

As a leading Global Provider of Progressive, Vendor-Neutral Training and Certification Programs, Arcitura Education Inc. is providing IT Professionals with the Tools Needed for Service Oriented Architecture and Cloud Computing

**Business Services  
Training and Certification**

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**Thomas Erl**  
CEO

**About Arcitura Education:**

Arcitura Education Inc. is a leading global provider of progressive, vendor-neutral training and certification programs. With a worldwide network of Certified Trainers, training partners, and testing centers, Arcitura schools and accreditation programs have become internationally established and further proven through a series of published books, papers, and on-going industry research.

**Interview conducted by:**  
**Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor**  
**CEOCFO Magazine**

**CEOCFO:** Mr. Erl, what is the concept behind Arcitura Education?

**Mr. Erl:** Our primary focus is the development of strictly vendor-neutral IT training and accreditation programs.

We specialize in segments of IT that are based on service technology and service sciences. We began by establishing the SOA Certified Professional (www.soaschool.com) certification curriculum, which is dedicated to a range of service-oriented architecture-related certification paths. A few years ago Arcitura expanded into the realm of cloud computing which resulted in the CCP or Cloud Certified Professional (www.cloudschool.com) program, which is dedicated to vendor-neutral accreditation tracks in the cloud computing industry. Each of the certification tracks maps to a specific organizational or project role in which IT professionals can specialize. All certification tracks share a common foundation or common fundamental courses that ensure that the vocabulary and concepts are consistent across all tracks. Vendor neutrality is our domain. We really focus on the academic side of contemporary technology to provide purely vendor-neutral and industry-aligned coverage of given topic areas. This knowledge is essential for any IT professional. It is something that they can then build upon by further specializing in vendor-specific products and technologies.

**CEOCFO:** What is the key to creating an effective program?

**Mr. Erl:** Because our focus is on cutting edge and contemporary segments of IT, the key is an investment in research to ensure that we keep track of how that segment of IT evolves. It is essential to keep track of what parts of it become mature and established within the industry and then identify the points in time at

which that happens. We then capture those parts in the training courses and in the certification criteria. All of the exams are published worldwide via Prometric. Once an exam is out there we want to ensure that it is not subject to change within a reasonable period of time, so that it is something that IT professionals can safely invest in.

**CEOCFO:** What is the competitive landscape?

**Mr. Erl:** There are many different commercial-centric training programs where, for example, you can learn how to use Amazon Web Services or various products from vendors like Google, Rackspace and Cisco, and so on. Some of those programs are specific to a vendor. Some cover a variety of vendor products and technologies to expose students to a broader range. These programs are, in no way, a bad thing. They are useful and helpful programs that provide hands-on insight into the tools and technologies that exist right now. These programs fully complement what we do. It is just that we draw the line at the academic coverage. Therefore, when comparing programs it is often a bit of a revelation to those who do a competitive analysis to see just how much commercial coverage there is in other programs. Again, that may be something they are looking for. Another distinction is that our programs are considered unusually comprehensive. For example, with the CCP program we currently have 21 individual course modules, 21 corresponding Prometric exams and 8 certification tracks that are comprised of different combinations of modules and exams. Therefore, our program

really is for two types of IT organizations: one where they have identified a need for vendor-neutral knowledge, and secondly where there is a need for more comprehensive, in-depth technical skills that need to be developed within the project teams. For example, you can have someone specialize in security, governance or in different areas of cloud technology, architecture and quality assurance and so on. At the same time, these specialists share the same foundation as other project team members. That level of depth is not found in many other programs.

**CEOCFO:** What are some of the courses you offer that people might be surprised are even available?

**Mr. Erl:** Cloud computing governance, quality assurance, storage or capacity management and planning, SOA analysis, SOA with Java and .NET development are examples of specialist courses we offer because we find them essential to carrying out a complete software development or application delivery lifecycle. That type of area of expertise may only be necessary for a smaller percentage of IT professionals, but we offer them so that an organization has the opportunity to establish skill sets within their IT department that cover the range of processes and stages throughout a given lifecycle, all with the same foundation and the same understanding of SOA or cloud computing. SOA is a good example. It is primarily known as an area of technology architecture. Therefore, many technology architects or application architects or solution architects get a Certified SOA Architect designation, which of course is important when designing systems and defining your blueprints for how a service will be used. However, once that stage has passed within a lifecycle and the services are built, it is important that developers have an understanding of SOA as it applies to how they approach their programming tasks. It is important that quality assurance professionals have an understanding of SOA as it applies to how they approach testing and quality

assurance practices. There are many distinct requirements that come with building solutions that are SOA-complaint. This carries over into how they are governed and evolved and maintained for the organization. There are many distinct considerations that otherwise will get missed and can compromise the success of what you invest in. That applies just as much to cloud computing.

