



# Professional System Administration

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# “Professional”?

- From the Oxford English Dictionary
- Adjective
  - 1 relating to or belonging to a profession.
  - 2 engaged in an activity as a paid occupation rather than as an amateur.
  - 3 worthy of or appropriate to a professional person; competent.
- Noun
  - 1 a professional person.
  - 2 a person having impressive competence in a particular activity.



# Professional System Administrator?

- Not particularly well defined as in other fields
  - Some poor sysadmins shouldn't be paid
  - Some volunteers are so good they should be paid
- No clear educational path for system administrators
  - May have some related degree
  - Often, no related degree or no degree at all
- Many people “fall” into it
  - You bothered to learn something about a system
  - “Ask Joe, he knows how to fix it”



# System Administrator Education

- Academic Programs
  - Not common, but do exist
    - <http://www.nssa.rit.edu/>
    - <http://www.tech.mtu.edu/cnsa/index.html>
    - Google for others
- Vendor Training
  - Usually high intensity, short duration
  - Usually focused on certification exam prep
  - Expensive, something like \$500 a day (not including expenses)



# Certifications

Certifications can suggest a certain skill level

Vendor specific

- Solaris: SCSA, SCNA
- Microsoft: MCP, MCDST, MCSA, MCSE
- Red Hat: RHCT, RHCE, others

Non vendor specific

- CompTIA: Server+, Linux+
- Linux Professional Institute: LPIC-1, LPIC-2, etc.

Some certifications were so “overdone” that have little credibility, i.e. MCSE



# Professional Organizations

League of Professional System

Administrators - [www.lopsa.org](http://www.lopsa.org)

USENIX, the Advanced Computing Systems

Association - [www.usenix.org](http://www.usenix.org)

SAGE, the USENIX special interest group

for sysadmins - [www.sage.org](http://www.sage.org)



# Professional Publications

## Vendor specific publications

- Microsoft Certified Professional Magazine,  
[www.mcpmag.com](http://www.mcpmag.com)
- Others

Used to be a good SysAdmin magazine,

[www.samag.com](http://www.samag.com) (bought by Dr. Dobbs)

;login: The USENIX Magazine,

[www.usenix.org/publications/login/](http://www.usenix.org/publications/login/)



# Professional Videos

## The System Administrator's Song

<http://www.deadtroll.com/index2.html?/sysadmin/~content>

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