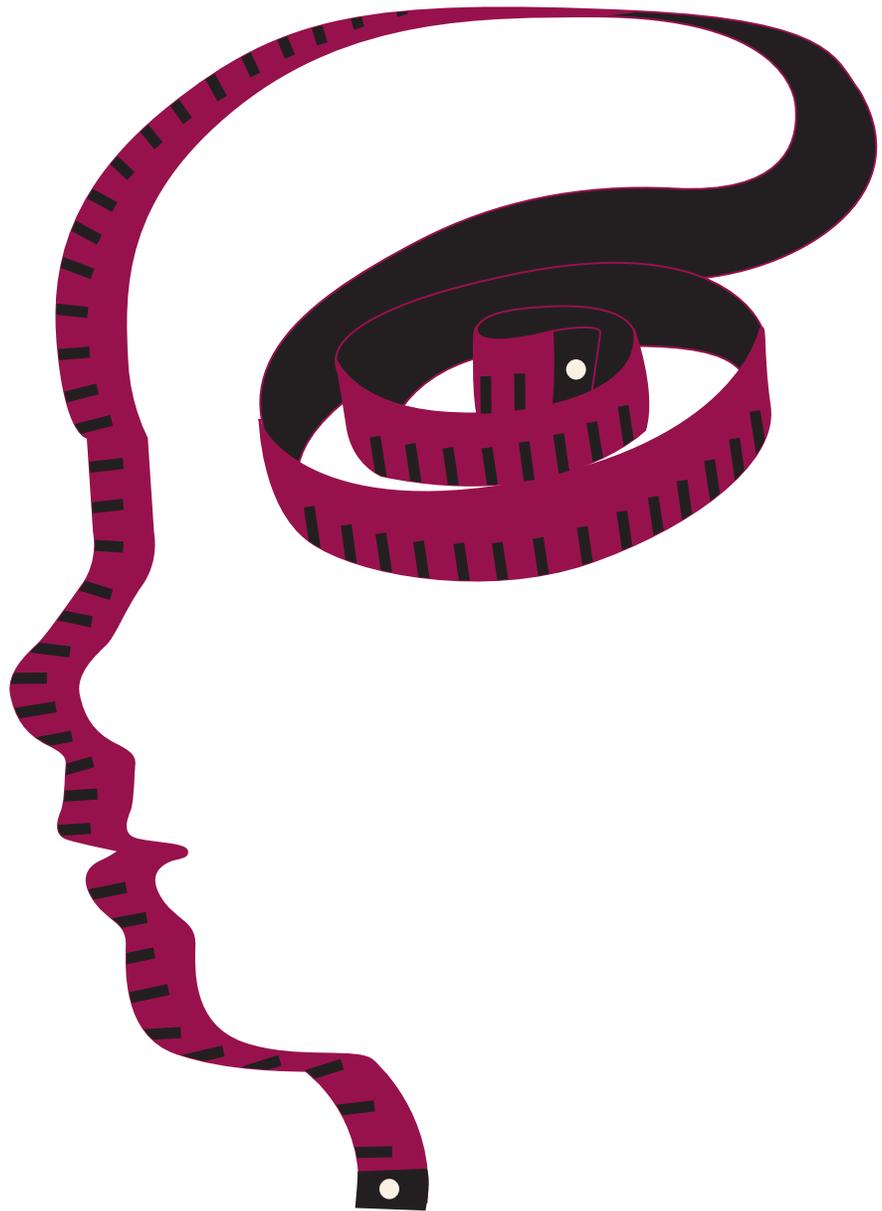# The Pearson VUE 2014
# Value of IT Certification Survey
Results summary

Overview

The 2014 Value of IT Certification Survey was conducted online from May 22 to June 24, 2014. Nearly 400,000 survey invitations were emailed to individuals who had taken a certification exam from one of 12 leading certification programs in the past two years and had opted in to receive marketing communications from Pearson VUE. The survey yielded nearly 31,000 completed responses from around the globe.

Survey objectives

1. To gain insight into the value of IT certification for candidates.
2. To learn more about candidate study habits, reasons for taking training/obtaining a certification and purchasing behaviors.
3. To further understand intentions for future training and/or testing.

