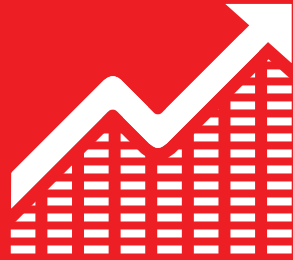
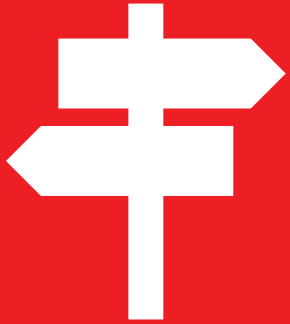


# **FIREBRAND** | Managed Accounts Programme



**Relevant  
Tested  
Certified**

Your fastest way to get employees trained, certified and back to work

# Firebrand: relevant, tested and certified

The fastest way to get your staff trained, certified and bursting with relevant knowledge

“We test throughout the course, a technique proven to help students retain information by as much as 80%.”



It seems as if every organisation today is expected to achieve more, faster with the same or fewer resources. Time is money, and we can't afford to waste either – but skills are increasingly the key to success.

Against this background, traditional classroom-based training might seem to be at odds with the times. Many organisations cannot afford to release their employees for the number of days needed to complete the course and get certified. But e-Learning – which might initially appear to be an attractive alternative – often takes too long and has a poor track record when it comes to the quality of learning and success in achieving certification.

## What is the alternative?

Firebrand's unique Accelerated Learning training method means your employees can be trained and certified at twice the speed of conventional training.

With a Firebrand course, employees are back at work sooner – qualified with an industry-standard certification. Plus, they learn practical skills, from the instructor's industry experience.

What we can offer your organisation is a unique,

tailored training programme that is faster, measurable and effective. We produce trained staff that are productive from the minute they complete the course.

Our courses are designed to be :

- **Relevant** the skills and techniques learned on a Firebrand course help solve real-life problems and are taught by experts with a wealth of industry experience
- **Tested** we test throughout the course, a technique proven to help students retain information by as much as 80%\*
- **Certified** all our courses are completed by an official exam taken on-site, with results and feedback given before the student leaves the training centre.

## Who is Firebrand?

Since 2001, we have delivered training to private and public sector organisations – saving 35,000 students more than one million hours of training. Firebrand has many official accreditations, including Microsoft Gold Learning Partner and Cisco Learning Specialized Partner. We are named in the Top 20 IT Training Companies in the World by TrainingIndustry.com.

\* Ten Benefits of Testing and their Applications to Educational Practice, Psychology of Learning and Motivation – 2011

# Solving the skills deficit

There's a skills crisis looming, as EU figures predict a shortfall of over 700,000 employees by 2015



“Our Managed Account customers are looking to us to help them implement strategic training programmes”

We are currently going through turbulent times. The economy has failed, and has forced organisations to do more with less. As a consequence we are asking our departments to squeeze more out of current technology. But we're also asking our product teams to accelerate their time to market, and we're looking to new technologies such as the cloud, mobile, social media and big data to grow our businesses.

## But what about the skills shortage?

Unfortunately, there's a limited number of potential employees with the right skill-sets, and there's now a predicted skills deficit of almost 700,000 in the EU by 2015. As a result, the competition for – and wages of – those with the right 'Business 2.0' skills has rocketed.

Businesses such as Microsoft, Google, Amazon and Salesforce can afford to invest in new technology and recruit the

brightest stars. But not everyone has such deep pockets, so how can you get the best out of your teams, and do more with less? The answer is to be agile and disruptive, and use the people and the tools you already have; but use them more effectively through training.

## Use the people you already have

More and more of our Managed Account customers are looking to us to help them implement strategic training programmes, which enable them to up-skill their teams on the latest technologies and project management methodologies.

At Firebrand we understand the needs that organisations have. To help, we've developed our Managed Accounts Programme, which is targeted specifically at businesses with complex skills and training needs, and is designed to help you get more out of your current

staff and to become more agile.

Our Managed Accounts team is staffed by experienced and skilled training professionals who can help develop your learning and development strategies, manage your day-to-day training needs and help your organisation grow.

To find out more about how we can help, read the rest of this guide, visit our Managed Accounts Programme website, or give us a call.

