

## 'Skills For Digital Business'



### *SFIA Conference March 2013*

The 2013 SFIA conference took place on Thursday 7 March at the Conference Centre of The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills at 1 Victoria Street, London. This was the eleventh of a series of successful IT Skills Management Conferences and Exhibitions run by the SFIA Foundation. And it brought together Speakers from across the Industry and explored practical aspects of the challenge facing us all today. Speakers covered areas within organisational transformation, qualifications and computer-assisted assessment as well as continual future development. I'm sure that everyone who attended would agree that the day went really well and brought together people from all areas of the SFIA Community. The Event included presentations from the following Speakers:

- Introductions: **Alan Hewitt**
- Keynote address Digital Business: **Sarah Greensmith**
- Digital Skills – In the database!: **Nick Caldwell**
- Cross Border Capability: **Robert Demare**
- Recruit and Retain: **Gary Faye and Kevin Tibbs**
- Learning and certification: **keep up with the changes: Michiel Van der Voort**
- Using SFIAplus to transform and improve performance: **Rebecca Assheton-Smith**
- Mind the Gap! Skills transformation at Transport for London: **Amit Srivastava & Tracey Scott**
- "Be Brilliant" Career development that inspires the workforce: **Mark Norris & Julie Stead**
- Government IT Profession moves forward: **Adam Thilthorpe**
- Competencies Getting the full picture: **Mark Palmer**
- Getting the whole Picture: qualifications and SFIA– how they work together: **Joy Shewring**
- Future development: **Mike Chad**

Many of whom agreed that their slides could be made available after the conference. If you would like an overview of the conference or to refresh your memory of the day, you can view them at:

<http://www.sfia-online.org/news/skills-for-digital-business/>

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took part in the conference especially those that presented on the day. For the co-operation of The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. The Participation of our Exhibitors and of course everyone who attended. We hope that all those present on the day found the event both informative and beneficial to their requirements.

We are already looking towards the next event and how we can continue to provide future conferences to benefit all SFIA Users. If you would like to discuss the day's events further, would like to make a suggestion for the next Conference or would like to discuss any other area of SFIA Business please contact Lucy Ryan Business Administrator at [busadmin@sfia-online.org](mailto:busadmin@sfia-online.org)



# The Australian Computer Society embraces SFIA

*Jim Owens – Accredited SFIA consultant, Honorary Secretary of ACS Western Australia Branch, a Fellow of the ACS and a lead tutor with ACS Education.*



The ACS (Australian Computer Society) is the professional association for Australia's ICT sector, and is passionate about recognising professionalism, developing ICT skills and building a community with a true sense of belonging. Its goal is to help its members to be the best they can be, and for them to be a professional, ethical and positive influence within the wider community.

ACS Certification is the official recognition of an ICT professional in Australia, providing the same recognition within industry as that afforded to professional disciplines such as accounting, engineering and law. Certification also provides official recognition of an ICT professional's competencies to potential employers, rather than relying only on references.

The ACS CP (Certified Professional) certification is accredited with IP3 (IFIP World Computer Congress Global IT Professional Practice Program)

As a body which recognises excellence and implements best practice, the ACS was keen to adopt SFIA as a common framework that allows an international understanding of what an ICT role actually involves, in terms of the Generic and Specialist skills required, and the levels of those skills.

SFIA provides a consistent foundation for the professional grades, accreditation and training programs of the ACS, as well as its Branch presentations, SIGS, conferences and other events.

As well as providing a foundation for ACS training programs, SFIA is also embedded within programs, such as the "Professional Environments" course, which is intended for International ICT graduates intending to work in Australia. This course has been constructed to provide an immersive and practical introduction to: Professionalism; Ethics; SFIA; Project Management and Peer Networking within the professional ICT environment. All materials are aligned to SFIA in order to provide participants with a practical framework within which to plan their long and short-term career goals.

ICT is a powerful tool, driving transformational business change in the global economy. And this ever-changing nature of ICT constantly challenges ICT professionals to maintain contemporary skills and knowledge whilst also preparing for career roles or to which the career path is often vague and uncertain, and even for roles that do not yet exist.

### ACS Capability Statement

ACS upon request can independently validate a member's SFIA skills profile, for a fixed fee, and can work with members to gather evidence of each competency, to help the ACS member stand out from the crowd in competitive recruitment processes.

MySFIA is a valuable SFIA-based tool developed for ACS members, which helps them navigate this constantly changing environment, and map a viable, practical path to career success. MySFIA enables members to quickly determine their current skills profile, with little previous knowledge of SFIA, identify possible career roles, identify gaps, and recognise development areas on which to focus, to help them achieve their goals.

Members first perform a one-time skills self-assessment. MySFIA then displays a graphical representation of the skills profile as a "Competency wheel" chart.

Next the member selects a desired career path from an extensive list provided (and defined in terms of SFIA), then MySFIA overlays their current skills profile with the profile of the desired career path, highlighting the development areas, in terms of skills and levels.

Lastly the member may select ACS professional development opportunities that support their career ambitions.



# Transparency in Outsourcing Capabilities



*Amit Srivastava, Managing Partner AKS Consulting Services, India & UK*

This article takes a look at some people and capability issues that manifest in many organisations during all stages of an outsource. There are plenty of documented examples of difficulties that often seem to arise during what is after all a difficult and complex change in any organisation. It seems that SFIA may have a real part to play in mitigating many of the people-related situations that can themselves sometimes be enough to turn the outsource into a very bad experience. Read on to find out more about how some skills ground work might have a disproportionate pay-off before and during an IT outsource.

