What do you need to know about Windows 7 Certification?

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What you need to know about Windows 7 certification. Is it available? Will it help you get a MCITP? What do you need to do to prepare? How can WindowsNetworking.com help you?

Introduction

While Windows 7 has been available to IT Pros with Technet for a while, it was just released to the general public on October 22, 2009. One of the ways that I typically begin learning about a new Windows OS is to start by looking at its certification. What I mean is, if you are going to spend time learning about an OS, why not learn the things that Microsoft says are important enough to put in their certification requirements? Plus, if you are going to invest the time to learn about Windows 7, why not take a test when you are done learning and get a certification out of it? It just seems like the most logical way to learn about the new OS.

With that, what is the status of the Windows 7 certification program? What do you need to do to get Windows 7 certified and how can WindowsNetworking.com help you?

What is the status of the Windows 7 certification program?

Just as Windows 7 is now available, the entry-level Windows 7 certification, the MCTS, is also available. Microsoft's Certified Technology Specialist (or MCTS) is the entry level certification for just about every Microsoft technology. There are MCTS programs not only for IT Admins who are interested in Windows Server or Windows 7 but also for those who are Office 2007 experts, SQL Admins, .NET developers, and even volume licensing specialists. In fact, there are over 50 MCTS certification options.

As you are reading this, you are interested in Windows 7 certification so the most important MCTS, to you, is the Microsoft Technology Specialist (TS) Exam 70-680: Windows 7, Configuring. You guessed it, this MCTS certification requires a single exam and it is all about configuring Windows 7.

This exam covers topics such as:

* Installing, Upgrading, and Migrating to Windows 7

* Deploying Windows 7

* Configuring Hardware and Applications

* Configuring Network Connectivity

* Configuring Access to Resources

* Configuring Mobile Computing

* Monitoring and Maintaining Systems that Run Windows 7

* Configuring Backup and Recovery Options

According to Microsoft, the "Configuring Network Connectivity" portion of the exam is worth 14% (so I encourage you to checkout the Microsoft.com resource list of articles I have put together later in this article). Specifically, that 14% covering networking covers the following:

* IPv4 network settings

* IPv6 network settings

* Windows 7 networking settings

* Windows 7 Firewall

* Windows 7 Remote management

It is likely that if you have been using Windows 7 since beta version, and you have previous Windows OS experience, I suspect that most of these networking topics covered do not scare you too much.

However, out of all of those topics, the one that caught my eye the most is IPv6. I do not think I have seen many "level 1" certification exams that require knowledge of IPv6. I know that topic will require me to do some extra reading!

Let's say that you took the 70-680 exam and passed it (which you could do this week as the test is available!), what do you do next?

After the MCTS covering Windows 7, what's next?

The MCTS covering the configuration of Windows 7 is a great place to start your Microsoft certification path. That is because that exam applies to at least 3 other higher level certification options. They are:

* MCITP: Enterprise Desktop Administrator 7

* MCITP: Enterprise Desktop Support Technician 7

* MCITP: Enterprise Administrator

The MCITP is Microsoft's Certified IT Professional or MCITP Certification and could be compared to the MCSE. However, there are many more types of MCITP than the MCSE and those types of MCITP have various certification requirements. For example, to get a MCITP Enterprise Desktop Support Technician 7 you need to take the Microsoft PRO Exam 70-685: Windows 7, Enterprise Desktop Support Technician 7 on top of your MCTS in Windows 7 Configuration. The requirements to obtain the MCITP Enterprise Desktop Administration 7 certifications are similar but you need to take the Microsoft PRO Exam 70-686: Windows 7, Enterprise Desktop Administrator 7 exam on top of your MCTS in Windows 7 Configuration. I should note that both of these exams are listed as "in development" by Microsoft and are expected to be released on November 16, 2009.

For a much more in depth type of MCITP, you can apply your MCTS in Configuring Windows 7 to the MCITP Enterprise Administrator certification. This version of the MCITP requires that you take 4 tests, in addition to the 70-680 that you passed to obtain your MCTS.

How can WindowsNetworking.com help you get Windows 7 certified?

Here at WindowsNetworking.com, we have been posting quality articles about Windows 7 and Windows 2008 enterprise features since the time that these operating systems were in beta. Thus, I am confident enough to say that there are a lot of good articles to help in your certification pursuit.

You can view all of our Windows 7 content at the WindowsNetworking.com - Windows 7 Articles Index.

Here are some good articles that I enjoyed and pulled from that index:

* Exploring Windows 7â€™s New Search Features (Part 1) by Brien Posey

* Connecting Windows 7 to an iSCSI SAN by David Davis

* An Introduction to AppLocker (Part 1) by Brien Posey

* Introduction to BranchCache - Part 1: Overview of BranchCache Features and Capabilities by Thomas Shinder

* Deploying Windows 7 - Part 9: Deploying 32-bit vs. 64-bit Windows by Mitch Tulloch

Keep in mind that Microsoft also has a number of Windows 7 education options. Their Windows 7 education options list links to not only their free videos but also 3rd party books and classroom training.

Conclusion

In this article, we covered what you need to know about Windows 7 Certification. You found out that Windows 7 certification, in the form of the MCTS / Configuring Windows 7 is now available. You need to pass one test - 70-680 - to become a MCTS in Windows 7 and there are a lot of resources available to you. So what are you waiting for? Get your MSTS in Windows 7 this week! Soon after that, the MCITP certification options for Windows 7 will be available so that you can continue your learning and certification.

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