Yours,

Harry Pallandt,  
Algemeen Directeur

# Managing your projects more effectively

New products, services and technologies usually start with a good idea, and the skills and abilities of a dedicated team. However, new research shows that a lack of skills and certification can lead to late delivery, overspend and failure

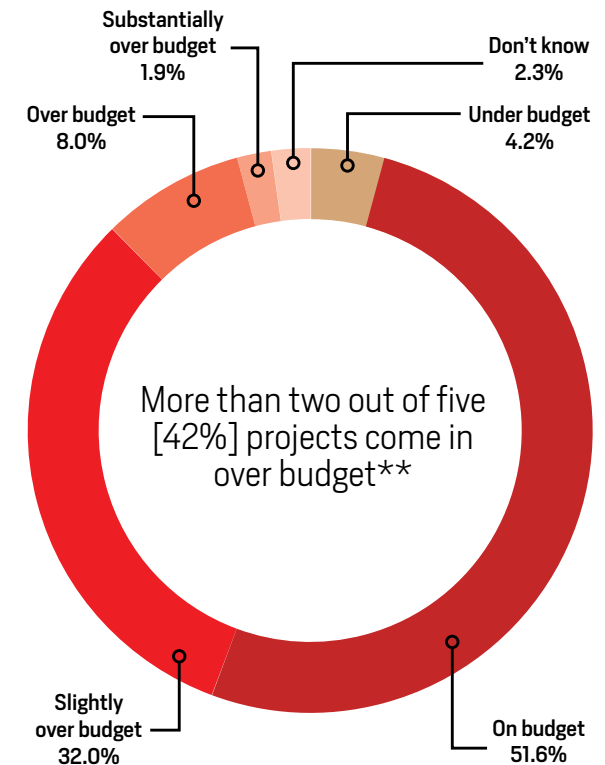


The secret to a successful project is ensuring that it stays on-plan, achieves the objective on or under budget, and on or ahead of time. However, if you look at any statistics on projects – particularly large IT-based projects – you'll find that most are anything but successful.

The results of a 2012 survey by McKinsey\* showed on average, large IT projects run 45% over budget and

7% over time, while delivering 56% less value than predicted.

If you only look at the projects that were completed, there's even more bad news. A recent survey\*\* found that more than two out of five (42%) projects were over budget, with one in 10 projects ending-up significantly over budget (see right).



\* Delivering large-scale IT projects on time, on budget, and on value, McKinsey & Company – 2012

\*\* How to Increase Your IT Project Success, Susan Tan – 2011

### Why projects go wrong

What is it that makes projects so difficult to complete? Is it the usual suspects of mission/feature creep, is it technology, or is it something else? Is there anything that can be done to make projects more successful, and to ensure a better outcome?

Mission creep is undoubtedly part of the problem, and new project management methodologies such as Agile are playing their part in reducing its influence. However, it's also fair to say that the use of technology is also part of the problem, and as a Harvard Business Review study\* points out...

"...software is now an integral part of numerous products...the engineers and managers who are in charge of product development too often have a limited understanding of how to implement the technology component."

### The secret of a successful project

While looking at the factors that make a project successful, analysts IDC discovered that the main contributing elements to project failure were the competence of the project manager and the project teams.

IDC's research\*\* found that the project team's skill-set was the deciding factor in more than one in four projects, with a strong correlation existing between the



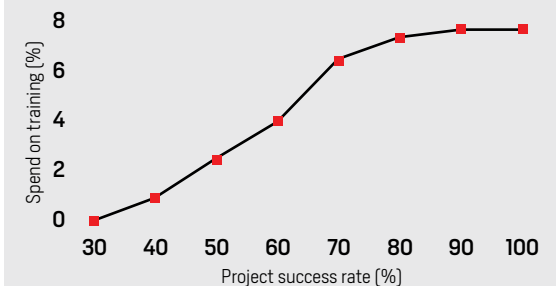
time and money spent on any of the following factors and the outcome of a project:

- The overall skill level of project teams
- The percentage of the project budget spent on training
- The number of hours of training per team member

### Small increases in training budget have big effects

IDC also discovered that the amount or the time spent on training doesn't need to be huge to make a big difference. Teams receiving just 40 hours of training per member met their significant project objectives three times as often as teams that received 30 hours of training or less. Projects allocating just 7% of the

### Relationship between training spend and IT project success\*\*



\* Why Your IT Project May Be Riskier Than You Think, HBR - 2011

\*\* Impact of Training on Project Success, IDC - 2011



budget to training were “significantly” more successful than projects where only 4% of the budget went to training.

