



## Initiative Improves Prospects for Impoverished Individuals

*Some of the poorest individuals in Rajasthan, India have gained access to computer and workplace training through Networking Academy.*

### Giving Back to the Community with IT Training



"12 percent of the population in India is in a trap of tremendous suffering."

Nitesh Mathur, Project Manager  
Cisco Networking Academy, India

While millions of people around the world enjoy the benefits of modern technologies, it is easy to forget that billions lack access to computers, connectivity, and basic necessities. Nitesh Mathur, project manager for the Cisco Networking Academy® program in Western India, points out that "12 percent of the 1.2 billion-strong population in India is in a trap of tremendous suffering, due to a lack of food and proper health and educational facilities."

In an effort to give back to society, and help address these economic divisions, Mathur has launched a project in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The goal of the initiative is to provide 90 days of free computer and career training for six classes of 30 students from desperately poor backgrounds each year.

Rajasthan's Center for Electronic Governance, a Cisco regional academy, is funding the initiative, and Cisco is providing the expertise, curriculum, and equipment for students to complete the Cisco® IT Essentials training in Hindi, and classes on how to flourish in a IT-based work environment.

### Financial Independence

The focus of this initiative is to allow marginalized individuals between the ages of 14 and 45, who are currently living on up to US\$450 annually, to gain financial independence by working in an industry that was previously beyond their reach. The first group of students began their training in May 2010. After completing the program, they will be prepared to earn the CompTIA A+ Essentials certification exam, and enter the workforce of the new knowledge economy.

One of the students is Buddhi Prakash Tomar, whose father earns around \$37 a month. A few days after starting the free course, he was hired on as IT assistant for Airtel, India's biggest service provider. Tomar is earning a salary of \$50 a month while pursuing his training. "Computer education was a luxury I could not afford," he says. "I found a decent job with the help of this course, and I encourage my friends and other students to enroll in this program."

Like his classmates, after earning his certification, Tomar will most likely gain access to more opportunities and a higher salary. The initiative also makes finding a job easier by arranging work placements within Cisco and other companies. In addition, the program plans to offer the 10 most promising students in each class an opportunity to complete their Cisco CCNA® training, also free of charge.

### Future Plans

With some students already working, and many more on their way to joining the IT workforce, Mathur hopes to roll the program out to the rest of India.

### For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Networking Academy, please visit [www.cisco.com/go/netacad](http://www.cisco.com/go/netacad).

To learn more about this project, please contact Nitesh Mathur at [nitmathu@cisco.com](mailto:nitmathu@cisco.com).