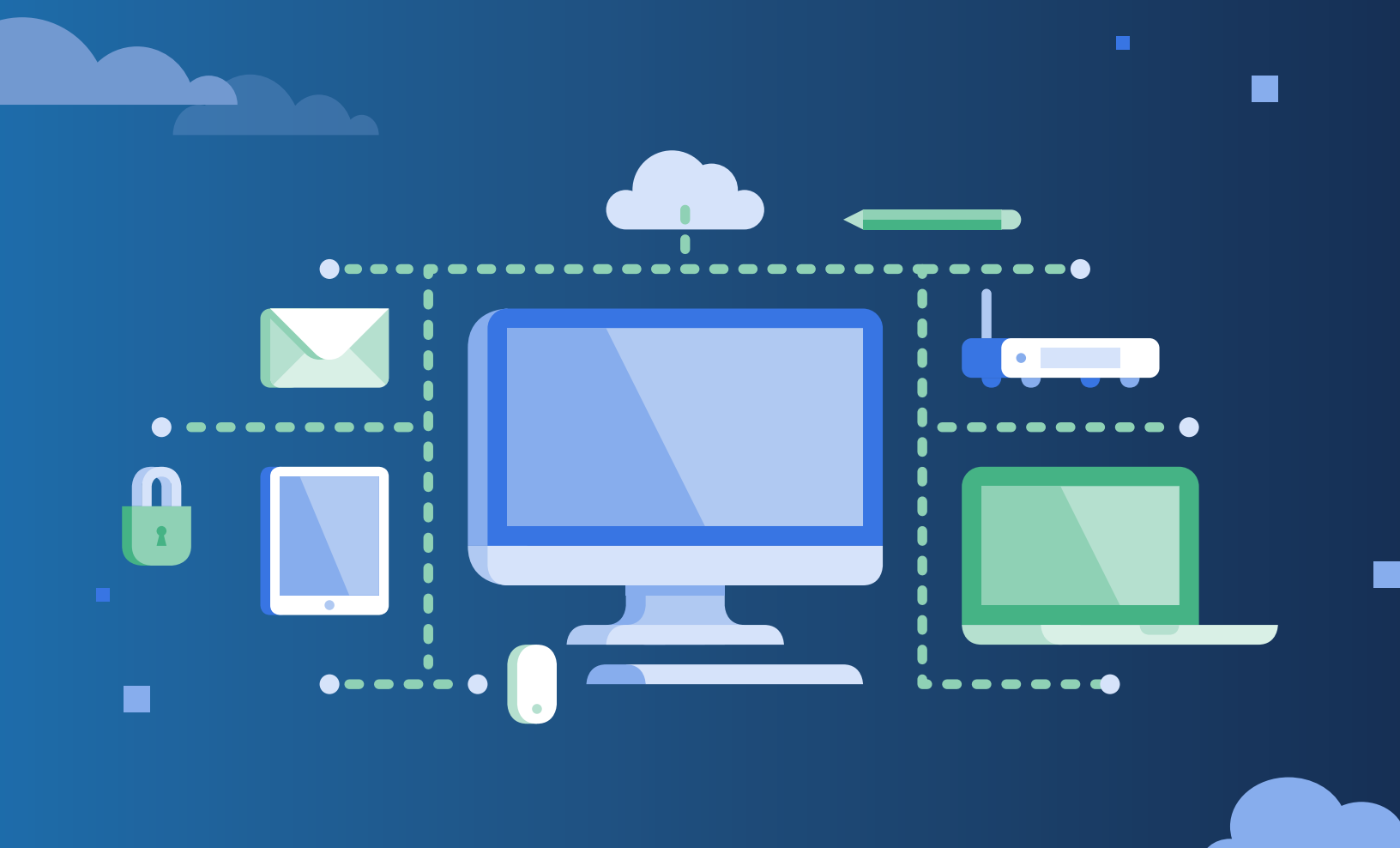# Cognizant

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Training to Lead at Cognizant

How Cognizant's Commitment
to Learning Accelerates Business

CloudAcademy

Training to Lead at Cognizant

Organizations worldwide look to market leaders to synthesize trends across technologies and industries into insights they can implement to stay ahead of the competition. One such thought and market leader is Cognizant, a global technology consulting firm.

We sat down with the team at Cognizant and we spoke at length about their training program, where cloud technology is headed, and how Cloud Academy unlocked technology learning and development across their worldwide footprint of hundreds of thousands of employees.

