



## IT CHALLENGE COMPETITION DETAILS

### OVERVIEW

The object of the IT Challenge is to highlight the art and science of developing, deploying, and maintaining IT systems that are efficient, functional, robust and secure. IT professionals have a base set of tools and techniques, but still have to work through customer needs and configurations that require an intimate understanding of how the pieces fit together. They also need to know how far the systems can be pushed before they will break, and how to make the systems highly available, so that they are always available.

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you choose to submit an entry in this Competition, then you agree that your participation is subject to the following:

- The [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#)
- The Imagine Cup IT Challenge Competition Details described below.

If there are any inconsistencies between the Imagine Cup Official Rules, the Imagine Cup Terms of Use, the Imagine Cup Code of Conduct and/or these Competition Details, the [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#) will govern.

### WHAT ARE THE START AND END DATES?

This Competition starts at 00:01 (12:01 A.M.) Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) on October 9, 2009, and ends at 23:59 (11:59 P.M.) GMT on April 24, 2010 (Entry Period). The Entry Period consists of the three (3) separate Rounds as described below. Each Round has unique entry requirements. All required entry deliverables must be received within the designated Round in order for your entry to be eligible for judging.

<b><u>ROUND</u></b>	<b><u>START DATE</u></b> <b>(all times 12:01 A.M. GMT)</b>	<b><u>END DATE</u></b> <b>(all times 11:59 P.M. GMT)</b>
<b>Round 1 - Qualifying Quizzes</b>	October 9, 2009	January 31, 2010
<b>Round 2 - Case Study</b>	February 8, 2010	April 5, 2010
<b>Final Competition - Hands-On Virtual Lab</b>	April 24, 2010	April 24, 2010
<b>Worldwide Finals</b>	July 2010	July 2010

The Competition Sign Up Period begins on October 9, 2009 at 12:01 A.M. GMT, and ends on January 31, 2010 at 11:59 P.M. GMT (Sign Up Period).

## **CAN YOU ENTER?**

You are eligible to enter this Competition if you meet the Eligibility Requirements set forth in the Eligibility Criteria section of the [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#).

## **HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR A COMPETITION?**

If you wish to participate in this Competition, you must sign up as instructed during the Competition Sign Up period. To sign up, go to your profile page and check the box next to the competition or award you would like to participate in.

For additional important details on signing up for a Competition, please see the requirements set forth in the Team and Individual Competitions section of the [Imagine Cup Official Rules](#).

## **WHAT CONSTITUTES AN ELIGIBLE ENTRY?**

Each Round has unique entry requirements, described below. All required entry deliverables must be received within the designated Round in order for your entry to be eligible for judging.

### **Round 1 - Qualifying Quiz**

During Round 1, IT Challenge competitors are required to pass one (1) quiz during one of the four (4) quiz periods.

<b><u>Quiz</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>
<b>#1</b>	November 16, 2009
<b>#2</b>	December 16, 2009
<b>#3</b>	January 7, 2010
<b>#4</b>	January 30, 2010

**All quizzes start at 12:01 A.M GMT and end at 11:59 P.M. GMT.**

Competitors will be able to register and take online quizzes at any time during the allotted 24 hour period. A competitor will be given 60 minutes to take a 30 question quiz. Each competitor can take as many quizzes as they like during these four (4) 24 hour periods and as long as one (1) of their scores is 15 or higher, they will advance to Round 2. Once advanced to Round 2, there is no need to take additional quizzes, but you are welcome to do so if you would like.

The questions will challenge the individual in their knowledge around Windows 2008 R2, Hyper-V Virtualization, Exchange 2007/2010, SharePoint 2007, Windows 7, System Center Operations Manager 2007, System Center Configuration Manager 2007, ISA 2006, SQL 2008, Office 2007, Office Communication Server 2007, and Windows Mobile. This exam will have a unique blend of questions that will challenge competitors in their knowledge of these Microsoft technologies.

Additionally, in Round 1, a [Facebook page](#) dedicated to the IT Challenge is available and updated. Technical tips, competition updates, preparation hints, etc are available to the competitors through this page. The IT Challenge Captains will actively post and share information with the competitors via this [Facebook page](#), and it is the hope that competitors will interact with one another there as well. This page is in addition to the standard IT Challenge forum on the Imagine Cup website, which we will continue to monitor, support, and answer questions on as well.

## **Round 2 - Case Study**

If you successfully advance to compete in Round 2 of the IT Challenge, you will compete against other Round 2 participants in a single case study submission.

This test will be in written form, and will test an individual's ability to reason through and describe an architecture and method of implementation of a Microsoft networking environment. The goal of this round is to make sure you have a real world view of the technologies, and are not just "book smart" but also show some practical understanding of the technologies. The Round 2 case study will provide a scenario that will challenge you to respond via an essay-based submission. The scenario will include the Microsoft technologies covered in Round 1 and key hints, tips, and content will draw on information shared through the Facebook page. Competitors who have actively participated in the [Facebook page](#) will be provided clues and hints into the information needed to submit a complete Round 2 Essay.

The top six (6) competitors from Round 2 that submit case studies, representing 6 different countries, will advance to the Final Competition.