**CEOCFO:** What is your geographic reach today? Do you see that changing?

**Mr. Erl:** That is a good question. We have seen it broaden significantly. I know that a year ago we did an analysis and we knew at the time that we were reaching well beyond 60 countries. I think that has increased significantly since then. There is a great deal of activity beyond North

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America. Of course North America, the US specifically, is a primary area where both cloud computing and SOA are being heavily assessed and adopted and worked with. However, areas like India and various regions in the Middle East and Asia are increasingly becoming part of our day-to-day communication. Then of course there are regions within Europe that are so progressive, IT-wise, such as Germany and the Netherlands, where we find ourselves constantly supporting them as well. I do see this diversity increasing because of the synergy between the programs. SOA has traditionally been more attractive to larger organizations. Therefore, we reach many, many Fortune 500 and Fortune 100 corporations. That is just due to the fact of the way that SOA is so appealing as a means of optimizing, streamlining and consolidating larger IT environments

and the benefits that come with that. However, with the advent of cloud computing and the fact that we now have the opportunity to lease IT resources and to delegate the administration of those IT resources to third-party cloud providers, these outsourcing models have opened the door to both cloud computing and SOA adoption to medium-sized and smaller organizations. This is further diversifying the range in interest in the courses and certification programs that we offer.

**CEOCFO:** How do potential customers find Arcitura?

**Mr. Erl:** We do very little marketing. We do not have a sales or marketing department, simply because we are always in a “catch-up” mode to stay on top of the demand. I believe that organizations are mainly made aware

of us by word of mouth and our online presence. Part of our curriculum includes a series of textbooks that are published through the Prentice Hall Service Technology Series. These textbooks have been very successful in terms of sales internationally. They have also reached many organizations that then learn about the corresponding courses and certification programs that the textbooks are a part of, in terms of the courseware. They are a required part of the programs that add a lot of substance to the materials that we develop in house.

**CEOCFO:** How often do you write a book?

**Mr. Erl:** So far, it has been one book every year. The first book was written in 2003 and published in 2004. Just last month in New York, we launched the ninth book in the series, which was a book dedicated to cloud computing. That was launched at the Cloud Expo at The Javits Center on June 11<sup>th</sup>. We had two thousand people lining up there to get copies of the book and to get them signed. It was a very positive experience. There are several books still in development right now that can fall into place at different periods of time. Therefore, I am hoping that between now and this time next year

we will have at least two more books out, especially in the cloud computing space.

**CEO CFO:** What surprised you the most as the company has grown and developed?

**Mr. Erl:** What makes it always interesting and challenging in a positive way is the exposure to different cultures and organizations. For example, organizations that are looking to enlist us to provide certified trainers to teach workshops and organizations that contact us for various types of strategic partnerships, venture capital firms that contact for other opportunities, and so on. It is just the different organizations with different ideas from different regions coming to us with proposals and new ideas as to how things can be improved and broadened. That, to me, is an ongoing learning process. I appreciate the interest and the effort

from these organizations. There has been a lot of fantastic input that we receive that has allowed the program to grow in two different areas. We have a network of licensed training partners that have now adopted and rolled out the programs in their respective regions. It has just been a really fulfilling but still challenging process. That is because every region has cultural characteristics and has their own way of doing certain things. Often we learn from that and other times we try to share practices and techniques with them that they can learn from. I believe that it is that exchange with new people and new organizations on a regular basis that makes it a very rich business environment that we work in.

**CEO CFO:** Why should investors and people in the business community be paying attention to Arcitura Education?

**Mr. Erl:** We focus on the most important areas of IT that are now emerging. We provide very valuable accreditation for members of IT departments who will basically gain skills that will maximize the ability of organizations to leverage these new technology innovations, which in turn will give them significant competitive advantages in their space. It is important for any organization to understand that their competitors may be doing this right now. If they do it successfully, it can put them years ahead, and it may be too late to catch up. Carrying out cloud computing and SOA projects right the first time is important. The key to accomplishing this is making educated decisions. Those types of insights are gained by bringing high quality, vendor-neutral education in house. That is what we hope organizations understand about our programs.

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