

BSDCert Monthly Notes

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Welcome to the first edition of the BSD Certification monthly newsletter. Published on the 15th of each month, the newsletter contains a summary of questions and suggestions from the BSD Certification mailing list as well as updates and announcements regarding the progress of BSD Certification.

First Month Statistics

The BSD Certification website was officially announced on Feb. 15 (<http://www.bsdcertification.org/media.htm>) and the initial response has been tremendous. Within the first two weeks over 500 members had subscribed to the public mailing list (<http://lists.nycbug.org/mailman/listinfo/bsdcert>) and over 100 persons completed the website contact form volunteering their talents to the effort. The website itself received over 250,000 hits during the first 2 weeks after the announcement.

Such statistics speak of the importance of certification within the BSD community.

Translation Teams

Within the first day it became apparent that internationalization of the certification process is very important. So far, there have been offers to translate into 21 different languages. However, each language requires a minimum of 3 translators and the following languages still require at least one additional team member:

- Turkish
- Latvian
- Romanian
- Ukranian
- Argentine Spanish (es-ar)
- German
- Venezuelan Spanish (es-ve)
- Indonesian (bahasa)
- Dutch
- Spanish (es-es)
- Czech
- Lithuanian
- Mexican Spanish (es-mx)
- Estonian

If you can translate into any of these languages and have some spare time each month, please contact Patrick using "**translation**" as the subject line (<http://www.bsdcertification.org/contactus.htm>) and indicate which language you can translate.

The website is in the process of being internationalized into the 6 languages which have complete translation teams. An announcement will be made once the translated sites becomes

available.

Additional Resources

The mailing list is now available through gmane:

<http://dir.gmane.org/gmane.os.bsd.certification>

For those who prefer a lower volume mailing list, an Announcement list has been created at:

<http://lists.nyctbug.org/mailman/listinfo/bsdcert-announce>

The Announcement list will contain periodic announcements regarding the progress of the BSD Certification, as well as a copy of the monthly newsletter. If you wish to discuss BSD Certification, please continue to do so at the discussion list:

<http://lists.nyctbug.org/mailman/listinfo/bsdcert>

A brochure regarding BSD Certification is now available for download at:

<http://www.bsdcertification.org/resources.htm>

Everyone is encouraged to download and distribute printed copies of the brochure.

Additionally, if you plan on distributing brochures at a conference or local event, please send the details to "chair" at <http://www.bsdcertification.org/contactus.htm> .

If there's enough interest, we'll create a shared calendar of events.

Brief Synopsis of Discussions from bsdcert@lists.nyctbug.org

The mailing list had several good discussions in the past 30 days. Many points were raised and discussed, much more than can be summarized within a short newsletter. However, we've included a brief hyperlinked synopsis so you can review the threads that interest you and which you perhaps missed first time round.

"The Study Material Question" thread brought up several good points. One was a suggested reading list [from Nikolas Britton](#)

[Siju George](#) reinforced that many certification candidates would benefit from a comprehensive course outline and a list of specific suggested resources.

[Frans Haarman](#) suggested an RDF-like¹ info system with all the topics for BSD certification and [Lucas](#) suggested a material-reviewing team to review and 'certify' certain books.

There was also a lengthy thread on what should be covered on a BSD Certification exam. [Ioan Nemes](#) gave a list of system administration tasks.

[Louis Bertrand](#) stressed the importance of a practical test and suggested a modular approach to the multiple flavours of BSD question.

Several questions require further discussion. Some quite specific ([Which Shell?](#)) and others more general ([Should we test Unix fundamentals?](#)).

The question of openness and licenses also arose. ([Disclosure of test questions](#)) and the

¹ RDF = Resource Description Framework (RDF) / W3C Semantic Web Activity

practicalities of obtaining BSD books in Asia and China ([BSD books for Asian countries](#)).

Advocating the merits of certification with employers was discussed at ([BSDCert, Advocacy, Cost](#))

Discussion on cost and how to deliver the exam internationally brought up many excellent points ([Ideas on Certifications](#)).

Update from BSD Certification Group

As with any project, there are several activities taking place all at the same time. This note hopes to clarify some of the things that are going on in the public list and among the members of the BSD Certification Group (BSDCG). This should lead to better understanding of how the certification process is being constructed, how ideas are channeled, how decisions are being made and what everyone is doing.

First, an update on what is happening:

- 1) A task analysis survey is nearing completion. This survey is an effort to determine what activities are important in the daily life of a BSD administrator. It will also help determine what activities are appropriate to different skill levels. The results from this survey will provide valuable information which will be considered as the exam objectives and testing methodology are developed. Once the survey is ready, it will be announced on the public email list and website. Everyone should take the time to complete it. As soon as the results are finalized, they will be available on the public website.
- 2) A Non-Disclosure Agreement is being prepared to facilitate working with translators and curriculum developers. As discussed on the mailing list, a certification project can not be totally open unlike other open source projects. For obvious reasons, details about test questions and answers can not be publically disclosed. The NDAs will provide protection against disclosure and the BSDCG will be vigilant in observing and responding to any discrepancies. Details on the test objectives however are public knowledge, and will be disclosed as soon as they are finalized. In addition, a certification roadmap which includes projected dates for the Group's milestones is being created; it will be announced as soon as it has been finalized.
- 3) The BSDCG is in the process of contacting an attorney to help facilitate transition into some form of legal entity. This is required to enter into negotiations with testing centers, sponsors, and others about concrete commitments for time, space and other facilities. The type of legal entity is not determined at this time. Full disclosure of any change in legal status will be made to the public email list and website.
- 4) A quick note on commercialization: there is no interest among the BSDCG towards making the BSD Certification into a fast-cash-quick-buck machine. All BSDCG members have indicated that the main goal is a solid, respected certification.