



INTERNSHIP INSPIRATION

CISCO NETWORKING ACADEMY

SUCCESS STORY

SINGAPORE
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Alvin Loo
Cisco Networking Academy Alumnus

This year Cisco embarked on a new internship program for the Cisco Networking Academy students to become a part of the Customer Briefing Centre (CBC) in Singapore.

The CBC has world class facilities showcasing advanced technology demonstrations as well as rich multimedia presentation capabilities to show customers how Cisco products and solutions can transform their business.

An Interview with Alvin Loo, a Cisco Networking Academy Alumnus

Alvin Loo is currently studying for a certificate in Information Technology (2 years of studies) at the Institute of Technical Education Singapore (College West). Upon completion of his first year of studies, Alvin won the Academy Progress Award, and has recently been nominated for the distinguished “Lee Kuan Yew Model Student” award.

As part of his certificate Alvin has completed the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) qualifications through the Cisco Networking Academy, and is planning to sit for his CCNA industry certification once his internship is complete.

How did you find out about the CBC Internship Program?

“I heard about the CBC internship opportunity through my lecturer Mr. Lam. I jumped at the opportunity, as I recognized this as a fantastic opportunity for me to gain some valuable business skills, and to be able to put into practice what I studied during the course. Also, since I am a registered Networking Academy Alumni, I was able to submit my resume via the Cisco Networking Academy job site”.

What do you do within the CBC, and what have you learnt?

“I was given a fabulous introduction into the Customer Briefing Centre on day one by our manager Mr. Ajith Jacob, and it was really exciting



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to learn about what the entire CBC team did... I don't know how they were so patient with me in that first week, as really it is a steep learning curve when you have your first work experience. During the three months I worked closely with the CBC team. I worked closely with Ronnie Choh, the Demonstration Engineer, as I was not experienced enough to work directly with Cisco customers. I did however, have the opportunity to sit in on some of his demonstrations and to hear how customer presentations were conducted. Tina Tong, CBC's Program Manager who is responsible for all the day-to-day running of the CBC, taught me about the administrative part of running the centre. Sean Ng, the Technical Marketing Engineer, taught me a lot about the maintenance of equipment, shipping services and support for the products within the CBC.

I have learnt so much in the three months I spent at the CBC, and it has really inspired me to continue my studies and pursue a professional career in Networking. I feel privileged to have had the internship opportunity as it has allowed me to see the full end to end process of working with customers. I was so excited to be given the project of looking after the implementation of DMS (digital media system) products within the CBC. The first product launch was within the Cisco Express, and it was my task to integrate it with the CBC – I was so impressed that the CBC team trusted me with this project.

What did you enjoy most about your internship experience?

“I loved the team environment, and the “hands on” aspect of the job. They were so friendly and so encouraging, I could not believe how supportive a team could be, to someone who knew so little when they walked through the door on that first day of the internship. They were fabulous mentors for me, and even the broader Cisco staff that I came into contact with, have all wished me the best and have helped me along the way.

What advice would you give other students on pursuing an Internship?

“I would tell them to go for it! Have a positive attitude and learn as much as you can. My CCNA studies gave me the confidence and passion for technical work, but an internship gives you a new perspective on a working career in technology. It is the most rewarding experience putting theory into practice. I am just about to end my internship now, and I am handing over my projects to the CBC's new intern. I am excited for him, as I think he will enjoy the experience as well, and this last piece of my internship has allowed me to step into the role as “mentor” for the next intern.



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What are your future plans?

“Right now I have to go back and complete my ITE studies. I plan to sit for my certification and use my Cisco Networking Academy certification voucher. I’d like to go onto further studies in Multimedia Information Technology, once I complete my two years with the Singapore National Service. I love networking – so I hope I can eventually pursue a career in this field – I would love to pursue Engineering opportunities.

Any last words?

I would like to thank the CBC team members for their patience in guiding me and their assistance during the 3 months.

Ronnie Choh Kar Wai, the Demonstration Engineer for the CBC gives some great parting advice for those thinking of taking up an internship opportunity. “Come with an open mind. Be ready to socialize, make friends and learn new things”.

Sean Ng, Technical Marketing Engineer, who is responsible for the operations and maintenance of the Demonstration lab as well as the CBC, worked closely with Alvin to give him instruction on the customization and set up of the CBC in preparation for client visits. “I also learnt a great deal from working with Alvin. It was rewarding to see an intern be able to take up the more challenging assignments, and complete them in a professional and timely manner. It really meant that my time could be freed up to concentrate on strategic ways to improve our customer experience in the CBC”.

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