

Press Release

The Gift of Knowledge: Hasso Plattner with Open IT Courses on the Web

September 3, 2012

Potsdam. Today, the Hasso Plattner Institute begins a new era in open and free of charge online courses on the topic of information technology. Around 10,000 have already registered at the interactive Internet educational platform www.openhpi.de and can now start to use the first content. The first online course, offered by founder Prof. Hasso Plattner, co-founder and chairman of the supervisory board of the software company SAP, leads participants through the topic of a revolutionary new main memory database technology.

The so-called In-Memory Data Management enables the evaluation of huge amounts of data at lightning speed – something that in the past took hours or even days. This technology was researched under Plattner's direction at HPI starting in 2007. Together with SAP, their partner in the industry, the Institute received the 2012 German Innovation Award for this work.

In the course week beginning today, participants can get a first glimpse into the topic area with five learning videos. Reading material to deepen acquired knowledge will be offered as well. An automatically scored test with 12 practice questions – e.g., access speed, compression factors or myths about separate data management – help participants to self-monitor their own learning progress. This is followed up by a short online intermediate exam.

The content initially involves establishing the requirements and characteristics of company applications as well as current hardware trends. The schematic structure of a new main memory database to fit these requirements finishes up the first course week. While fundamental background knowledge of databases is helpful for the course, it is not required.

At openHPI there are no admission requirements for the online courses, which are embedded in a social learning network and held in English and German. The courses are led by HPI computer science professors. The Institute numbers among the pioneers of teleteaching in Germany and with its new offer is the forerunner in Europe. The structure is based on current approaches in the US, where the universities of Princeton and Stanford along with two other institutions recently founded the platform "Coursera." The

universities of Berkeley, Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology now operate a further platform called "edX."

The offer from openHPI is directed, on one hand, at students who want to deal with the topic of computer science. "On the other hand, the target group includes professionals who would like to increase their understanding of computer science to use this knowledge for career development, as well as others who are just personally interested in IT topics," said Prof. Christoph Meinel, Institute Director of HPI.

Starting in November, openHPI will be offering an introduction to the technology behind the World Wide Web. Gradually, the offer of open online courses will be expanded. "We will, for example, offer introductions to the basics of computer science. This involves the design and operation of complex IT systems, the functionality of the Internet and the WWW, security in Information technology and privacy protection in the digital world," explained HPI director Meinel. He also announced courses about the current developments and innovations in information technology, such as the Semantic Web or multicore and cloud computing.

Each of the free openHPI courses is dedicated to a specific topic and last approximately two months. The course material is comprised of learning videos, self-tests, weekly homework and a final exam. On Mondays the complete course material for the week will be available on the Web and can then be worked through at any time. The subjects taught are discussed by learners and instructors in discussion forums. The direct communication between participants from all over the world and course teachers is rounded out by weekly video response, focusing on the most important and the most exciting issues talked about. Upon successful course completion, the participant will receive a certificate.

Short Profile Hasso Plattner Institute

The Hasso Plattner Institute for Software Systems Engineering GmbH (HPI) in Potsdam is Germany's university excellence center for IT Systems Engineering. It is the only university institution in Germany offering bachelor and master programs in "IT Systems Engineering" – a practical and engineering-oriented course of studies in computer science, in which currently 460 students are enrolled. The HPI School of Design Thinking is Europe's first innovation school and is based on the Stanford model of the d.school. It offers 120 places for a supplementary study. There are a total of ten HPI professors and a further 50 guest professors, lecturers and contract teachers at the Institute. HPI carries out research noted for its standard of excellence in its nine topic areas, as well as at the HPI Research School for PhD candidates, with its further research branches in Cape Town, Haifa and Nanjing. HPI teaching and research focuses on the foundation and application of large-scale, highly complex and interconnected IT systems. The

development and exploration of user-driven innovations for all areas of life is an additional area of importance. HPI always earns the highest positions in the CHE university ranking. Since the beginning of September 2012, the Institute has offered openHPI, an interactive Internet educational network that is open to everyone.

Note to the editors: We ask journalist who would like to get to know openHPI to register at <https://openhpi.de/register>.

Upon request we gladly provide footage material of Prof. Hasso Plattners' first online courses.

Pressekontakt HPI: presse@hpi.uni-potsdam.de
Hans-Joachim Allgaier, M.A., Pressesprecher, Tel.: 0331 55 09-119,
Mobil: 0179 267 54 66, Mail: allgaier@hpi.uni-potsdam.de;
Rosina Geiger, Tel.: 0331 55 09-175, Mail: rosina.geiger@hpi.uni-potsdam.de