## IT professionals who completed the survey

Pearson VUE partnered with 12 leading IT organizations to conduct this survey using their exam registration data. The chart below represents the percentage of respondents from each organization who completed the survey in its entirety.
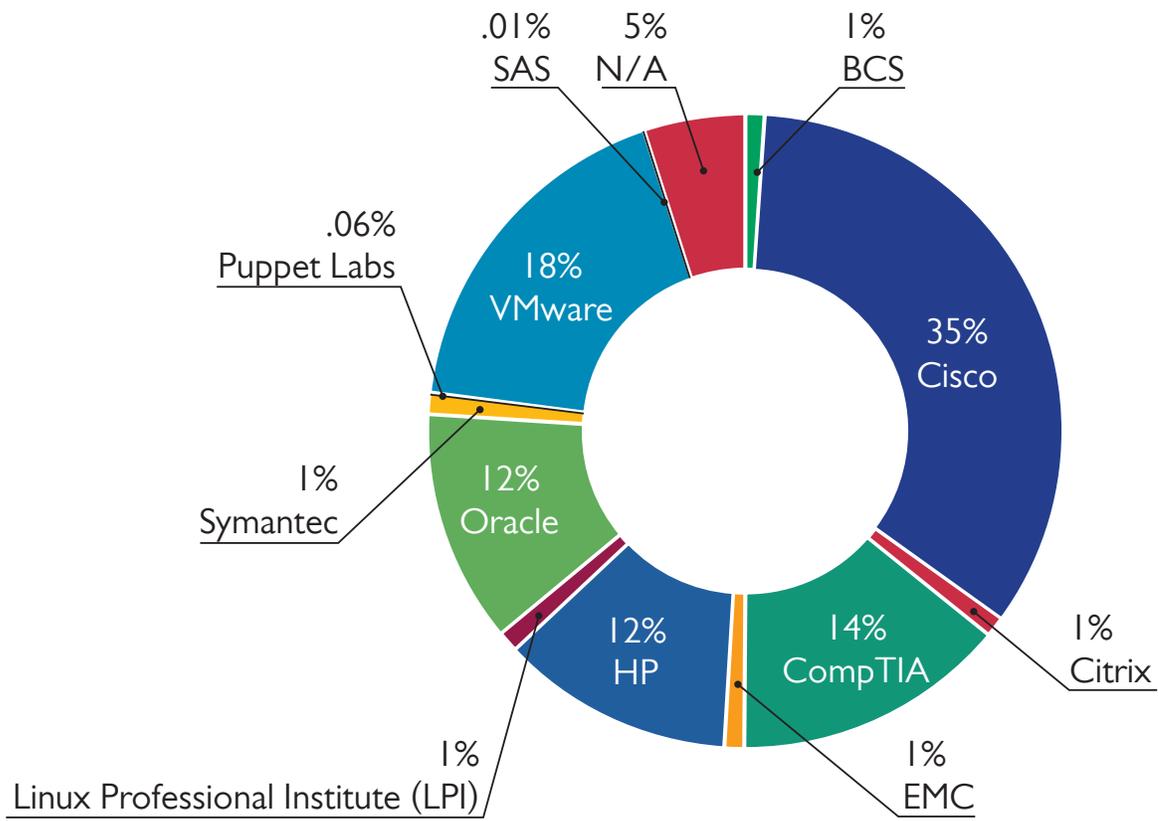
Training

Q: In the past 24 months, have you taken any training courses (either through an instructor-led classroom, virtual classroom or digital training) for any of the following IT programs? (choose all that apply)

90% of the respondents had taken a training session in the last 24 months, with the average candidate taking 1.6 training courses in this time period.
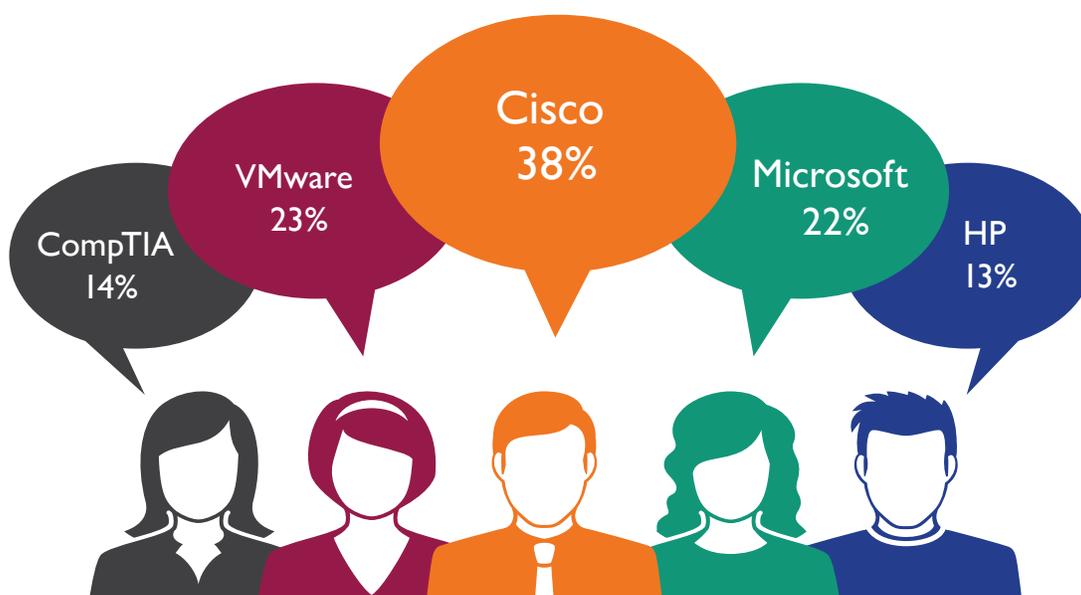
Adobe	2%	CIW	0.38%	HP	13%	Nokia	0.45%	SAS	0.33%
Apple	2%	CompTIA	14%	IBM	3%	Oracle	11%	Siemens	0.22%
AppSense	0.13%	Dassault	0.06%	(ISC)²	1%	PeopleCert	0.31%	Symantec	3%
Avaloq	0.02%	EC Council	2%	ISQI	0.16%	PMI	2%	VMware	23%
BCS	1%	EMC	4%	Juniper Networks	4%	Puppet Labs	0.25%	None	10%
Cisco	38%	EXIN	3%	LPI	4%	Ruijie Networks	0.13%		
Citrix	4%	Google	2%	Microsoft	22%	SAP	1%		

Q: If you did take some training in the past 24 months, who paid for the most recent training?

