp
- iBand Ensemble

b) Intermediate Courses:

- Cascading Style Sheets (Advanced)
- Cascading Style Sheets (Basic)
- Digital Music - Basic Song Arrangement 1
- Digital Music - Basic Song Arrangement 2
- Digital Music - Intermediate Digital Piano 1
- Digital Music - Intermediate Digital Piano 2
- Digital Music - Intermediate Digital Piano 3
- Digital Music - Intermediate Digital Piano 4
- Digital Music - Intermediate Song Arrangement 1
- Digital Music - Intermediate Song Arrangement 2
- Digital Music - Music Theory Grade 1
- Digital Photography
- Dreamweaver I
- Dreamweaver II
- Flash ActionScript (Advanced)
- Flash ActionScript (Basic)

- Flash Basic
- GIMP
- GIMP I
- GIMP II
- GIMPSHOP
- HTML (Advanced)
- HTML (Basic)
- Illustrator
- Illustrator Master
- InDesign
- JavaScript (Advanced)
- JavaScript (Basic)
- Microsoft Certified Application Specialist 2007 – Access
- Microsoft Certified Application Specialist 2007 – Excel
- Microsoft Certified Application Specialist 2007 – Outlook
- Microsoft Certified Application Specialist 2007 – PowerPoint
- Microsoft Certified Application Specialist 2007 – Word
- Online Marketing - Google Analytics
- Photoshop I
- Photoshop II
- Photoshop Master
- Video Editing I (Storyboarding)
- Video Editing II (Premiere)

(ii) Certifications offered at the IAC

- a) Internet and Computing Core Certification (IC3): IC3 examinations consist of three main areas of competency – computer fundamentals, key applications and living online.
- b) Microsoft Certified Application Specialist (MCAS) Certification: MCAS Certification is a globally recognised certification and the examinations test desktop productivity which is relevant to work relating to corporate services.
- c) Adobe Certified Associate Certification: Adobe Certified Associate provides trainees with credential in digital media work. This is an industry recognised credential which will give confidence to trainees when they are seeking work.

(iii) AT Loan Library

The AT Loan Library houses over 700 types of AT equipment. It is the first in Asia which caters to persons with disabilities as well as professionals such as teachers and therapists who work with them.

Devices can be loaned for a defined period of time. A team of AT specialists is on hand to conduct assessments before prescribing any equipment.

With the AT Loan Library, people with disabilities would be able to loan and try assistive devices in their functional every day settings. It would also help them decide on a suitable device prior to purchase. At the same time, those with devices and which require repair is able to loan a set from the library, until such time that their device is repaired. Therapists and/or teachers who like to try AT devices with their clients would also be able to do so through the AT Loan Library. The AT devices available at the library are:

- a) Alternative keyboards and mouse
- b) Switches
- c) Note takers
- d) Alternative and augmentative communication devices
- e) Mounting systems
- f) Switch adapted toys
- g) Writing and reading tools
- h) Low vision and blindness aids
- i) Positioning aids
- j) Software catering to a range of AT needs

(iv) IT Apprenticeship Programme

The IT Apprenticeship Programme focuses on bridging the gap between IT training and employment for people with disabilities. IT Apprenticeship Programme develops each trainee's competency and portfolio through modular IT and work training curriculum, participation in commercial projects and internships.

IT Apprenticeship Programme's flexible training plan allows trainees to pace their learning according to their comfort level. IT Apprenticeship Programme trainees seeking employment can choose to train under the various apprenticeship tracks, namely Corporate Services, Visual Communications, Web Design and Video Production.

3. Since its launch in July 2008, 123 clients and professionals had loaned AT devices from the library. In addition, 680 professionals from various VWOs and hospitals attended Basic Assistive Technology training courses and have had hands-on experience with the devices from the AT Loan Library. IA Centre has provided more than 4,615 training places for its customised IT training programmes (as at November 2011).

(Please see Annex A for a case study of the IAC Programme)

Annex A: Case Study of the IAC Programme

Name of Trainee : Ang Yu Kiong¹
Age / Gender : 24 yrs old / Male
Nature of Disability : Cerebral Palsy
Spoken Languages : English / Mandarin

Yu Kiong has mild Cerebral Palsy. Due to his condition, he has a speech impediment and has difficulties walking. Despite his disabilities, Yu Kiong involves himself in activities such as playing table tennis, badminton, soccer and wushu. He graduated from Republic Polytechnic with a Diploma in Business Application in 2008.

It was difficult for Yu Kiong to find a job after his graduation. He felt that he was discriminated against by employers because of his disabilities. It took him 7 months to secure a job as a clerk.

Yu Kiong approached the Infocomm Accessibility Centre (IAC) to enhance his employability with IT skills. Having explored with Yu Kiong on his interest, skills and aspirations, IAC developed a training plan that would set him on a path towards a career in web design. Yu Kiong attended classes in Adobe Photoshop and Dreamweaver at IAC and subsequently progressed to the Web Design Track at the IT Apprenticeship Programme (ITAP). While at ITAP, he learnt to create web pages, design web graphics and worked on web based content management systems.

As part of his training with ITAP, Yu Kiong was placed on internship where he learnt to be more meticulous and took ownership and responsibility for his designs. He also learnt the importance of teamwork and developed problem-solving and communication skills. The experiences and exposure gained through the internship has given him more confidence in building websites on his own. In addition to IT skills, ITAP equipped Yu Kiong with important life skills. He learnt to be more confident and overcame his fear of communicating with due to his speech impediment.

¹ The case study was written in October 2011.

Upon completion of his training with IAC and ITAP, Yu Kiong managed to secure a job at an engineering consultancy company as a project assistant. His job requires him to create and simulate building models using computer software. He is happy with his job now. In fact his good performance had recently won him a promotion. He is now self-reliant and can lessen the financial burden on his family. He finds dignity in being able to manage on his own hard-earned money.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
IDA Communication Contact

Miss Zohria Nunis
Assistant Manager, Corporate & Marketing Communication
Tel: +65 6211 3874
Fax: +65 6211 2227
Email: zohria_nunis@ida.gov.sg

Mr Christopher Koh
Manager, Corporate & Marketing Communication
Tel: +65 6211 1709
Fax: +65 6211 2227
Email: christopher_koh@ida.gov.sg