### Why certification makes for successful projects

The final part of the recipe for project success is down to testing and accreditation. IDC looked at the types of training on offer, and how that affected the overall project result. They found that the more accredited experts on the team, the more likely the project was to be successful.

According to the IDC research, “functional excellence increases either when an organisation is well-trained, or when a team increases its percentage of certified members; and each new certification increases team performance.”

It continues: “the subsequent certification of the skills obtained by IT staff members in particular is the most reliable predictor of IT project success. When

projects succeed, IT can spend less time on routine installation and maintenance tasks and more time developing services that improve business processes and drive revenue growth.”

## Managed Accounts Programme (MAP)

Signing up with a Firebrand Managed Accounts Programme can help your organisation deliver a 100% record on IT projects, delivering them on time and on budget.

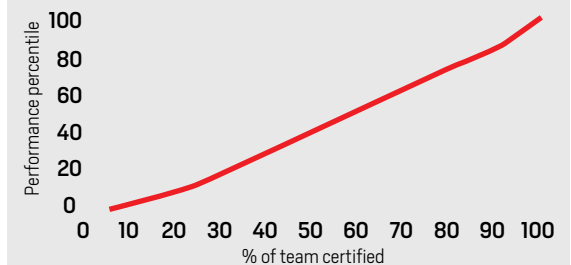
The Firebrand MAP has been built to deliver a service that’s simple to administer, scalable and brings your organisation quantifiable benefits. With the MAP you get:

- A dedicated Managed Account consultant – who will advise on new business and IT trends, and courses available; and assess your organisation’s current skills
- Complete transparency on costs – to enable you to see and budget for all your training in advance
- A monthly statement – get a full break-down of your staff’s training attended in the last month. As well as seeing what your total training costs are, you will be able to see progress against your training plan. The statement also lists the certificates, qualifications

and exam scores for your employees, and gives recommendations for their next training steps

- A single monthly invoice for your organisation
- Training tools – including a True Cost of Training Calculator (see pages 10 and 11) to help you compare the true cost of training, and pre-test quizzes to test employees’ skill levels and training requirements
- Day-to-day training management – our Managed Accounts customer service team will enrol your teams on courses, update employee calendars and take over the management of getting your teams to training on time
- The Firebrand Passport – get more training days for your organisation by buying training in advance.

### Relationship between performance and percentage of team certified in all IT functions\*



\* Impact of Training on Project Success, IDC – 2011



# How to succeed in the war for talent

Good IT and project management skills are in short supply and contractors can name their price, so how can you make sure your organisation is in the best position to achieve success?



If you are in the lucky position of being able to recruit, you will soon find that getting good, experienced staff is both difficult and expensive. Potential employees with IT skills in buzz-word areas such as cloud, mobile,

social media and big data – along with security experts and those with project management experience – are all becoming prohibitively expensive. In short there's a 'war for talent' and it's a war that's affecting everyone from big FTSE 100 businesses through to the latest high-tech start-ups.

Usually, if you can't employ someone full-time then the answer is to get in a contractor. However, this option is

proving difficult even for businesses with deep pockets. As Microsoft's Matt Kaufmann explained, "[Contractors] can charge such hefty contracting fees. What we would offer them in pay annually would not match up to their hourly rate."

## Build your own expertise

A solution to the problem of recruiting is to develop your own expertise through external training. Align to a training programme that matches your organisation's goals with your current in-house skills, and maintain a recruitment and retention strategy.

As well as a list of recommended courses and a timeline of when they need to be achieved, the organisational training programme will also include detailed plans of how to build the skills

and real-world experience needed by your staff. You'll also be able to prioritise and manage the projects in hand, and take advantage of the new technologies and methodologies available, now and in the future.

## Managing your training headache

At Firebrand we understand that creating a training programme can be time consuming and, unless you have a deep understanding of the training courses, can be a complex task. So as part of the Managed Accounts Programme we can help you create a training schedule for your organisation that will prepare your teams for the new projects and new technologies you'll be taking on over the next six to 12 months – and beyond.

