



“Addicted” to Success

Seven CCIE Badges in Three Years for Jiaqi Xu

To be a CCIE certification holder is to be part of a rare group indeed—among less than three percent of all Cisco-certified individuals around the world. But Jiaqi Xu can count himself among the best of the best of this group. That’s because he’s one of only 16 individuals worldwide with not one, not two, but seven different CCIE certifications. Jiaqi has one word to describe this IT feat: “addicted.”

Building a Stronger Knowledge Base with Each Certification

After a friend mentioned the idea of Cisco certifications to Jiaqi, he enrolled and never looked back. CCIE Security certification came first in October 2011 and then CCIE Voice in early 2013. As a network engineer involved in both presales and postsales activity for the East China region for Cisco’s general distributor, Digital China, Jiaqi found that certification gave him the confidence and ability to communicate with customers more smoothly.

Jiaqi’s growing network knowledge and work experience led to him being offered a job at Cisco in 2013. At Cisco, Jiaqi wasted no time earning five more badges in relatively short order: CCIE Service Provider in September 2013, followed by CCIE Collaboration in April 2014. Then came CCIE Data Center, just one month later. By late 2014, Jiaqi had added CCIE Wireless and CCIE Routing and Switching to his list of exploits. Considering that the average amount of preparation time for an individual pursuing a single CCIE certification is eight months, Jiaqi’s dedication is particularly impressive.



Cisco Career Certifications

Case Study Subject

Jiaqi Xu, Systems Engineer, Cisco China

Industry

IT

Challenge

Improving technical breadth required for top-quality engineering support of Cisco customers

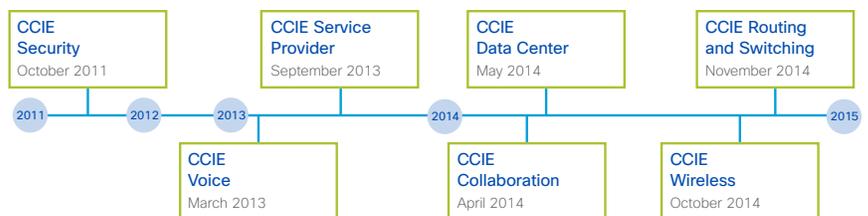
Solutions

CCIE Security, CCIE Voice, CCIE Service Provider, CCIE Collaboration, CCIE Data Center, CCIE Wireless, and CCIE Routing and Switching certifications

Professional Benefits

Helping customers achieve business goals through complete and integrated technical solutions

Three Years, Seven Certifications



What made Jiaqi’s accomplishment even more impressive was that he earned his seven CCIE certifications without achieving his Associate or Professional levels first, as most people do.

The Best Ways to Learn and Persevere

Earning seven certifications didn’t come without sacrifice. Says Jiaqi, “I abandoned almost all of my recreational activities and put aside all other things that I liked before. My New Year’s holiday was even spent in the lab.” To earn those last five certifications in just a little more than a year, he needed to travel between Beijing, Hong Kong, and San Jose.



“Great oaks grow from little acorns. Only when a solid foundation is built can you gradually find the road that’s very broad.”

—Jiaqi Xu

Jiaqi’s thirst for information kept him going: “I tried my best to learn more network knowledge and absorb a new technique every day.”

Another thing that kept Jiaqi going was having a study group, specifically in preparing for the CCIE Data Center certification. The group set up their own lab to pace through exercises. “Even a broken-down lab could still allow me to learn a lot of the content,” says Jiaqi. The members of the study group all went for their certification at the same time. “This dramatically improved our exam pass rate,” he adds.

Improving Capabilities and Confidence with Customers

Earning five CCIE certifications at Cisco, in addition to the two certifications he had already obtained, won Jiaqi the admiration of his boss and colleagues. “I became able to apply all kinds of technologies masterfully,” he states. “Now I can handle anything easily and dexterously, including routing and switching, collaboration, and data center. I can face my customers confidently.”

Jiaqi’s reward came in the form of a promotion from presales engineer to systems engineer. In this role, Jiaqi helps the sales team in China convey the advantages of Cisco products and solutions to customers. “Cisco has very strong competitors in China,” he says. “Our advantage is that we can help customers achieve their business goals by enabling them to work out complete and integrated technical solutions.”



What His Future Holds

Despite the blistering pace at which he picked up his seven CCIE titles, Jiaqi’s advice is not to proceed hastily. “It’s very necessary to study network fundamentals robustly,” he says. “Great oaks grow from little acorns. Only when a solid foundation is built can you gradually find the road that’s very broad.”

Jiaqi continues to be driven. “Even though I’ve obtained seven CCIE certificates, there are still challenges in my work and problems I don’t know how to solve,” he states. “CCIE certification is only a

small milestone. It’s intended to teach you how to get started and use a scientific learning approach to acquire knowledge. You have to learn new technologies continuously, constantly remind yourself to advance with the times, and take in new knowledge like a sponge.”

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Routing and Switching certification, visit: www.cisco.com/go/rs-track.