45% of training courses were paid for by the employer and 34% of respondents said they paid for their own training.

Employer	45%
Self-paid	34%
Provided by the IT certification program	5%
Government funded	4%
Included in a school/university/college program	4%
Other funding	5%
Rather not say	3%

Based on those who took instructor-led training: 27,969 responses.

Employer **45%**
Self-paid **34%**
IT certification program **5%**

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Q: Still thinking about the most recent training you undertook, where did you purchase it?

41% Training provider
21% IT certification program
8% Amazon or online source
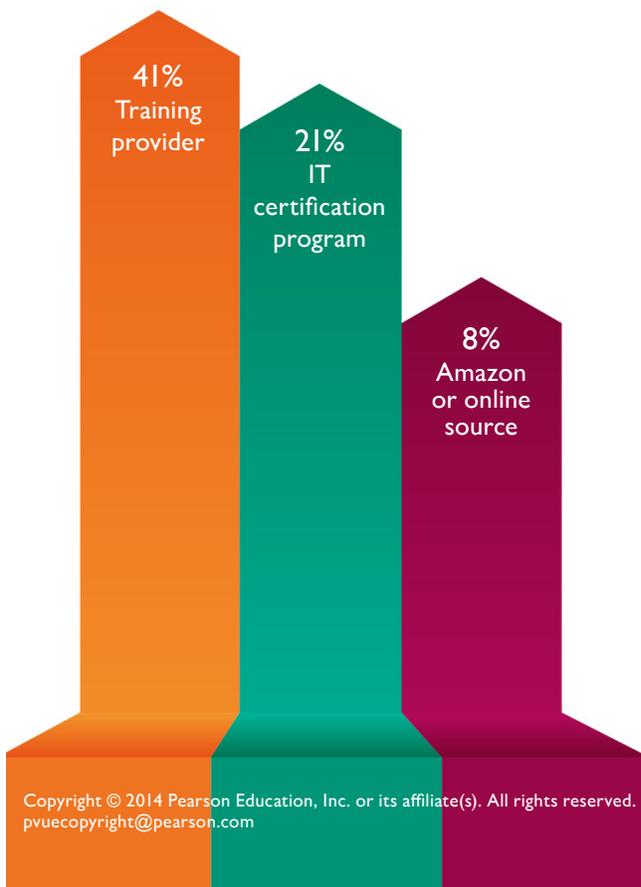
Training provider	41%
From the IT certification program	21%
Amazon or online source	8%
Friend or colleague	7%
Employer or company	6%
mindhub.com, CompTIAstore.com, AdobeMarketplace.com or other certification e-commerce site	1%
Other	11%
Don't know	5%

Based on all those who self-paid for instructor-led training: 9,394 responses.

Certification exams

Q: In the past 24 months, have you taken a certification exam for any of the following programs? (choose all that apply)
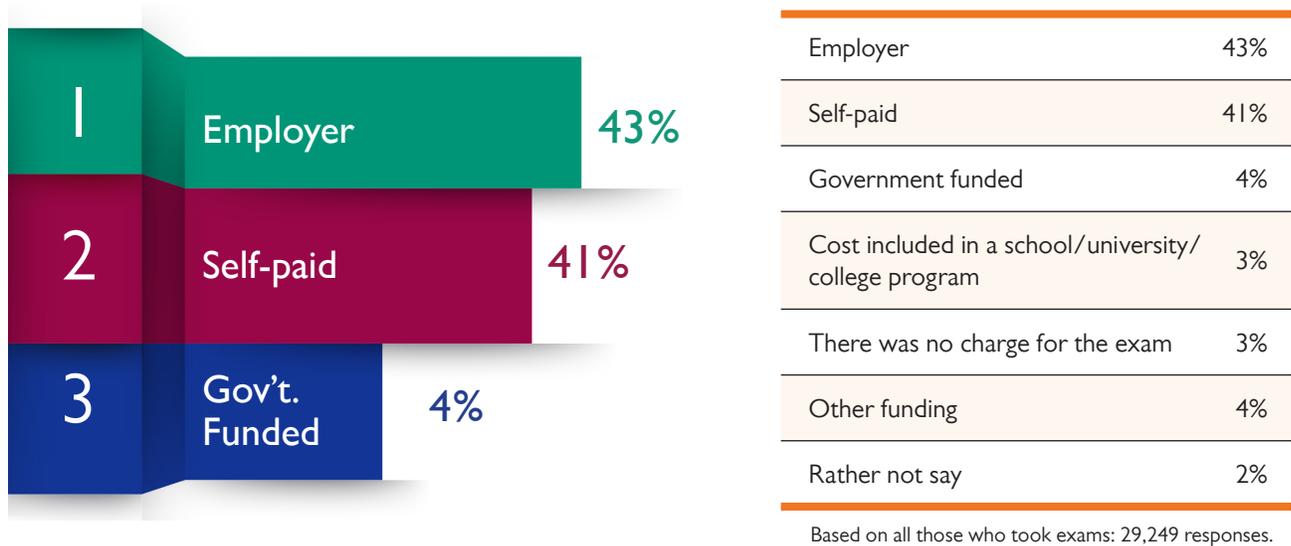
94% of the respondents had taken a certification exam in the past 24 months.