SFIA can be used to avoid some of the common issues faced when outsourcing or planning to outsource. Take for example the retained organisation. In the very early stages using the SFIA skills framework to underpin the strategic sourcing assessment of the organisation and the processes can provide a really firm foundation for a significant portion of what is to follow. It is this foundation that will allow the decision-making factors (autonomy and influence) and the interfaces (complexity and business skills) to be clearly identified and quantified. Thereby enabling an informed approach to the assessment. In taking this approach we find that a wider range of information becomes available as different parts of the organisation are assessed on an identical basis. As examples of this the core elements to each role become clearly identified, as does the way in

which a role contributes to both its parent department as well as the wider organisation. The understanding this provides makes interactions with the processes of the organisation become visible to all parties at every level in the impending outsource.

So what does this actually mean? Take two common issues, firstly getting the right skills across the retained organisation. The information gained by using SFIA to underpin the assessment stage allows not just the right skills to be specified for the new (retained) organisation but also for these skills to be easily found amongst the existing workforce prior to outsourcing. This is possible because SFIA has levels of responsibility that are associated to skill descriptors so the right organisation to manage the supplier effectively can be defined. The detail available about this organisation will show clear levels of responsibility which enables and empowers decision-making and provides clarity of accountability. By analysing processes to be employed and mapping these to the SFIA skills framework not only can the skills required to deliver effective supplier management post outsourcing be identified but also the required roles will be more likely to be effective from the earliest days of the new supplier arrangement.

The second issue addressed by this form of assessment is the ability to identify and definitively articulate the required skills with their required levels needed by the organisation in a structured, manageable and assessable way.

The outcome delivered by such an approach is much clearer visibility and understanding of what people need to be doing and exactly how they will need to be equipped for success. One of the real beauties of it all is that the benefits will be felt on both sides of the outsourcing arrangement.

*The author is a principal consultant with AKS Consulting Services Ltd a skills and accredited SFIA consulting company with a particular interest in helping with the people dimensions of IT outsourcing. AKS has offices in the UK and India.*

## New SFIA Web Site

We are very excited to inform you that the Brand New SFIA Website is now up and running with a new international domain: [www.sfia-online.org](http://www.sfia-online.org)

If you have direct links in your web browser to individual SFIA pages on the previous web site, then they will need to be updated. Our old email addresses will still work. But you can also address us with the old mailbox name at the new domain: Operations Manager (Ron McLaren): [ops@sfia-online.org](mailto:ops@sfia-online.org) and Business Administrator (Lucy Ryan): [busadmin@sfia-online.org](mailto:busadmin@sfia-online.org)

We hope that you find this new site helpful and much more user friendly as intended however if you have any problems locating what you are looking for please feel free to contact Lucy Ryan (as above). We must now inform you that even if you have already registered to access SFIA on our previous web site, you will need to register again. We are really sorry to inconvenience you. However, it will only take a few moments. We hope that the change will be beneficial for all. Just follow the links at: <http://www.sfia-online.org/framework/>

## SFIA Professional Profile

SFIA skills easily visualised with new, free tool from the National Skills Academy for IT

Skills (0)	Certifications (0)	Technologies (0)
<b>Strategy and architecture</b>		
Information strategy	IT governance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Information management	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Information systems co-ordination	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Information security	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Information assurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Information analysis	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Information content publishing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Consultancy	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Technical specialism	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Business strategy and planning	Research	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Innovation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Business process improvement	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Enterprise and business architecture development	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Business risk management	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Sustainability strategy	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Technical strategy and planning	Emerging technology monitoring	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Continuity management	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Software development process improvement	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Sustainability management for IT	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Network planning	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Solution architecture	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Data management	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
	Methods and tools	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Business change		
Solution development and implementation		
Service management		
Procurement and management support		
Client interface		

The National Skills Academy for IT has launched [SFIA Professional Profile](#) – an evolution of its free online [IT Professional Profile](#) tool, which is currently used by over 1,000 technology professionals and [backed by leading employers](#).

SFIA Professional Profile builds on this, enabling users to assess an individual's expertise against SFIA quickly and simply, via an intuitive online interface. Each profile can be saved, shared and compared, giving an overall view of SFIA skills levels and gaps from an individual, department or company-wide perspective.

The tool is freely available now for individuals, with the Skills Academy planning to add a corporate version later in the year. This will enable organisations to develop SFIA-based job roles and profiles for recruitment, promotion, appraisal and training purposes.

Try SFIA Professional Profile at <http://www.itskillsacademy.ac.uk/it-professional-profile/sfia>.

## The Last Word

The SFIA conference 'Skills for Digital Business' Went ahead on March the 7<sup>th</sup> and with a fantastic line up of speakers and exhibitors and a practical exploration of daily challenges faced by us all we hope that everyone who attended would agree that it was an excellent day! The feedback so far definitely seems to prove its initial success, and we are already looking forward at themes and ideas for next year!

We are always looking to keep up with an ever changing industry and to make life easier for SFIA users and with the recent release of our brand new and improved website <http://www.sfia-online.org/> We hope we have achieved just that.

The Foundation continues to develop SFIA and encourage and support its use within organisations. Help us keep up to date with on-going changes and User experience and assist others with their SFIA Journey by sharing your story. Either in the form of a case study or an article for our next edition of 'Skills Update' the SFIA Newsletter. Whether it's a success story, a tale of trouble overcome, or unique SFIA implementation we'd love to hear from you.

Until the next edition of 'Skills Update' We thank you for your on-going support and wish you a prosperous few months.



**Lucy Ryan**  
Business Administrator

Skills Update is the newsletter of the SFIA Foundation  
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