Embarcadero supports secondary, university-level ICT education across SA

MAIDENHEAD, UK: Embarcadero Technologies, a leading provider of software solutions for application and database development, is actively engaging with the academic community across South Africa to support secondary and university-level ICT education in the country.

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The company is working with schools, academic institutions and government organisations to provide the latest software programming tools including Delphi and C++ Builder to facilitate delivery of the ICT curriculum. Embarcadero is also actively assisting academic institutions with the development of course material on Delphi and C++ programming languages across the spectrum of ICT education in South Africa.

Growing interest

"We are seeing growing interest from students in software development as a career option at university level, but we need to do substantially more to kindle and sustain this enthusiasm, especially at secondary level," said Bertie (A) Buitendag, Lecturer, Department of Computer Science, Faculty of ICT, Tshwane University of Technology. "Languages such as Delphi and C++ are not only perfect programming languages for teaching, but are amongst the most popular the world over for application development. Delphi also fulfils the criteria of the national FET School curriculum for IT, which focuses on application development with an Object Oriented Approach, utilising database connectivity as well. The primary idea of IT at secondary school level education is to promote and encourage learners' enthusiasm for further studies, and Delphi is an excellent tool for that. Our relationship with Embarcadero provides us with the most current software development tools, giving students a real-world feel for software development."

At the secondary education level too, Embarcadero is enabling a number of schools to deliver their IT curriculum by providing its leading-edge software. For instance, the company has recently granted a copy of RAD Studio XE3 to the IT teacher and the top student in each year at The Hill High School in Johannesburg. RAD Studio XE3 is the newest version of Embarcadero's software development platform, which is used by developers across the globe to develop applications for Windows, Mac and mobile environments. The school is the winner of Potchefstroom-based North-West University's Practical Assessment Task (PAT) project for grade 12 students. This project used Delphi as the programming language.

Award for Best IT Student

In recognition of The Hill High School's excellence and focus on IT, Embarcadero has instituted an award for the Best IT Student, which will be given annually to the grade 12 student achieving the highest mark in IT at the school. The first award was presented on 29 January this year at The Hill High School Honours evening.

"Schools typically face two key challenges with IT programmes - to keep students interested and engaged in IT to prevent drop outs, and the cost of software," explained Bernard Sibanda, an ICT educator at Edens School; and former ICT teacher at The Hill High School. "Schools' engagement with Embarcadero can address both these areas. From experience, using the latest versions of Delphi gets students excited and encouraged to develop truly sophisticated native and web applications. Delphi gives students good preparation for entry into the commercial world. The language helps build core skills that also make learning additional commercial languages such as C++ - the world's most widely used language - so much easier. Secondly, schools can have access to the best software at a fraction of the cost, given limited school budgets. Having the right teaching tools greatly impacts the quality of education we can deliver to our students."

"We are committed to working with and supporting the academic community in South Africa, not just with our products, but also with our knowledge and expertise in the field of software development," added Glenn Wylie, Director of Sales - Africa, at Embarcadero. "We are providing written material and access to 3D visual aids for teachers to enable them to deliver the core aspects of the IT curriculum in their schools. In the near future, we will also support IT curriculum development."

Schools and academic institutions interested in engaging with Embarcadero can contact the company via developerdirect.africa@embarcadero.com.

About Embarcadero Technologies

Embarcadero Technologies, Inc is a leading provider of award-winning tools for application developers and database professionals so they can design systems right, build them faster and run them better, regardless of their platform or programming language. 90 of the Fortune 100 and an active community of more than three million users worldwide rely on Embarcadero products to increase productivity, reduce costs, simplify change management and compliance, and accelerate innovation. Founded in 1993, Embarcadero is headquartered in San Francisco, with offices located around the world. http://www.embarcadero.com.