**“There will be a deficit of over 700,000 trained IT staff in Europe by 2015.”**

Neellie Kroes, Vice-president of the European Commission

# The Firebrand difference: faster and guaranteed

Time spent out of the office on training is time not spent at work. With Firebrand's Accelerated Learning you can reduce your training overheads by as much as 50%, and it's guaranteed to succeed

One of the key issues with training is the time that employees spend out of the office. Then there are the travel and accommodation costs, and the time away from work for the exam – which could be weeks later, by which time your employees may have forgotten half of what they learned.

## Why e-learning is ineffective

An alternative to classroom training is e-learning, which appears to tick all the boxes for employers. It's something your employees can do when they have 'free time', doesn't require time out of the office, allows students to learn at their own pace, and is cheap.

However, what research\* has found is that online training can be ineffective for those struggling with a subject, and it won't help users to remember the coursework any better than classroom training. In addition, it tends to only teach what's in the curriculum, which for certain IT and project management courses forms only part of what is tested in the exam and is unlikely to help with real-world problems.

On a Firebrand Accelerated Learning course we

train our students at twice the speed of conventional classroom training.

## Back in the office and qualified faster

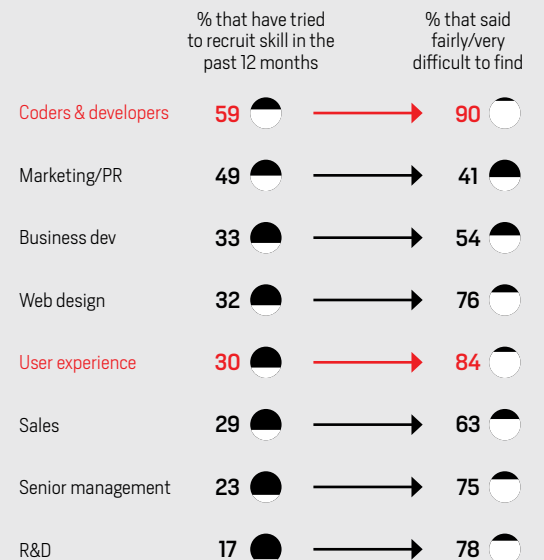
We reduce the time it takes to complete a course through a combination of techniques. Our courses are generally taught from 8am to 7pm and our instructors are on hand to answer questions until much later.

Trainees stay and eat with us during the course so there's no time wasted travelling to and from the training centre, and no additional costs. The training labs are open 24/7, so students can experiment with any of the tools and techniques they have learned so far. Plus, the exam is included on the course, and is taken on-site; whereas other training companies expect you to do this in your own time.

What this means to your organisation is that your employees are out of the office for the minimum amount of time, and you get your staff certified and working on new projects and systems faster. To see how much time and money your organisation can save by choosing a Firebrand training course, see our True

Cost of Training Calculator on pages 10 and 11, and the Firebrand Managed Accounts Programme website.

## GfK Tech City study 2013\*\*



\* Improving students' learning with effective learning techniques: Promising directions from cognitive and educational psychology, Psychological Science in the Public Interest – 2013

\*\* Tech City Growth Stunted by Talent Shortage and Lack of Access to Capital, GfK – 2013



# Firebrand success stories

Here are just a few of the comments from some of the organisations we work with

Since 2001 we have trained tens of thousands of employees, saving organisations more than 1,000,000 hours in training time. Our Accelerated Learning courses cover a wide range of subjects – from big name IT software and services including Microsoft and Cisco, to courses in IT security and project management methodologies.

Firebrand works with large and small organisations – from government departments and local authorities, to organisations in the following sectors:

- IT
- Defence
- Education
- Pharmaceuticals
- Retail
- Services
- Transport
- Automotive
- Charity
- Engineering
- Leisure / Gaming
- Manufacturing / Construction

But don't just listen to us, here's what some of our industry partners and Managed Accounts say about Firebrand Training...



and flexibility – and our Firebrand Training Account Manager, has been helpful in advising on, and organising, our technical training programme.”

**Phillip Rudd, Soltec Computer Systems Director**

“Not many training providers offered what we needed – Microsoft Dynamics AX; we were desperate to gain certification quickly. It boils down to cost more than anything – when you factor in accommodation and travel – it's all under one roof.”