Legend:
- Took training (%)
- Took certification exam (%)
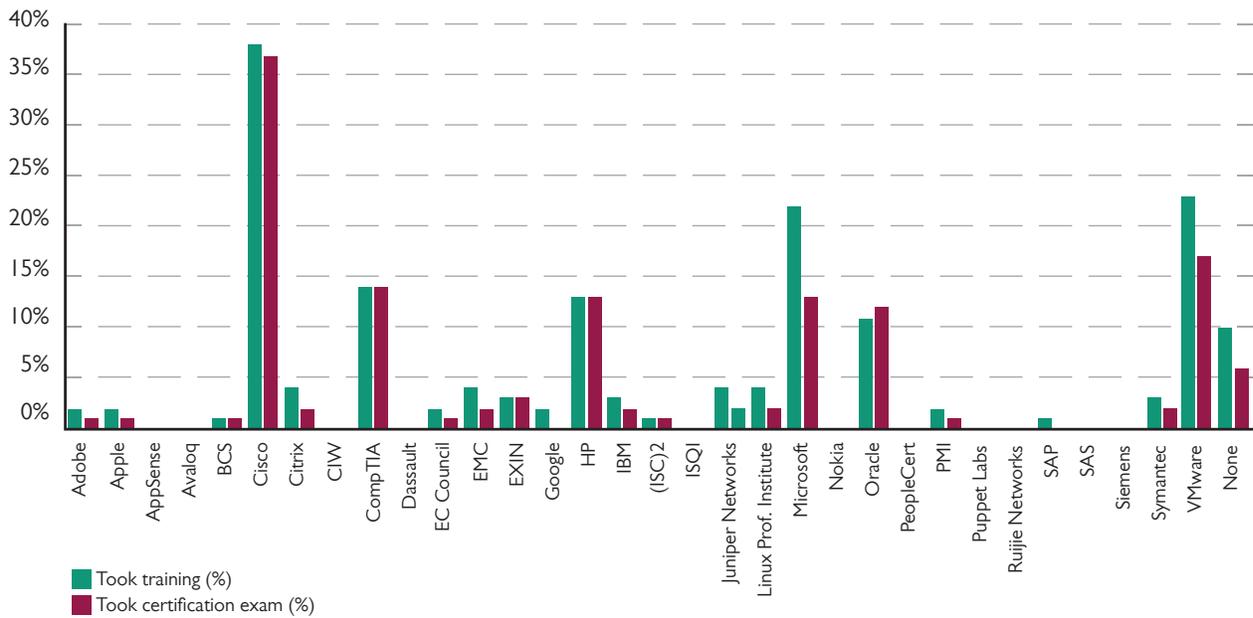
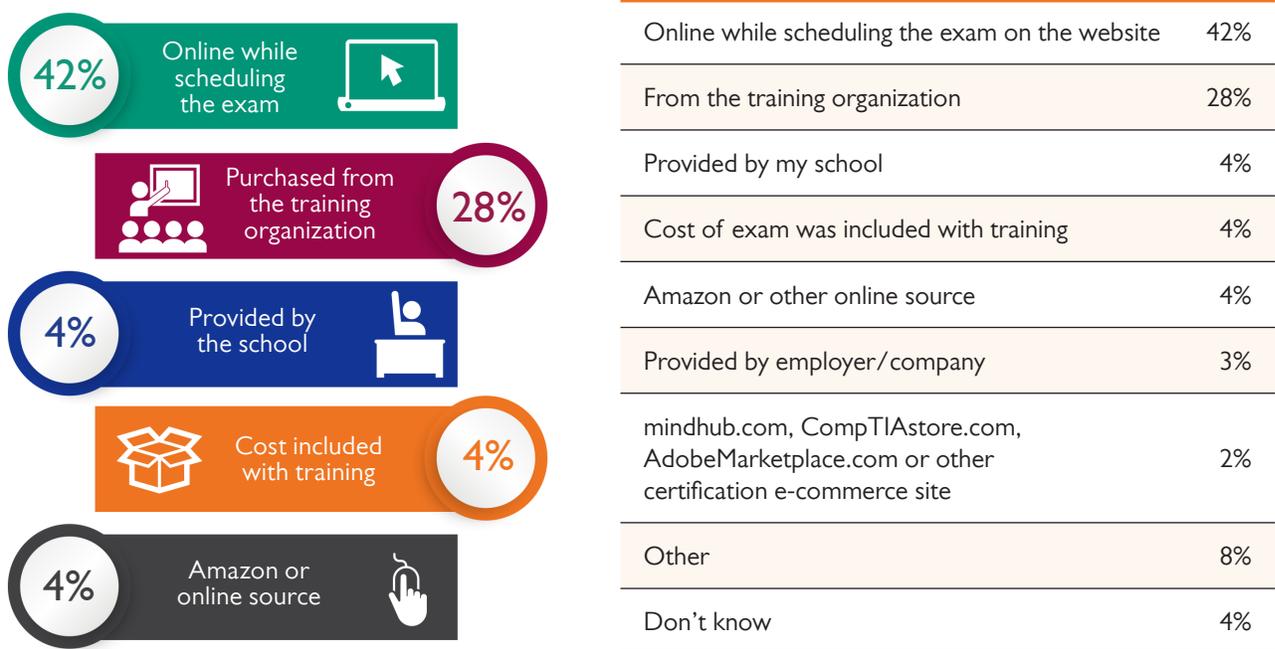|								
Adobe	1%	CIW	0.40%	HP	13%	Nokia	0.13%	SAS	0.14%
Apple	1%	CompTIA	14%	IBM	2%	Oracle	12%	Siemens	0.08%
AppSense	0.04%	Dassault	0.05%	(ISC)²	1%	PeopleCert	0.29%	Symantec	2%
Avaloq	0.03%	EC Council	1%	ISQI	0.13%	PMI	1%	VMware	17%
BCS	1%	EMC	2%	Juniper Networks	2%	Puppet Labs	0.05%	None	6%
Cisco	37%	EXIN	3%	LPI	2%	Ruijie Networks	0.05%	NOTE: Certification exam data only. See page 2 for training data.
Citrix	2%	Google	0.41%	Microsoft	13%	SAP	0.30%	