## **Final Competition - Hands-On Virtual Lab**

During the Final Competition, you (if you are invited to advance to compete in the Final Competition) will compete in a hands-on virtual lab testing the top 6 (six) competitors (one per country) on their practical hands-on knowledge of IT solutions.

The Final Competition is a new format for the 2010 competition and will be held prior to the Worldwide Finals. Since the finalists will not compete head to head in Poland, this will be a hands-on virtual lab round that will challenge the competitors to fulfill on building servers, server images, and configurations on a Hyper-V host server to prove their practical knowledge and experience with the technologies. The competitors will be given 24 hours to complete the hands-on lab test.

During this round, the finalists will be challenged to actually setup, install, and demonstrate knowledge and expertise in Microsoft technologies, including Windows 2008, Exchange 2007/2010, Windows 7, Office 2007, System Center Configuration Manager, System Center Operations Manager, ISA 2006, SQL 2008, and Office Communications Server 2007. The competitors will be tasked to demonstrate in a timed competition, their experience and expertise in a theme that matches the [Imagine Cup 2010 theme](#). The captains will be available throughout the virtual lab round via Chat to answer questions. Should you advance to the Final Competition-Hands-On Virtual Lab, you will need to have access to a reliable Internet connection so that you can participate remotely online to the virtually hosted environment.

## HOW DO I SUBMIT MY ENTRY?

**Round 1 Qualifying Quiz:** Sign in to the Imagine Cup website and navigate to the IT Challenge page and complete any of the available quizzes before the close of Round 1.

**Round 2 Case Study:** Sign in to the Imagine Cup website and navigate to the IT Challenge page and submit all required entry deliverables in a single .zip file (no more than 300 MB) before the close of Round 2.

**Final Competition Hands-On Virtual Lab:** If you advance to the Final Competition- Hands-On Virtual Lab, we will provide individual instructions by e-mail on how to submit your required entry materials and participate.

## HOW WILL ENTRIES BE JUDGED?

**Round 1 Qualifying Quiz:** At the conclusion of the Round 1 Entry Period, every eligible entrant that achieved a valid score of 50% or better on any single Round 1 quiz will advance to compete in Round 2 of the Competition.

**Round 2 Case Study:** At the conclusion of the Round 2 Entry Period, all eligible entries received will be reviewed by a panel (or panels) of qualified judges based on the unique criteria listed below to determine up to six (6) of the top competitors, one (1) per country, (each, a Finalist) that will advance to compete in the Final Competition.

### Round 2 Case Study Judging Criteria:

- **30% Satisfaction of Proposal Requirements:** Does your proposal address all technical and customer issues as outlined in the case study? Have you demonstrated that you thoroughly understood and addressed the customer needs?
- **30% Technical Feasibility and Accuracy:** Does your proposal make correct use of appropriate technology? Have you applied the correct technology to address the customer needs? Is what you are proposing technically possible? Have you made the most cost effective decisions based on the customer needs?
- **30% Justification for Recommendations:** Are you able to demonstrate that your solution is the best response for the customer needs? Have you prior to the Worldwide Finals. The finalists will not compete head to head in Poland at the Worldwide Finals; instead addressed each portion of the customer requirements?
- **10% Quality:** Is the case study well written and comprised of all of the correct elements?

### Final Competition Hands-On Virtual Lab:

At the conclusion of the Final Competition Entry Period, all eligible entries received will be reviewed by a panel (or panels) of qualified judges based upon the unique criteria listed below to determine up to three (3) of the top competitors that will advance to compete at the Worldwide Finals in Poland.

## Final Competition Hands-On Virtual Lab Judging Criteria:

Each competitor will be asked to complete a series of 20 Challenge Tasks to demonstrate to the judges that their solution is functional and technically sound. There will be a panel of judges that will observe, ask questions, and grade the competitor in areas covering the services and the solution. Each task will be graded on a scale of 1 to 10. There are two sets of Challenge Tasks: Milestone Tasks and Demonstration Tasks.

- **Milestone Tasks:** There are 5 milestone tasks. These tasks will be completed during the challenge. All competitors will complete the milestone tasks at the same time. The competitors will be given these tasks one hour before they are required to complete them at evenly spaced times during the challenge. These 5 tasks will collectively be worth 25% of the final score.
- **Demonstration Tasks:** At the end of the challenge, competitors will be judged on their ability to demonstrate a final set of tasks within each service. There are 15 challenge tasks that test the functionality of the solution. These 15 tasks will count for 75% of the final score.

The table below summarizes the scoring:

<b>Challenge Tasks</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Percent of Grade</b>
Milestone Tasks	5	25%
Demonstration Tasks	15	75%
Total	20	100%

The judges scores for each task will be averaged and then task scores will be added together to determine the competitors final score. The competitor with the highest total final score will be the winner, with second and third place being awarded to the second and third highest scores.

## PRIZES

**Final Competition - Hands-On Virtual Lab:** The top 3 finalists will receive a trip to the Worldwide Finals in Warsaw, Poland. Trip includes round trip coach airfare from major airport closest to winners home, standard hotel accommodations, and select meals. In addition, the top 3 finalists will receive one of the following cash prizes:

- **First Place:** \$8,000 USD
- **Second Place:** \$4,000 USD
- **Third Place:** \$3,000 USD