

ITALY'S AICA RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE AWARD

The Project 'Revitalising a Mature Market Through an Internal Campaign' is the Winner in the Marketing & Public Relations Category

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – 14 OCTOBER 2011

At the ECDL Foundation Forum 2011, held in Dublin, Ireland, the entry submitted by the National Operator for Italy, AICA, was voted to be an outstanding example of best practice in the Marketing & Public Relations category.

ECDL Foundation, the certifying authority for the world's leading international computer skills certification programme, ECDL / ICDL, established the Best Practice Awards to acknowledge and credit initiatives and projects that are considered as exceptional examples of the implementation of ECDL Foundation programmes that help to raise levels of digital literacy, and promote ECDL / ICDL in local markets.



AICA

The Marketing & Public Relations category recognises excellence in initiatives aimed at raising the profile of ECDL Foundation's certification programmes. This new Best Practice Awards category credits promotional activities such as social media strategies, innovative sales campaigns, and advertising initiatives in print and other media.

The 2011 winner in the Marketing & Public Relations category was AICA, for an initiative that increased sales through making best use of the organisation's existing network of operatives, through bonuses and other incentives. The outcome of the project is that a market that has seen several years of negative growth has experienced a significant upturn in sales.

This year, the ECDL Foundation Best Practice Awards ceremony was attended by ICT professionals and digital literacy policy shapers, representing national computer societies and international organisations in 148 countries around the world.



ICDL Africa

The runner-up in this category was ICDL Africa.

There are three other categories for the ECDL Foundation Best Practice Awards, and this year's winners in these categories are:

Corporate/Private – ECDL France, Government/Public – testIT (Sri Lanka), Social Inclusion – ECDL Romania.

ENDS

About ECDL Foundation

ECDL Foundation is the certifying authority for the leading international computer skills certification programme - ECDL / ICDL. ECDL Foundation's mission is to enable proficient use of ICT that empowers individuals, organisations and society, through the development, promotion, and delivery of quality certification programmes throughout the world. With over 11 million candidates participating in a range of programmes, ECDL Foundation has set the global benchmark in end-user skills certification. For more information about ECDL Foundation, and about the ECDL / ICDL programme, please visit: www.ecdl.org

Internal Campaign Report

In addition to many other general actions, two more specific campaigns were proposed and approved in 2009:

- AICA started to look at schools as the main channel for full ECDL certification [this part is not in the scope of this brief report]

Clear targets were given to each local inspector, i.e. to increase the number of test centres and the number of certification tests taken in his/her territory. Since AICA gives these inspectors a fixed pay only for their (part-time) job as quality auditors, some additional 'push money' was allocated to compensate positive results in their additional new job as promoters.

The campaign targeting AICA inspectors/promoters was initially piloted on a limited set of territories, then extended in 2010 to all regions of the country, with this basic message:

ECDL certifications are even more relevant in a mature society, they just need to be better known (including new modules) and used.

This message was not only said during our internal meetings: a 2-day training on sales techniques was offered to all promoters, and each of them received a letter (formally a contractual addendum) specifying targets and rewards in event of success.

The acceptance from our field force was good, but practical results were still generally poor in 2010, with a few positive exceptions. As a consequence, the actual expenditure for bonuses was less than € 25,000.

In 2011 this expenditure is going to be 3 times higher, because we are finally succeeding in reverting the negative market trend, as shown in the attached figures.

New Tools

In addition to the training on sales techniques and to the letters defining personal targets and rewards, the following tools and new products were also offered to support the promoter's activity:

- A personal dashboard showing day by day to each promoter the progress against targets in his/her territory (fig. 2, 3, 4 below)
- 'Teca', the new virtual community dedicated to ECDL examiners and other test centre staff willing to read news in advance, to comment on it, and to share experiences (fig. 5); a private forum inside Teca is reserved to the exchange of ideas between promoters
- 'Aula01' e-learning platform covering the 7 ECDL certification modules, developed by a primary partner of AICA and added as an option for test centres interested in blended learning
- A new way of presenting our wide product range: ECDL's transition from a generic certification to a set of modules capturing the skill mix offered by training paths (including all new curricula resulting from the national high school reform, started in Sept. 2010)