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BOSON INSTRUCTOR'S PERSPECTIVE BETWEEN C)PTE & CEH

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As a veteran of the EC-Council CEH program, Ryan Lindfield , Senior Technical Instructor of Boson Software, has seen CEH's program come a very long way since version 2.0. "Many labs have been added, as well as additional chapters and tools, in fact, the course content seems to grow by a few pounds with each year that passes," said Lindfield. "I ha ve delivered the CEH course approximately 10 times a year for the last 4 years, and while I enjoy the addition of recent tools, it is difficult to make it through all of the slides, and make sense of the often poorly written labs." Lindfield added that there were an excessive number of slides, and many of the labs didn't have a real purpose, or demonstrate a technology effectively. "Again, it is nice that new material has been added, but old material has not been removed, there is a great deal of overlap between chapters, and the book doesn't read consistently, as though it's written for different levels of experience without much thought to a target audience," said Lindfield. He relayed frustration with the fact that he had made many suggestions directly to EC-Council, however there hasn't been any real response to his concerns.

While teaching a Cisco Certified Security Professional boot camp at Training Camp in the D.C. area, Lindfield ran into another instructor who was teaching CEH, the same week. When he asked his opinion of the latest courseware, the other instructor agreed with Ryan's concerns and recommended the C)PTE course to Ryan. "This was about a year ago, and finally this week I have taken the C)PTEcourse, led by Duane Anderson," said Lindfield.

What was his take on the C)PTE course? "The C)PTE seems to be much more effective in conveying the relevant information to the student, without overwhelming them with a tool showcase," said Lindfield. He went on to explain that CEH, for example, will give over 50 tools, each with their own slide, that will effectively do the same thing. "Multiply

this across 22 chapters, and you will lose the attention of the audience early on," added Lindfield. Additionally, Lindfield added that while there are not as many tools in C)PTE, they seem to have chosen the most effective and current tools in each respective area.

"With regard to the technologies being covered, mile2 does an excellent job of giving a real understanding of technologies," Lindfield said. He pointed out that in the cryptography section the instructor, Duane Anderson, loaded cryptool and displayed the inner workings of both encryption and hashing algorithms in the middle of the lecture. "I was really impressed by how often Duane would break up the traditional slide show with live demonstrations, which all fortunately worked flawlessly," said Lindfield.

According to Lindfield, one of the most impressive aspects of the C)PTE course was the amount of time spent in the classroom, and the quality of the time. "Even though there is about 1/3 the amount of pages in the student handbook, the lab book walks the student through much more complex examples, many of the labs build upon the success of a previous lab," said Lindfield. When he was manipulating the logging functions of a remote server, for example, he would have previously compromised the target and setup a back door. "When using the labs within CEH, you simply run tools locally, and it doesn't give the student a real understanding of the whole process, start-to-finish."

While looking at each individual aspect of the course, number of pages, course content, and quality of labs, Lindfield believes it's easy to see which courseware is better written, which results in happier students and a stress-free instructor. He added that he feels the real value is only seen when you take a step back and ask yourself the question, "Why is the student actually here?" "It's not about a lack of typos, or clean diagrams. It's not about the weight of the courseware the student

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has to lug home, possibly paying excess baggage fees on an airplane. It's the level of knowledge obtained," Lindfield summarized. "How much has the student learned? What are they taking back to work with them? Are these skills the student can put into use the day they get back?"

Lindfield believes that the students overall experience is going to be much greater due to the elaborate labs, and courseware that is much more logical. While he explains that he delivered CEH training to many happy customers, it required him writing a custom lab book, and skipping hundreds of slides, and making a lot of supplemental material.

"While I will continue to develop my own labs as a value-add to our customers, I will not have to modify the courseware and I believe the students will gain more from a class that has a "Quality over Quantity" approach to courseware development," said Lindfield.

Having attended training offerings by Cisco, Microsoft, EC-Council, SANS, Blackhat, and more, Lindfield believes strongly that Duane Anderson is one of the best instructors he has seen, and while he adds that this case study is not a review of the instructor, he did such a great job he simply couldn't leave this out. "He did a great job of adding real world examples and humor, while building a transparent relationship between complex technology and real world concepts that anyone could understand," said Lindfield.

"While I have been a strong advocate of EC-Council in the past, I hope that in the future, they alter their courseware to follow this design," said Lindfield. In the meantime, Lindfield explains that he will be using the C)PTE courseware for his future ethical hacking offerings.

ABOUT BOSON SOFTWARE, LLC

Founded in 1999, Boson Software, LLC is a privately held company that specializes in providing robust learning solutions, including examination preparation materials used by individuals, businesses, academic institutions and government entities around the world.

Headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee, the company also operates a state-of-the art instructor-led training operation in Tampa, Florida. As a Cisco Learning Partner, Boson Training provides the authorized training needed to pass today's rigorous IT certification exams. Boson instructors have years of industry and classroom experience and, when not teaching, they are involved in many aspects of the networking industry, including consulting on enterprise networks, developing advanced curriculum, and writing and editing books for major publishers in the IT industry.

ABOUT MILE2

mile2 is a globally respected IT Security Organization that was developed in response to the threat of corporate and national information security attacks in the aftermath of 9/11. mile2 designs, develops, and delivers Information Security training and Information Assurance services that meet military, government, private sector and institutional specifications. In doing so, mile2 has become the de facto standard for organizations and militaries worldwide.

Mile2 places a high focus on security training for national and corporate organizations who understand the value of "knowing your enemy." By training businesses and organizations to think like an attacker, their intellectual property and data remains secure. mile2's enduring goal is to establish and contribute to a universal benchmark standard for adoption by government, military, and corporate organizations whose intellectual property and infrastructure assets are significant strategic targets for compromise by elements with malicious and criminal intent.

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