
The Benefits of SNIA Certification - An Interview with Will Roming

The SNIA Storage Networking Certification Program (SNCP) is firmly established as the place for vendor-neutral, systems-level credentials that integrate with and complement individual vendor certifications. The success of this program is a testament to its importance to the industry.

The highest honor SNIA bestows is the SNIA Certified Storage Networking Expert (SNIA SCSN-E) credential, which means the recipient has knowledge and skill in the storage networking technology domain that cuts across vendor platforms and has the ability to design/architect, implement, and manage a storage network solution in a multi-vendor environment.

FarSighted recently sat down with Will Roming, SCSN-E, of Spectra Logic, to discuss why he and his company are committed to the SNCP.

FS: Why do you think SNIA certifications are important?

WR: Many different reasons. First and foremost, is the credibility it gives you in the industry. For example, I have a very long list of certifications that are manufacturer specific, and the SNIA certifications are the few that I actually had to study for, so I hold it in very high regard personally. From a business standpoint, it is very important for Spectra Logic for the simple fact that it brings credibility to the table anytime we are dealing with customers or our resellers.

FS: When Spectra Logic puts in a bid for a piece of business, how does the certified expertise help with that process?

WR: The SNIA certification is an industry-wide standardized certification test, which has a higher value to the customer because you have to know many different vendors to pass these tests. So when we are bidding on an RFP or RFQ, it has a lot of weighted value and provides a leg up on winning the contract.

FS: How do the prospective customers respond? Do you have to explain to them what this brings to the table?

WR: 90% of all the customers in the storage industry, or people who are looking at storage, already understand what SNIA is. But very few are able to obtain the certification because it covers a broad certification spectrum and thus is more difficult to obtain. When you tell a prospect that you are a SNIA expert, and that there are just a little over a hundred professionals in the world who have that designation, you usually get a response like “really?” or “wow!” Your credibility is no longer in question at that point.

FS: What role does the certification program play for you working in a multi-vendor environment? Do you find that it helps you in your day-to-day work?

WR: When I'm dealing with the resellers and having to provide a technical recommendation, again the certification provides credibility. So, you no longer have to prove or validate your reasoning behind what you're saying and what you've documented and presented. You've already validated yourself, credibility-wise, with the certification.

Everyone understands the level of difficulty of the SNIA expert - that's why there aren't very many people in the industry that actually have it. So there's usually very little legwork once someone finds out you're a SNIA expert.

FS: What benefits have you seen as the recipient of the expert credential, and, why was it important to you to go to the highest level within the SNIA certification program?

WR: First of all, for me personally, I've made contacts throughout the industry. The professional growth that it gives me and the opportunities the certification makes possible are excellent. From a business standpoint, it also brings a lot of credibility to Spectra Logic. In fact, Spectra Logic is working to get other engineers within our company also certified with the SNCP.

FS: So you obviously see the value, because you're committing additional resources to expand the number of people within your company who have these certifications?

WR: Absolutely. We actually have another individual with the company who is now studying for his Expert credential.

FS: Are there any examples where you were offered work because of your specialized expertise?

WR: I have seen many other opportunities and doors open up from a sales standpoint because of the SNIA expert certification. Customers hold it in high regard and so they are more apt to do business with you.

It's a huge honor to be able to point to this achievement and be a part of such an elite group.