Q: If you did take an exam within the last 24 months, who paid for the most recent exam?

43% of certification exams were paid for by employers, proving that companies are continuing to invest in IT certification. A further 41% of respondents paid for their own exams.

1	Employer	**43%**
2	Self-paid	**41%**
3	Gov't. Funded	**4%**

Employer	43%
Self-paid	41%
Government funded	4%
Cost included in a school/university/ college program	3%
There was no charge for the exam	3%
Other funding	4%
Rather not say	2%

Based on all those who took exams: 29,249 responses.

Q: Still thinking about the most recent exam you took, where was this exam purchased?

42% of respondents purchased their certification exam online while scheduling their test.

42%	Online while scheduling the exam
28%	Purchased from the training organization
4%	Provided by the school
4%	Cost included with training
4%	Amazon or online source

Online while scheduling the exam on the website	42%
From the training organization	28%
Provided by my school	4%
Cost of exam was included with training	4%
Amazon or other online source	4%
Provided by employer/company	3%
mindhub.com, CompTIAstore.com, AdobeMarketplace.com or other certification e-commerce site	2%
Other	8%
Don't know	4%

Based on all those who self-paid for an exam: 11,953 responses.

Use of study materials

Q: In the past 24 months, did you use any self-study materials for your exam?

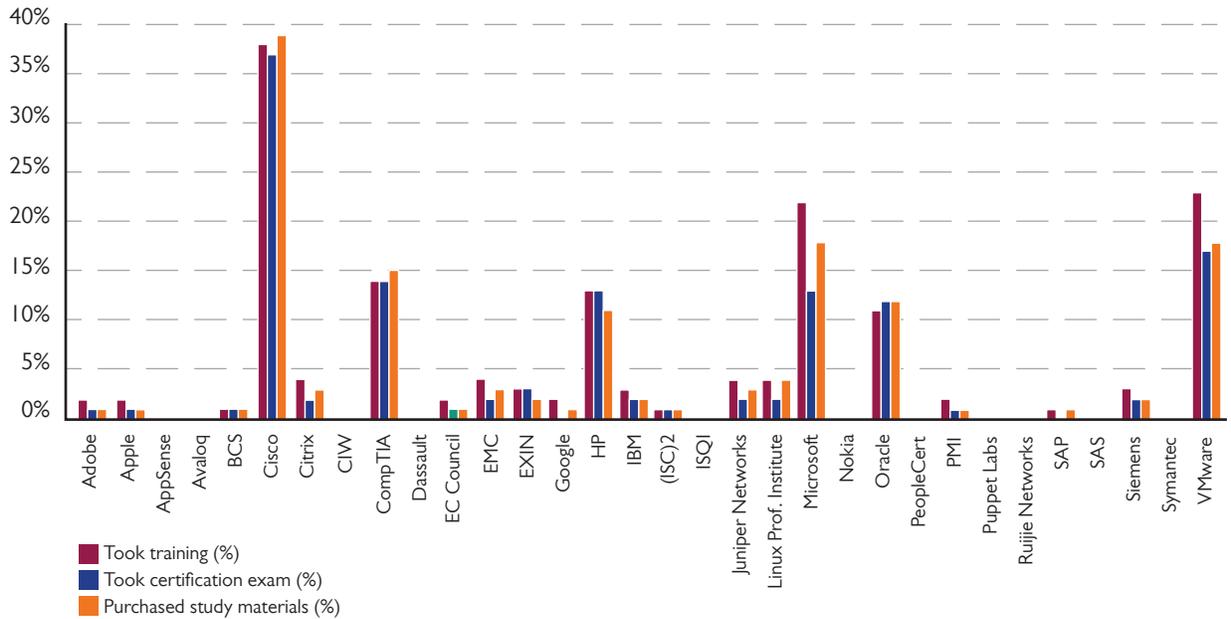More than 9 in 10 of candidates used study materials in the past 24 months.

