In December 1999, Novell Education awarded its first Certified Directory Engineer certifications. The Certified Directory Engineer program is designed to enhance and to test the directory technology skills of senior systems engineers and other networking professionals who have extensive networking experience.

As part of the certification requirements for the Certified Directory Engineer program, students must pass The Novell Practicum, a challenging, hands-on exam that tests students’s problem-solving skills in a live network environment. (For more information about the requirements for achieving the Certified Directory Engineer—A Novell Certification, see “Add Directory Expert to Your Credentials,” NetWare Connection, Nov. 1999, p. 32. You can download this article from http://www.nwconnection.com/past. You can also visit Novell Education’s web site at http://education.novell.com/cde.)

WHAT IS THE NOVELL PRACTICUM?
The Novell Practicum is a fully functional directory environment that Certified Directory Engineer students connect to via remote access from authorized testing centers. To pass the exam and to become a Certified Directory Engineer, students must solve some common, but challenging, directory problems and restore the directory back to a healthy operating state within a specified time limit.

“The Novell Practicum uses real-life servers and trees, and real-life problems. . . . You have to know what you’re doing to pass the test,” said Craig Swenson, one of the first three Certified Directory Engineers. After finishing The Novell Practicum, another student said, “You definitely have to know your stuff. It was difficult, but someone with a good working knowledge of NDS [Novell Directory Services] and the tools used to manage NDS should be able to pass The Novell Practicum.”

HOW VALUABLE IS THE NOVELL PRACTICUM?
Although someone may have a certification, employers and other IT professionals often find it difficult to determine how well that person will be able to solve real-world directory problems. Because The Novell Practicum uses a live directory environment, students can prove they can recognize and solve real-world networking challenges. In fact, when one student was asked if The Novell Practicum presented realistic challenges, he said, “I have solved thousands of NDS issues, and this scenario was realistic and challenging.” Another student commented, “The problems . . . test troubleshooting, logic, and thinking skills. Many issues [covered by The Novell Practicum] are real-life problems I have seen while dealing with real customers.”

The overwhelming majority of Certified Directory Engineer students agree that The Novell Practicum is a great way to ensure that Certified Directory Engineers are experts who can meet a company’s directory challenges.

Novell NDS eDirectory Advanced Technical Training on Video

Novell Education recently released the NDS [Novell Directory Services] eDirectory video bundle, which contains seven Advanced Technical Training videos. These videos are designed to teach both new and advanced networking professionals about NDS eDirectory, Novell’s e-business solution. The video bundle covers the following topics:

- NDS Fundamentals Part 1 covers NDS basics and design techniques, distributed databases, partitions and replicas, and useful network administration tools.
- Planning and Design covers successful tree designs, administration via a web browser, and NDS eDirectory design.
- Tools/HealthCheck covers NDS health and diagnostic tools.
- Administration covers the basics of NDS eDirectory administration, including partitioning, administering NDS rights, and merging NDS trees.
- Troubleshooting and Maintenance covers NDS database structures, common errors, obituary process and indexing, and has a demonstration of troubleshooting and maintenance tools.
- Integration and Migration covers integrating NDS eDirectory with Windows NT, SPARC Solaris, and NetWare 5.