

Challenge

The world is facing a serious talent problem. Research suggests that four out of five businesses believe there is a critical shortage of qualified talent.¹ Recent trends are dramatically changing the way we recognize skills. Cloud and big data are creating new and rapidly evolving skill requirements. Combined, these two shifts affect traditional job roles for professionals already on a career path and, even more so, for young professionals entering the workforce.

Solution

Today's credentials must be relevant, verifiable, portable and discoverable. IBM's open badge program, powered by Acclaim, launched in 2016 and is already driving measurable results for IBM, its clients and the individuals who invest in the company's training and skills-building efforts.

The IBM program issues more than 665 different badges across the entire IBM organization to recognize a wide range of learning outcomes achieved across its global ecosystem from MOOC-delivered learning to events, activities and hackathons, to authorized training courses, internal training, professional certification, university partner programs and more.

Learning Impact Outcomes

IBM's open badge program is designed to connect individuals with opportunities, including active job requisitions via Acclaim's built-in labor market insights. These insights not only connect individuals with job opportunities, they also make accessible information such as job titles that align with a skill set, the expected salary for those jobs and other related skills that an ideal candidate possesses. This makes it easier for individuals to identify a career path and plan out tangible steps to get there. Individuals who have earned an IBM open badge report receiving job offers and promotions after their badges were verified.

IBM badges also provide valuable professional development opportunities via Acclaim's built-in "Recommendations" feature, which connects badge earners to relevant learning pathways such as the next course in a series or the next certification to reach for.

Return on Investment

By recognizing a learner's achievements with open badges, in 2016 IBM:

- Provided increased access to pathways and career opportunities to 168,000 individuals from over 150 countries
- Issued 269,296 badges at a rate of 15-20K per week
- Rapidly expanded its unique badge offerings by 2000% in 2016 with a total of 665 across 40 different IBM programs
- Generated 48.7 million brand impressions through badge sharing activity, valued at \$1.2M dollars

¹ Aberdeen Group, Zach Lahey: *Pre-hire Assessments: An Asset for HR in the Age of the Candidate* (2015)