

For immediate release: Tuesday, 01 February 2005

## Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs chooses IC3 Certification New Horizons Ireland appointed training and accreditation partner

Dublin, Ireland, Tuesday, 01 February 2005...The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has chosen the new IC3 Certification Programme as the computer learning standard for its employees. The task of training and accrediting the 190 departmental staff has been awarded to New Horizons Ireland after a competitive tender.

The Department, in its ICT Strategy 2004-2007, identified IC3 as the standard to implement as the ideal foundation for staff to learn basic computing and the internet.

Frank McGeough, Training officer at the Department explains: "When we looked at all the certification options in the market place, including ECDL which focuses up to a fundamental level of IT competence. We chose IC3 because it provides the knowledge required to be a productive user of computer hardware, software applications, and the Internet"

IC<sup>3</sup> stands for Internet and Computing Core Certification and is managed by Prodigy, the Master Distributors for the Microsoft Office Specialist and IC3 Certification Programmes in Ireland. IC<sup>3</sup> was developed over a two-year period, which included 270 subject matter experts in 19 countries. IC<sup>3</sup> is a global, professionally validated, standards-based Certification Programme that provides employers and academic institutions proof that an IC<sup>3</sup> certified individual has the essential computing knowledge and skills to succeed in today's digital economy.

Back in February, McGeough issued the tender for the training and certification. New Horizons was shortlisted to the last two before winning the prestigious contract. Managing Director and founder of New Horizons Ireland, Liam McMahon felt his company's unique flexible approach combined with a Learning Management System won the day:

"Ireland is seen as a strategic location for a New Horizons Centre. The strong focus on information technology by both government and business requires everyone to be more efficient using computer applications and managing computer infrastructures. New Horizons Ireland only began trading in January but already have over two hundred strong customers. Our ability to hit the ground running comes from our connection with the global New Horizons network which equips us with the highest standards from the beginning.

"We were therefore able to offer the Department great flexibility in our training approach, including a variety of training options from classroom to individual, all based on employee requirements."

The Department began training in October and will continue for the next twelve months. There are seven different classes in total; two for the first module; four for the second; and one for the last one. While the majority of the training will be held as instructor led classroom learning, New Horizons has adapted the courses to allow for additional individual training and elearning.

As an added tool, New Horizons provided the Department its in-house Integrated Learning Manager (ILM). A web based Learning Management System, which allows McGeough to plot his development plan for the whole department with individuals logging in to make personal amendments. “This feature is very popular with our clients as it allows them to manage and monitor their training.” says McMahon.

### **About New Horizons**

New Horizons is the largest independent IT training company worldwide. The company opened its Irish operations in 2004 and employs 14 people, offering courses and accreditation across a range of computer and business related fields.

New Horizons offers a one-stop IT learning experience, offering high quality training solutions from instructor-led training, onsite corporate training, customised training, e-learning and online solutions to satisfy any organisational and individual requirements.  
[www.NewHorizonsIreland.com](http://www.NewHorizonsIreland.com)

### **About Prodigy**

Prodigy is the Master Distributor of IC<sup>3</sup> in Ireland and Scotland as well as the Microsoft Office Specialist examinations

### **About IC<sup>3</sup>**

IC<sup>3</sup> stands for Internet and Computing Core Certification and was released globally in February 2002 by Certiport, Inc, a leading provider of global, performance-based certification programs, after a two-year development process that researched 219 computer-related, subject-matters in 19 countries. IC<sup>3</sup> is a global, professionally validated, standards-based certification program that provides the industry proof that an individual has the essential computing knowledge and skills in today's digital economy.

### **About the Microsoft Office Specialist Program**

The Microsoft Office Specialist Program is Microsoft's official desktop certification Program, aimed at increasing customer productivity and measuring and validating users' skills within the Microsoft Office suite of desktop applications. Deployed throughout more than 4000 testing centres around the world, Microsoft Certification enables individuals to prove their knowledge of Microsoft Office and employers to ensure a return on their investment and a reduction in their support costs.

Additional information on the Microsoft Office Specialist Certification Program can be found at [www.prodigy.ie](http://www.prodigy.ie) or 00353-1-2360424.

For more information, please contact:

Adrienne Meade  
Jillian Godsil

Prodigy  
PRG

(01) 2360424  
(055) 294 55