**Alex Davis, Dabs.com IT Manager**

“Firebrand Training's unique style of Accelerated Learning means that technicians and developers can gain certification and start implementing Microsoft technology far quicker than anywhere else.”

**Garry Corcoran, Microsoft Partner Learning and Development Manager**

“We are an expanding business and we need a well-motivated and highly-skilled workforce. Investment in this training is showing benefit – in greater efficiency

“Firebrand helps CONET to keep up-to-date on all technological aspects concerning its Microsoft solution portfolio. On this basis CONET's consultants and software engineers are able to achieve high quality results and create innovative solutions for our customers' benefit.”

**Mario Strüder, CONET Head of Procurement**



# Are you wasting €1,000s on training?

Find out with the True Cost of Training Calculator

The evidence shows that well-trained employees are more productive – and this is particularly true when it comes to technical roles in IT and project management. But what's the most cost-effective way of ensuring that your people have the right skills?

The answer may surprise you – particularly if you employ customer-facing consultants, when every day spent on training reduces billable time.

Because training costs your business much more than the course fee, food, accommodation and exams.

**“All food and accommodation is taken care of. But the real benefits become apparent when you take the opportunity cost into account”**



## How much money does your company lose when staff are training?

Every day your staff are training, they're not working for your business. Firebrand's unique Accelerated Learning approach dramatically reduces the number of billable days lost – while delivering a measurably better learning experience.

When your people train with Firebrand they are immersed in an all-inclusive training experience.

Unlike traditional training, all food and accommodation is taken care of in one simple price.

That by itself is usually enough to make Firebrand a more cost-effective option. But the real benefits become apparent when you take the 'opportunity cost' of your people's time into account.

## What's your true cost of training?

Take a look at the sample calculation on the next page, to get a sense of how much time and money you'll save with Firebrand. In many cases, the true cost

of training with Firebrand is less than half that of conventional classroom training.

As well as the savings on food, accommodation and exams (all included on Firebrand courses), pay close attention to the "Days out of the office" number. With Firebrand, your staff will spend less days out of the office, because our courses are twice the speed of traditional training.



# The True Cost of Training Calculator

Here's an example of how the calculator works, using our 9-day Microsoft MCSA: Windows Server course. It would take 18 days to achieve this certification through conventional training – including three training courses and three exams

## Try for yourself

Apply your own numbers to the calculator by visiting:  
[www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/calculator](http://www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/calculator)

	Conventional Training	Firebrand Training
Number of courses	3	1
Training days	15	9
Additional exam days	3	0
Days out of the office	18	5
Cost of course(s)	€4.500	€6.650
Cost of exams (€100 each)	€375	Included
Cost of subsistence (€75 per day)	€1.800	Included
<b>Total direct costs</b>	<b>€6.675</b>	<b>€6.650</b>
Opportunity cost (€500 per day)	€10.800	€3.000
<b>True cost of training</b>	<b>€17.475</b>	<b>€9.650</b>

It usually requires three separate training courses to get all of the knowledge needed. To obtain the MCSA: Windows Server certification, the student needs to pass three separate exams – which all need to be scheduled some time after the training. It's unrealistic that you'd be able to give your staff 18 consecutive days off work – so this can take months to achieve. Because the Firebrand course runs over the weekend, it's only one week out of the office

Once you add the costs of exams, accommodation and food (all included with Firebrand), the Firebrand option already looks like the most cost-effective option

And the advantage accelerates when you take into account the cost of your people's time. We've made a conservative assumption of billing out €500 per person per day. Whatever your actual amount, the opportunity cost soars for traditional training – and it suddenly looks far more expensive!



# Contact us

Does what you've read in this brochure resonate with what you're trying to achieve for your organisation? Take the first step by arranging an initial brief discussion about your training requirements, and we'll explain what difference we can make to your bottom line.

Telefoon: +31 24 8457770

Email: [map@firebrandtraining.nl](mailto:map@firebrandtraining.nl)

Visit: [www.firebrandtraining.nl/managed-accounts](http://www.firebrandtraining.nl/managed-accounts)

## Firebrand partners include:



**Microsoft** Partner  
Gold Learning



## Firebrand Managed Account customers include:

Achmea, ASR, CNV, Kadaster, KPMG, KPN, NATO, Philips, Shell.

Find out why they turn to us when their staff need help learning new skills quickly. Watch the Tale of Two Guys video on our website:

