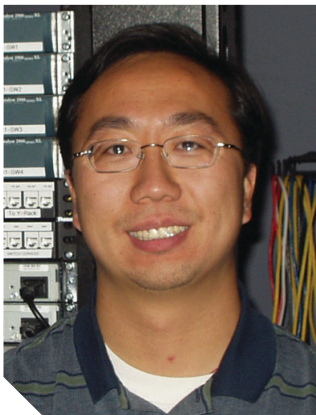




Success Story

## Liked Cisco Network Academy Program so much he now teaches it Program logical, challenging and hands on with real equipment

**You've heard the commercial, "I liked the shaver so much, I bought the company." Well, Sheldon Wong liked the Cisco Networking Academy program so much he now teaches it.**



**Sheldon Wong**

*"It was worth more than anything else I took; it was worth the whole program altogether."*

*– Sheldon Wong*

When Wong's sister made him an uncle he decided it was time to become a responsible adult. So rather than returning to China to teach English again, he enrolled at the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) in their Information Technology Professional program, which included the Cisco Networking Academy program. Wong has a degree in metallurgical engineering but found he didn't like being isolated in a lab doing research. He wanted the interaction he would have with people as an I.T. professional.

He found the program particularly interesting because of his technical background. "It was very intuitive and logical; it just made sense. I also enjoyed it because it was challenging," he says. Wong found the Cisco Academy curriculum was THE highlight of his program. "It was worth more than anything else I took; it was worth the whole program altogether."

The Cisco Networking Academy program teaches students the fundamentals of networking. Started in 1997 it has expanded around the world and partners with groups from business, government and community organizations, ensuring the program delivers the curriculum required to train tomorrow's workforce. As an internet based course it is broadly available facilitating learning anywhere, anytime. It combines the on-line component with instructor training and hands-on practical experience.

One major advantage of the program was the access to actual equipment. Wong says, "We had a rolling pod. We had the devices on a rack on wheels that we could roll in and out of the classroom. Having time on the devices was probably one of the best things. Coming from an engineering background where everything is theoretical, the actual practical application is the fun part."

At the beginning of the program Wong's goal was just to finish but as he went through he was so enthused he decided he wanted to write the Cisco Certified Network Associate exam, which he did within a few weeks of graduating.

When he finished the program, he was hired immediately by SAIT and over the next few years worked as desktop support and a network analyst. "The contracts finished and I took a break. Then I did consulting for other companies in oil and gas. xwave found my resume on the web and called me in. I had the right skill sets and level of experience they were looking for."

xwave is a 30 year old I.T. consulting company based in Atlantic Canada that provides support, infrastructure and help desk advice to companies and governments in Canada and around the world. Wong is based in Calgary where he is the only person from his team. The rest are in Ottawa or Atlantic Canada so he works quite independently. "I'm the only person in Western Canada doing my job."

Having taught English in China, Wong knew he liked teaching so he decided to combine it with his Cisco knowledge and achieve his Cisco Certified Academy Instructor designation. "I teach in the evening in continuing education. I bring the practical side as well as the theoretical." He is teaching certain semesters of the Network Academy program and having a lot of fun. "I can see my students learning and discovering new things. I see that spark in their eyes when they not only understand it but see what goes beyond it."