✔ **91%** Yes   ✘ **9%** No

Q: Which of the following IT programs did you purchase self-study materials for in the past 24 months? (choose all that apply)

Legend:
- Took training (%)
- Took certification exam (%)
- Purchased study materials (%)

Adobe	1%	CIW	0.36%	HP	11%	Nokia	0.23%	SAS	0.21%
Apple	1%	CompTIA	15%	IBM	2%	Oracle	12%	Siemens	0.13%
AppSense	0.06%	Dassault	0.04%	(ISC)²	1%	PeopleCert	0.26%	Symantec	2%
Avaloq	0.03%	EC Council	1%	ISQI	0.22%	PMI	1%	VMware	18%
BCS	1%	EMC	3%	Juniper Networks	3%	Puppet Labs	0.13%	NOTE: Self-study data only. See page 2 for training and page 4 for certification exam data.
Cisco	39%	EXIN	2%	LPI	4%	Ruijie Networks	0.09%	
Citrix	3%	Google	1%	Microsoft	18%	SAP	1%	

Q: If you did use self-study materials within the last 24 months, who paid for the most recent set of self-study materials you used?

Over half of respondents bought their study materials on their own and 24% noted their materials were funded by an employer.

24% Employer

55% Self-paid

6% IT certification program
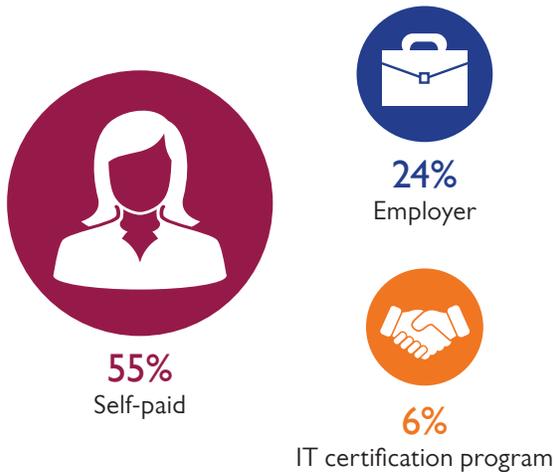
Self-paid	55%
Employer	24%
Provided by the IT certification program	6%
Included in a school/university/college program	3%
Government funding	2%
Other funding	6%
Rather not say	3%

Based on those who used self-study materials: 28,290 responses.

Q: Still thinking about the most recent self-study materials you used, where did you purchase the additional study materials?

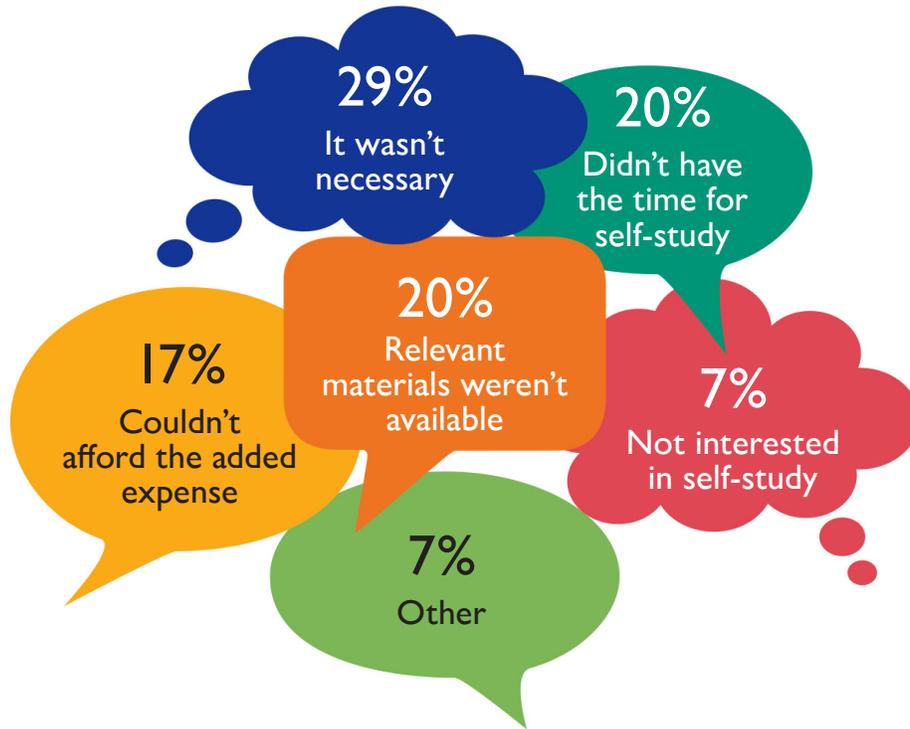31% of candidates purchased study materials online.

31% Amazon or other online source

13% IT certification program

13% Friend or colleague

17% Training provider

Amazon or other online source	31%
Training provider	17%
From the IT certification program	13%
Friend or colleague	13%
Employer or company	3%
mindhub.com, CompTIAstore.com, AdobeMarketplace.com or other certification e-commerce site	2%
Other	18%
Don't know	3%

Based on all those who self-paid for self-study materials: 15,580 responses.

Purchasing habits

Q: If you did not use any self-study materials, what was the PRIMARY reason for not using any self-study materials?

29% It wasn't necessary

20% Didn't have the time for self-study

20% Relevant materials weren't available

17% Couldn't afford the added expense

7% Not interested in self-study

7% Other

Based on those who did not use self-study materials: 2,697 responses.

Q: Was the cost of the certification exam included in the cost of instructor-led training?

