James Vajda

Director of Global Wi-Fi Solutions

7SIGNAL Solutions

CWNE # 183

What is your level of industry experience?

I've done wireless network engineering for 8 years in public schools, higher education, healthcare, nonprofit, MSP, and government networks.

Where did you receive your training/education?

The first formal training I received in Wi-Fi was from Bryan Harkins while he was at Aerohive. He helped ignite my passion for Wi-Fi and send me down the CWNP certification path. After that I was mostly self-taught.

What certifications do you currently hold?

CWNE #183
CCNP-Wireless
ACWP (Aerohive Certified Wireless Professional)
Network+

When did you first become interested in wireless?

I was in an IT Coordinator role at a public school that rolled out an ambitious 1:1 computer program which required a new high density WLAN. Doing that work helped me discover my passion for wireless and that's when I decided I wanted to specialize in wireless networking.

Why did you choose the CWNE path?

The CWNA curriculum had so much practical value that I wanted to continue learning from this certification path. I also believe that the CWNE certification is valued as a true expert-level certification.

How long have you been involved in the CWNP certification process?

I earned my first CWNP cert, the CWNA, in February 2015.

What was the hardest part of the whole process and how did you overcome it?

The CWAP exam I had to pass was PW0-270–a notoriously difficult exam. I'm in the minority on this, but I recommend doing CWSP and CWDP before tackling CWAP. That way, you have learned some of the material that is in CWAP already, particularly from CWSP, and there is less new material to learn.

What value will your CWNE provide to you, your clients, and/or your company?

The CWNE earns me immediate respect as a wireless professional among my peers and the customers that I work with.

What would you say to anyone considering a CWNE designation?

I've talked to people that were hesitant to pursue it, because they didn't feel like an expert yet. However, you learn a lot from the study materials, and a certification is just the beginning. Experience is a big component of expertise as well. Ask any CWNE, we are all better engineers now that when we first got our numbers! You never stop learning and growing in wireless networking, and there are always people to look up to. If you can pass the exams and have some enterprise Wi-Fi experience, you should do it!

To whom would you recommend the CWNE program?

Any network engineer who works with wireless networking primarily, or who plans to. Start with CWNA and go from there. It's much more than an exam study guide, it's practical knowledge that will make you a better wireless network engineer.