Cognizant

What's driving your training initiatives?

Technology is no longer just a business enabler; it is now core to the business model itself, no matter what industry. Today, 'digital' encompasses a lot of things including artificial intelligence (AI), data science, big data, mobility, IoT (the Internet of Things), analytics, the blockchain, and much more. These technologies are reshaping the workplace and the economy by eliminating some jobs and creating new roles and jobs.

Therefore, it is imperative for any workforce to be ahead of the curve in learning new technologies, processes, and delivery models. Continuous learning and the ability to rapidly translate that learning into business outcomes has become a source of sustained competitive advantage for organizations.

At Cognizant, we lay great emphasis on training and professional development of our people, both at entry level and with experience. It is an organizational mandate for us.

How do you integrate Training Plans and in general, Cloud Academy training with an already busy workday? How beneficial has it been to customize your Training Plans in accordance with your ongoing business needs?

Our learning process is based on the creation of a customized role development plan for each associate, based on their role and the technology they are working on. Our approach equips the associates to choose and customize their learning path based on their skill levels. As part of their learning goals, we encourage each associate to pick a battery of new technologies every year.

How does training on Cloud Academy now with Training Plans compare to last year when you didn't have them?

We have made a very conscious effort to ensure our corporate learning strategy has evolved to keep pace with changes in technologies, processes, business, and operating models and workforce demographics.

We have put the employee at the core of our strategy and offer programs that can be tailored around their choices, needs, and work/time constraints. Today, classroom sessions account for just 15% of our L&D catalog; the other 85% comprises virtual modules. By eliminating dependency on classrooms and physical infrastructure, Cloud Academy has been able to enable Cloud L&D across geographies, including associates working at client locations.

What incentives, if any, do you offer your employees for completing training?

At Cognizant, we have made learning, skilling, and associate development an organizational mandate. In order to encourage our employees to build and improve their digital skills, in 2018, as an industry-first, we rolled out a skills premium allowance for levels up to that of a manager. The premium pay was given to 40,000 employees last year and has helped us make compensation more competitive for employees with niche digital skills.

We include L&D as a key component in our performance assessment process. We leverage the expertise and subject matter experts knowledge of our associates and empower them to lead teaching modules for others. They also act as mentors and coaches to others via our enterprise social platforms. We encourage informal and impromptu learning methods too; our associates use the enterprise platforms to set learning challenges and skill tests for each other.

Based on our Cloud Catalog Technology Trends, we are noticing increased investment in the multi-cloud. Is this something that you can corroborate from your perspective?

Yes, the cloud is increasingly being counted on as the operational fabric that holds together complex business-critical requirements and deep, rich and fully integrated functionality.

This multi-cloud can be broadly grouped into the following categories:

Hybrid Cloud: Organizations are now moving to an agile infrastructure that leverages a seamless hybrid architecture including public and private cloud platforms. The Hybrid Cloud enables organizations to benefit from new cloud technologies to bring powerful improvements while optimizing their existing IT investment. Enterprises can dynamically orchestrate application workloads between the public and private cloud, and unify underlying architecture with integrated processes, tools, and comprehensive governance.

Multiple cloud providers: Enterprises are segmenting their computing workloads between multiple cloud vendors such as AWS, Microsoft Azure, and Google Cloud.

How have skills within the organization grown over the past few months?

Yes, we are seeing a huge uptick in the L&D momentum. Our 'skilling at scale' program has upskilled more than 100,000 employees in the last two years.

Where do you see your cloud training going in the next few quarters?

At Cognizant we have created a robust culture of learning. With technology evolving faster than ever, the need for continuous learning has never been stronger.

Cloud technology is poised to becoming a critical component in any organization's digital transformation journey. This calls for skills across the entire cloud technology stack and allied digital technologies such as AI, Machine Learning, and Analytics. We would be doubling down on our emphasis on Cloud L&D in the coming years.

CloudAcademy

Cloud Academy is the leading enterprise digital skills development platform accelerating innovation through guided Learning Paths, Hands-on Labs, and Skill Assessment. Companies trust Cloud Academy to deliver role-specific training on leading clouds (AWS, Azure, Google Cloud Platform), essential methodologies needed to operate on and between clouds (DevOps, security), and capabilities that are unlocked by the cloud (big data, machine learning, IoT).

Leading organizations customize Cloud Academy to contextualize learning and leverage the platform to assign, manage, and measure cloud enablement at scale. Learn more at cloudacademy.com.