

Breaking Barriers: How Cloud Academy Helps 25,000 Microsoft Engineers Upskill to Solve Problems Faster

Introduction

Microsoft enables digital transformation for the era of an intelligent cloud and an intelligent edge. Its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more.

Microsoft has a rich offering of business functions, along with engineering groups that cover Cloud + AI, Engineering + Devices, and Technology + Research.

As we dive into Microsoft's story, we will see just how their commitment to empowering their engineers is leading them toward world-class customer support.

The Challenges, and the Goals That Emerged

Billions of users span products and geographies

How do you get thousands of engineers to be case-ready - quicker? Microsoft's Customer Success and Support (CSS) teams are responsible for keeping over 1.4 billion monthly active Windows 10 and 11 users happy. This means CSS's 25,000+ support engineers are in a constant state of flux as the team onboards new employees and upskills existing staff to deliver high-quality support services.

Moving toward broader skill fluency

Years ago, it made sense for support engineers to specialize in one or two Microsoft skills. But with a growing customer base and constantly evolving technology, these support engineers need to be able to manage evolving workloads and deliver on service expectations.

To enable customer experiences free of unnecessary transfers, CSS teams have started skilling support engineers in the whole suite of Microsoft products and the various skills that are needed to solve problems at the highest levels. This change is essential, especially as individual and enterprise customers purchase access to more applications.



1.4 billion active Windows 10 & 11 users monthly



25,000+ support engineers responsible for delivering high-quality support services



CSS teams upskilled in complete suite of **Microsoft products** to solve problems faster

Overcoming challenges of large-scale training

This change brings up a particular pain point when managing support at scale: the challenge of training thousands of engineers to quickly be case-ready, while also being able to handle more than one issue on a single call. Direct and always-updated insight into the hard skills of each support engineer is needed.

Goals

Out of these challenges came three specific goals that Microsoft focused on:

1. Getting engineers case-ready faster – being able to independently grab and manage a support call.
2. Getting staff cross-trained – to manage more than one case issue on the same call.
3. Using skill tracking to route the case to the appropriate engineer – based on how the issue matches up to the employee's knowledge.

Solution

The solution that emerged was a combination of effective, data-driven skills management, followed by operational benefits born from using the staff skills data. This aims to result in quicker time-to-readiness for the employee with the additional goal of having a whole department of staff that can quickly be case-ready.

Skills Management as an Operational Pillar

To start, Cloud Academy helped Microsoft transform the skills insight of their entire staff into an actionable data source that could guide them toward understanding the specific technical strengths of their staff and how they could best help incoming support cases across a wider stretch of products.

A Learning Repository

Microsoft integrated its technical and upskilling content within the Cloud Academy platform, creating a learning repository full of best practices for support engineers. This has added a new layer of optimization to an already best-in-class workflow.

Customized Training and Certification Paths for Support Engineers

Microsoft partnered with Cloud Academy to begin implementing an innovative training and development approach to upskill its support staff. Through the use of customized training and certification paths, support engineers will be able to quickly acquire new skills – this aims to help engineers keep pace with the target to be quickly case-ready across a spectrum of products.

Measurable and Sustainable Learning Outcomes

To ensure sustainable learning outcomes, advanced analytics will be utilized to track progress and measure the training's impact. A main benefit offered by this approach is that it can ensure that employees are able to effectively apply newly acquired skills in their day-to-day work. This will keep the team in line with their goal to provide the highest quality support services to customers.

Investing in Professional Development

Professional development can result in both employee satisfaction and improved operational outcomes – faster time to case-ready for thousands of support engineers. The partnership between Cloud Academy and Microsoft has demonstrated the potential for organizations to use the combination of technology and innovative training approaches to upskill their workforce and improve the quality of their services.

Results

A Focus on Performance and Efficiency

As they dive into Cloud Academy's customized training and certification paths, Microsoft's support engineers will be able to acquire new skills and knowledge, leading to optimized paths for employees to solve various cases – regardless of the product or geography. Empowered engineers will be better equipped to handle tickets and positively affect the customer experience, focusing on goals such as shorter time to resolution and larger volume of tickets handled.

Tangible Upskilling Results That Can Solve Customer Problems

As they move forward, CSS leadership seeks to intelligently route support requests to the best engineers based on their skills profiles – a proprietary combination of assessments at different points in time.

“Cloud Academy's platform allows us to quickly train and certify our support engineers on the complete portfolio of Microsoft products. We will use our resulting skills inventory data to intelligently assign our support incidents to the most qualified engineers, resulting in faster resolution times, higher throughput, and greater customer satisfaction.”

Caroline Dumont, CE&S Learning Leader at Microsoft

Data-Driven Decision-Making

The partnership will also enable CSS leadership to make data-driven decisions when it comes to allocating support requests to the most qualified engineers.

Through the analysis of a combination of factors, such as the engineer's skills profile, training history, and performance metrics, support requests will be routed to the most qualified engineer, ensuring that issues are resolved quickly and efficiently.

Outlook

Revolutionizing Customer Support with Skills Readiness from Cloud Academy

Microsoft's partnership with Cloud Academy has proven to be an effective step forward for the organization's CSS teams and their best-in-class service.

With the implementation of the innovative training and development approach offered by Cloud Academy's Skills Readiness, Microsoft's support leaders have been able to upskill huge teams while reducing customer pain by using the upskilling data to match problems with resolution.

The CSS team can also use Cloud Academy as a centralized learning hub where their employees' skills data is always updated and staff can return for technical and custom role-specific guidance.

With advanced analytics, the learning outcomes are measurable, and employees can apply their new skills effectively in their day-to-day work.

To learn more about building efficiency with hands-on training for your company, visit cloudacademy.com >