✔ **39%** Yes

🚫 **17%** Did not purchase

✘ **41%** No

❓ **3%** Did not respond
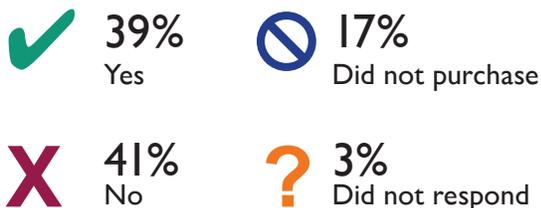
Q: Was the cost of the certification exam included in the cost of any self-study material?

✔ **33%** Yes

🚫 **15%** Did not purchase

✘ **44%** No

❓ **8%** Did not respond

Impact of certification

Q: What were your reasons for pursuing the certification exam? (choose all that apply)

The majority (70%) of the respondents who took certifications did so hoping to improve their professional profile. In addition, over half of candidates (55%) also mentioned they pursued certification with intentions of improving their CV/resume.
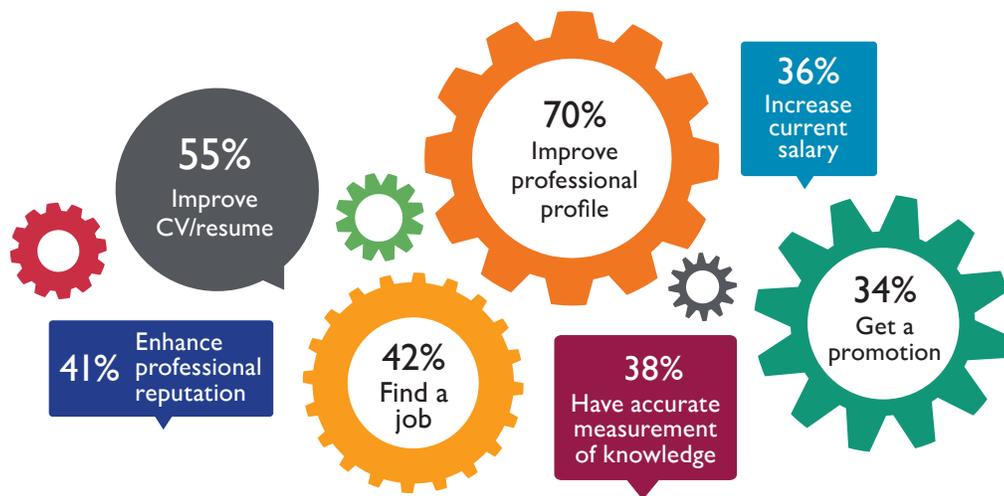
Improve professional profile	70%	Required by employer	29%
Improve CV/resume	55%	Re-certify or retain partnership status	16%
Increase chances of finding a job	42%	Recommended by a friend or colleague	8%
Enhance professional reputation with colleagues, employers, or customers	41%	Discounts or special promotions were available from the program provider	7%
Have an accurate measure of my knowledge	38%	My instructor encouraged me to take the exam after completing training	5%
Increase chances of a higher salary with current employer	36%	The exam was paid for as part of the training	5%
Increase chances of a promotion with current employer	34%	Other	1%
Change to a better job with a different company	29%		

Q: Which of the following benefits did you get from your certification? (choose all that apply)

65% of respondents said achieving their certification has had a positive impact on their professional image/reputation.

65% Positive impact on professional image

27% Received a salary increase

33% Moved into a career in IT
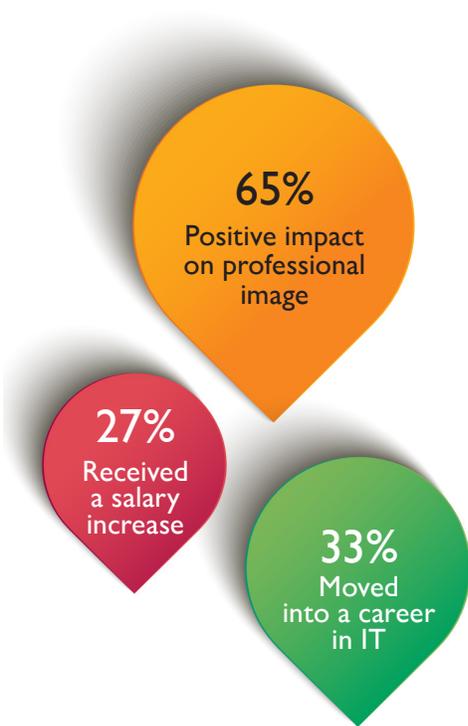
|	
Certification has had a positive impact on my professional image/reputation	65%
Moved into a career in IT	33%
Got a salary increase	27%
Found a job	24%
Got a promotion	20%
Got a better job with a different company	19%
Found a job in a new country	8%
Other	8%

Q: How did the certification help you most in your job?

56% of respondents said they were able to perform their job better and more efficiently after obtaining their certification.

29% Helped me do my job more efficiently

28% Helped me do complex tasks more confidently

27% Helped me do my job better

Helped me do my job more efficiently	29%
Helped me do complex tasks more confidently	28%
Helped me to do my job better	27%
Helped me to take on management responsibilities	9%
Other	7%

Q: How long after you achieved the certification did you experience the first benefit?

