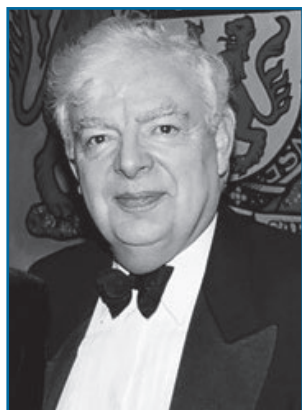# Broadband Training
from the SCTE
by Chris Swires, Director, Broadband Training Division, SCTE

There has never been a better time to refesh, update and add to your skills. Chris Swires, director of the SCTE's Broadband Training division, underlines the importance of training for broadband engineers and operators.

Chris Swires, Director, Broadband Training Ltd

The SCTE, founded in 1945, celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. Its aim is to raise the standard of broadband engineering in the global telecommunications industry. The Society provides a forum for the exchange of technical information and experience through formal publications and lectures as well as social interaction between members. It particularly concerns itself with the training and career advancement of technical professionals in this field. As a Learned Society, SCTE provides broadband industry accreditation and certification for its members, giving them professional standing within the industry.

SCTE training courses have achieved wide acceptance as the standard for young technicians wishing to enter the field of cable telecommunications and for those wishing to advance their knowledge and career prospects. They are used in-house by a number of operating companies and SCTE engineers can be found working in a variety of international organisations.

Broadband Training was set up some eight years ago, as part of the SCTE, to create, present and run the Society's training activities. It offers a wide range of professional development options for SCTE members to further their careers and expand their knowledge base and qualifications. These range from comprehensive training courses and individual course books (for home study or instructor-led use) with SCTE certification to technical lecture meetings, online video presentations and an online assessment training centre. Students completing the course successfully become accredited SCTE Technicians and are issued with SCTE Certificates.

Flexible training 'on the go'

Over the past eight years, SCTE's Broadband Training division has generated 12 training courses, which have been universally praised as excellent. It has been successful at selling these courses and has trained hundreds of students and engineers worldwide. All the courses have been revised and updated by the SCTE and are available in a variety of formats, with customised versions for different markets and geographical regions. The course books are available either as reference text-books or as a complete training package. The training course cost is heavily subsidised by the SCTE and SCTE members receive preferential discounts.

> "The cost of good training programmes can be very quickly recuperated through improved company performance provided by efficient and competent staff."

More recently, the SCTE has improved its broadband training pedigree with the launch of its new Learning Management System (LMS), accessible 'on the go' for engineers and technicians. This online learning solution allows a student to cover the training material at their own pace in any location (with an internet connection) and offers more interaction (including animation, audio, video content and active information links). Quizzes at the end of each section ensure that the material is understood and, at the end of the course, an exam tests a student's understanding of the entire course. If the student passes the exam, accreditation by the SCTE is awarded along with a downloadable certificate.

Current broadband courses include Installation Technician; Service Technician; Network Technician; Network Architecture and Design; Fibre Optic Transmission for Technicians; Business Data Solutions and Understanding Wi-Fi and Wireless Technology. Its instructor-led courses include An Introduction to Broadband; Co-Axial Networks RF Design Course and a range of satellite training courses with a trusted partner.

It has also partnered with the IET to offer 'An Introduction to 5G' training course. Another popular course is SCTE's 'Introduction to DOCSIS 3.1 Technology'.

I would urge managers responsible for engineers in the industry to look at the considerable value that good training adds to the performance of companies and operators in the broadband industry, as well as at the substantial operational cost savings that it can contribute.

The need for training

Tony Lee, Director for Network Field Operations at Virgin Media, underlined why SCTE was so important to his engineers.

"The SCTE (Society for Broadband Professionals) proudly serves as a technical leader in cable telecoms, defining and driving industry standards. Our relationship with the SCTE ensures that we have access to that essential knowledge. Its work ethic fits perfectly with Virgin Media's growth ambitions. I'm delighted to be working closely with the SCTE to create the next generation of HFC engineers," he said.

Almost every broadband company that we contact acknowledges the urgent need for more training. SCTE training courses have demonstrated real benefits. However, in spite of this, many contacts in the industry still struggle to obtain funding for courses for many staff who have not been fully trained.

The cost of good training programmes can be very quickly recuperated through improved company performance provided by efficient and competent staff. Cost savings (including decreased truck rolls, reduced customer visits and less equipment spend) can also be ensured with properly trained staff offering good service to an operator's customers who (in turn) reward that competence with loyalty and reduced levels of churn. Training supports and grows every element of an operator's service.

The fastest-growing part of most global economies is the services sector which includes telecoms, software and information technologies. All this growth cannot

Broadband Training from the SCTE™

Eleven LMS courses are now available

- Installers Course
- Service Technicians Course
- Network Technicians Course
- Network Architecture and Design Course
- Fibre Optic Transmission Course
- Business Data Solutions Course
- Understanding Wi-Fi and Wireless Technology Course
- Introduction to DOCSIS 3.1 Course
- Introduction to Broadband
- DOCSIS 3.1 Measurement
- IET Introduction to 5G

The SCTE™ learning management system (LMS) courses have comprehensive and enhanced online training information which can be used for home study learning. Online assessments, quizzes (to check understanding) and exams may be taken and students receive downloadable official SCTE™ accredited certificates.

information on these courses.

be successfully managed and sustained without trained staff to build and operate reliable broadband services.

In a cabled or broadband network, trained staff will benefit the company in many ways. Properly trained broadband engineers keep the network operator satisfied by generating more revenue and encouraging existing customers to purchase more services. If a customer is satisfied with the quality of an installation, they are more likely to recommend an operator's service to others.

Trained engineers also act as 'de-facto' ambassadors for operators and often provide the customer's first real experience of an operator's service. When a service visit is necessary, a competent response by a well-trained technician will give the customer confidence in the service provider.

The importance of real customer satisfaction, avoiding churn and complaints, cannot be over-emphasised and this can only be achieved by a well-managed company with competent staff. A better quality of experience for the customer that results from reduced (near-zero) downtime on the network means fewer calls to the operator's call centre, due to network faults, and multiple home visits that can only cause frustration and dissatisfaction for customers.

Free training during lockdown

In these times of uncertainty and lockdown, while many stay at home, the SCTE is also offering free training packages to help encourage the uptake of training. There has never been a better time to refesh, update and add to your skills, especially in the current climate.

To celebrate the SCTE's 75th anniversary, a special free edition of the SCTE's online Fibre Optic Transmission for Technicians LMS course and its DOCSIS 3.1 course are now available for members. If you are self-isolating at home, why not take the course and update your skills in this area? The course covers topics such as cables and connectors; splicing; installation; fault-finding; fibre network topologies etc. Register for a username and password at **http://www.broadbandtraining.eu/lms/**

Another valuable service offered, to help companies identify gaps in their staff's training knowledge or skills, is the SCTE's free online analysis of training needs. Identify the skills gaps in your companies and act to plug them – see **http://www.broadbandtraining.eu/index.php/training-3/analysis-of-training-needs**

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If a company carries on training and investing in its engineers, it shows its staff and customers that it values quality. Staff and customers are more likely to stay loyal to that company as a result. Good training for engineering staff in a cable or broadband company encourages loyalty and pride in the engineering departments.

SCTE's Broadband Training division has an ongoing commitment to keep all SCTE training up-to-date and produce new training programmes to meet the requirements of the broadband industry.

Contact

For further details, see **www.broadbandtraining.eu** or **www.thescte.eu/professional-development** and email **office@thescte.eu** or **office@broadbandtraining.eu**