

I ndustry Snapshots

- Information Technology (IT) is the fastest growing sector in the economy with a 68% increase in output growth rate projected between 2002 and 2012. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Employment opportunities are expected to be good in the IT industry as demand for computer-related occupations increases due to rapid advances in computer technology, continuing development of new computer applications, and the growing significance of information security. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- 92% of all IT workers are in non-IT companies, 80% of which are in small companies. (Information Technology Association of America)

High Growth INDUSTRY PROFILE

W orkforce Issues

- More than 90% of IT workers are employed outside the IT industry, which makes it necessary for them to have both IT and complementary training in their respective business sectors such as health care, manufacturing, or financial services.
- Employers are also looking for well-developed soft skills, transferable IT skills and adaptability in their workforce.
- IT remains a critical aspect of work in all industries and sectors, as well as an industry in its own right. However, America continues to suffer from a shortage of qualified IT workers with flexible and portable skills who can readily adapt and respond to ever-changing IT demands and processes.

S kill Sets

(Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)

- For all IT-related occupations, technical and professional certifications are growing more popular and increasingly important.
- IT workers must continually update and acquire new skills to remain qualified in this dynamic field. Completion of vocational training also is an asset. According to a May 2000 report by the Urban Institute, community colleges play a critical role in training new workers and in retraining both veteran workers and workers from other fields.
- People interested in becoming computer support specialists generally need only an Associate degree in a computer-related field, as well as significant hands-on experience with computers. They also must possess strong problem-solving and analytical skills as well as excellent communication skills because troubleshooting and helping others are such vital aspects of the job. And because there is constant interaction on the job with other computer personnel, customers, and employees, computer support specialists must be able to communicate effectively on paper, using e-mail, and in person. They also must possess strong writing skills when preparing manuals for employees and customers.

E TA in Action

DOL has sought to understand and implement industry identified strategies to confront critical workforce shortages. It has listened to employers, industry association representatives, and others associated with the information technology industry regarding some of their efforts to identify challenges and implement effective workforce strategies. DOL's Employment and Training Administration is supporting comprehensive business, education, and workforce development partnerships that have developed innovative approaches that address the workforce needs of business while also effectively helping workers find good jobs with good wages and promising career pathways in the information technology industry.

I nvestments

Total Industry Investment is \$2,818,795
Total Leveraged Resources are \$3,795,072

Computing Technology Industry Association (national, IL)
National Information Technology Apprenticeship System

CompTIA is using the \$2,818,795 grant to support the development and implementation of a National Information Technology Apprenticeship System (NITAS), a competency-based apprenticeship methodology that supports consistent and flexible credentialing for the career development and advancement of IT workers. The seven-track NITAS career matrix allows workers to progress through all or part of the apprenticeship program using a combination of classroom instruction and on-the-job training. Standardized, industry-recognized certifications are earned as each apprenticeship tier is completed, and the certifications are transferable from employer to employer.

CompTIA projects that within five years, 384,000 IT workers will have become registered apprentices and approximately 6,700 employers will have been enlisted as registered on-the-job learning providers.

NITAS provides the public workforce system with a demand-driven, comprehensive, flexible, and sustainable IT skills development model. This innovative apprenticeship model enables the public workforce system to build its capacity and better leverage its resources to meet the current and anticipated needs of IT employers, ensure a continuing pipeline of skilled IT workers, and contribute to community economic growth. NITAS' consistent focus on increasing the available pool of skilled IT workers and simultaneous attention to retention and advancement of current IT workers demonstrates a continuous workforce planning strategy that ensures sustainability. (43,295,400 in leveraged funds)

R esources

For additional background information about the industry and details on the grants, information about employment and training opportunities, and workforce development tools for employers, educators, and workforce professionals please refer to the following: www.doleta.gov/BRG, www.careervoyages.gov, www.careeronestop.org, and www.workforce3one.org.