16%
Within 1 month

11%
Within 6 months

24%
Immediately

18%
Within 3 months

9%
Within 1 year
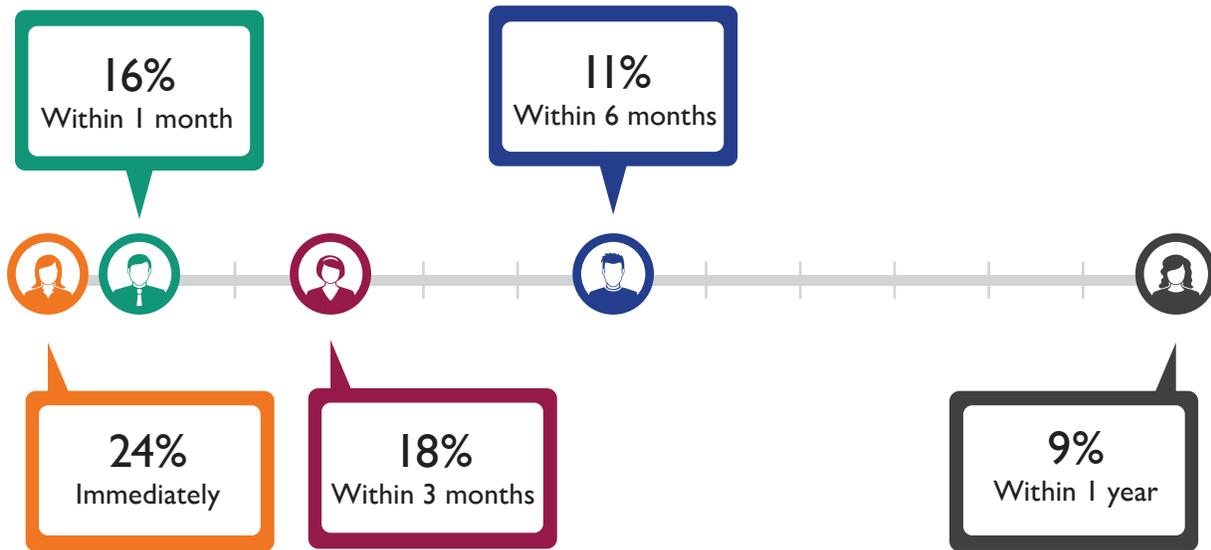
Immediately	24%	Within 6 months	11%	Not applicable	15%
Within 1 month	16%	Within 1 year	9%	Prefer not to comment	7%
Within 3 months	18%				

Q: If you received a salary increase or a promotion, by what percentage did your salary increase from before the certification was earned?

30% of respondents said they received a salary increase of up to 20% upon earning their certification.

Salary increase	% responded
Up to 5%	9%
6% – 10%	12%
11% – 20%	9%
21% – 30%	6%
31% – 50%	3%
51% or greater	2%
Prefer not to comment	16%
None	43%

Future intention for certification/training

Q: Please rate the following statements on how well they describe your intentions for the next 12 months.

Going forward, there is a commitment to ongoing professional development among candidates with more than 9 in 10 (93%) announcing they are likely to take a certification exam in the next 12 months. Additionally, nearly 70% are likely to undertake further instructor-led training.

I will undertake instructor-led training.

Likely and very likely	69%
Unlikely and very unlikely	31%

Based on those who responded to this question: 28,823 responses.

I will take a certification exam.

Likely and very likely	93%
Unlikely and very unlikely	7%

Based on those who responded to this question: 30,515 responses.

I will purchase self-study materials.

Likely and very likely	76%
Unlikely and very unlikely	24%

Based on those who responded to this question: 29,170 responses.

- Likely and very likely to take instructor-led training.
- Likely and very likely to take a certification exam.
- Likely and very likely to purchase self-study materials.

Future research

Pearson VUE plans to conduct this research annually to track ongoing training and testing trends within the IT market. We will continue to refine this survey and adjust questions to better explore trends in IT certification. Some future topics may include:

- Impact of gender on training, certification, employment and salaries
- Trends in growth of online training vs. ILT
- Financial benefits of obtaining certification
- Influence of employer demand for certification

About the report

Survey objectives

1. To gain insight into the value of IT certification for candidates.
2. To learn more about candidate study habits, reasons for taking training/obtaining a certification and purchasing behaviors.
3. To further understand intentions for future training and/or testing.

Participating IT organizations

Pearson VUE would like to extend a special thank you to the following IT organizations for helping make this survey a success:

- BCS The Chartered Institute for IT
- Cisco
- Citrix
- CompTIA
- EMC
- HP
- LPI
- Oracle
- Puppet Labs
- SAS
- Symantec
- VMware

Survey methodology

The 2014 Value of IT Certification Survey was conducted online from May 22 to June 24, 2014. Nearly 400,000 survey invitations were emailed to individuals who had taken a certification exam from any one of the 12 leading certification programs in the past two years and opted in to receive marketing communications from Pearson VUE. The survey yielded nearly 31,000 completed responses from around the globe. All tables included in the report are based on total responses unless otherwise stated.

Survey incentive

The first 100 respondents to complete the survey in each region (Americas, EMEA & APAC) received an Amazon gift card worth $10 USD, or the appropriate currency equivalent.