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Headline: Dell offers to arm 3,000 in Singapore with cloud, data skills

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Dell Technologies is offering to arm 3,000 students, fresh graduates, and mid-career professionals in Singapore with skills in cloud computing, data protection, data science, and big data analytics. It hopes to do so over the next two years via a new tech skills accelerator.

The initiative would encompass two separate programmes, including a partnership with Singapore Management University (SMU) that would see more than 1,000 of the school's undergraduates experience cloud-native technologies and content as part of their curriculum.

Students from SMU's School of Computing and Information Systems would undergo classroom training as well as hands-on lab sessions to acquire "practical technical skills" in cloud-native practices and technologies, Dell said in a statement Wednesday.

To be led by VMware, the programme also would include mentorship for final-year students, with Dell participating in guest lectures and technical workshops focused on cloud-native skillsets.

A second initiative focuses on data capabilities, where a five-week training sessions will be offered to 1,000 employees of Dell's local partners and customers that have enrolled in Singapore's SGUnited Traineeship or Mid-Career Pathways programme.

The government had introduced its SGUnited Jobs and Skills plan, with an aim to support 100,000 jobseekers, to provide job, traineeship, and skills training opportunities to support Singaporeans impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Dell was looking to tap this with its Skills Up training sessions, which would equip participants with skillsets they needed for roles in data protection and management, data analysis, and converged cloud infrastructure. At the end of the five-week programme, participants would be assessed on their technical proficiency and issued certifications such as the Dell Certified Associate if they passed the examination.

Another eight-week programme, called Getting Future Ready, also would be piloted by VMware to provide "structured learning paths" to help students tap cloud-native job roles and opportunities, Dell said.

It added that Skills Up and Getting Future Ready collectively would train up to 2,000 fresh graduates and mid-career professionals in Singapore.

The US tech giant said the new training programmes were put together to meet growing demand for tech skills and help drive digital transformation in the country.

Citing its Digital Transformation Index 2020, Dell noted that data privacy and cybersecurity concerns were amongst the top challenges faced by organisations in Singapore. These were further followed by the inability to extract insights from data as well as a lack of relevant in-house skills, it added.

Dean of SMU's School of Computing and Information Systems, Pang Hwee Haw, said: "Companies and public agencies are employing digital technology to transform their business models and processes. The digital transformation of industries, economies, and societies will accelerate going forward."

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"It is, therefore, imperative that we equip our students with highly sought-after computing skills, including emerging technologies such as cloud-native skills, so that they become industry ready, innovation-enabled solution developers who are able to create value to business and society," Pang said.

Dell's president of Asia-Pacific Japan and global digital cities, Amit Midha, noted that digital economy advancements had "shaken up" skills requirements and pushed demand for tech talent. Tech vendors, hence, played a key role in training talent with the skills needed to help bridge the critical skills gap.