



ZULFADHLI ZAKI/  
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At the launch of Google Ignite ... (from left) MAA council member (training) Jean Loh and Day, who are hoping to get 1,000 students certified this year.

# Google Ignite is back

> Local undergraduates can help boost their chances for an internship with this digital marketing training programme

BY S. INDRA SATHIABALAN

**F**OR the third consecutive year, Google Malaysia is running Google Ignite, its digital marketing training-to-internship programme for Malaysian undergraduates.

Google Ignite focuses on developing undergraduates' digital marketing skills on Google platforms, which includes a certification at the end of the course.

The entire programme culminates in a job fair in October co-organised with the MAA (Malaysian Advertisers Association) and JobStreet.com.

The job fair is expected to place at least 270 of the highest performing students and graduates in internship positions with some of the largest digital agencies and brands in Malaysia.

This year's Google Ignite programme will take place at six institutions of higher learning - Universiti Teknologi Mara in Shah Alam; Inti International University in Subang, Nilai,

Kuala Lumpur, George Town and Kota Kinabalu; Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman in Sungai Long and Kampar; Sunway Monash University in Bandar Sunway; Multimedia University in Cyberjaya; and Tunku Abdul Rahman University College in Setapak, Kuala Lumpur.

More universities were involved previously, but Google Malaysia decided to pare the number down this year and focus on universities who could integrate this programme into their curriculum better.

"We've learned a lot over the first two years of the programme, and worked closely with our university partners to optimise our approach and the experience for students," said Jon Day, head of marketing at Google Malaysia.

This decision will help organisers improve the quality of participants and certification candidates, with the training modules integrated into the university syllabus itself.

In the first two years, students took the course outside of their

regular curriculum, but now, the universities involved actually have it as part of the curriculum, and even trained professors to better guide the students.

In addition, those interested to undertake the programme but who are not studying at any of the six universities involved, can still take up the course online.

Throughout the duration of the programme, Google is providing the universities with online learning resources for self-study, as well as on-campus training in Google AdWords (a Google-developed online advertising service) in order to certify students and ensure their eligibility for internship opportunities with top employers in Malaysia.

This arrangement allows students to get valuable training that they would otherwise only get as an employee, and take advantage of internship opportunities Google has created with its partners, MAA and JobStreet.com.

Over 6,000 undergrads have taken the Google Ignite

certification exams so far, but only about 1,800 have passed it.

And of that number, only 400 have gone on to become interns at major companies in Malaysia.

These numbers are a testament to the rigorous requirements of the course, and the calibre of the candidates it seeks to attract.

"Malaysia is inherently a digital country," added Day. "More and more people are researching online to make purchasing decisions and generally find information [that they need]."

He said that means that a lot of businesses need to find a way to reach these consumers.

"Malaysia has grown so fast digitally, it has outpaced the supply of talents that have this digital know-how to help companies run their digital marketing."

Day said Google, upon seeing the need to drive this new ecosystem, decided to start Google Ignite to help big companies as well as SMEs hire the digital talent they need.

Students who don't manage to secure internships will still be equipped with a Google certification that is an asset when they go job hunting.

Google's goal this year is to get over 1,000 students certified.

For more, visit the Google Ignite website.

# Helping undergrads get certified

By **NEVILLE SPYKERMAN**  
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GOOGLE Ignite, a digital marketing training-to-internship programme is back to help undergraduates jump start their careers by getting Google Adwords certification and on the job training even before they graduate.

Google with Malaysian Advertisers Association (MAA) and Jobstreet.com are teaming up with selected universities to run the free-of-charge programme, for the third year running.

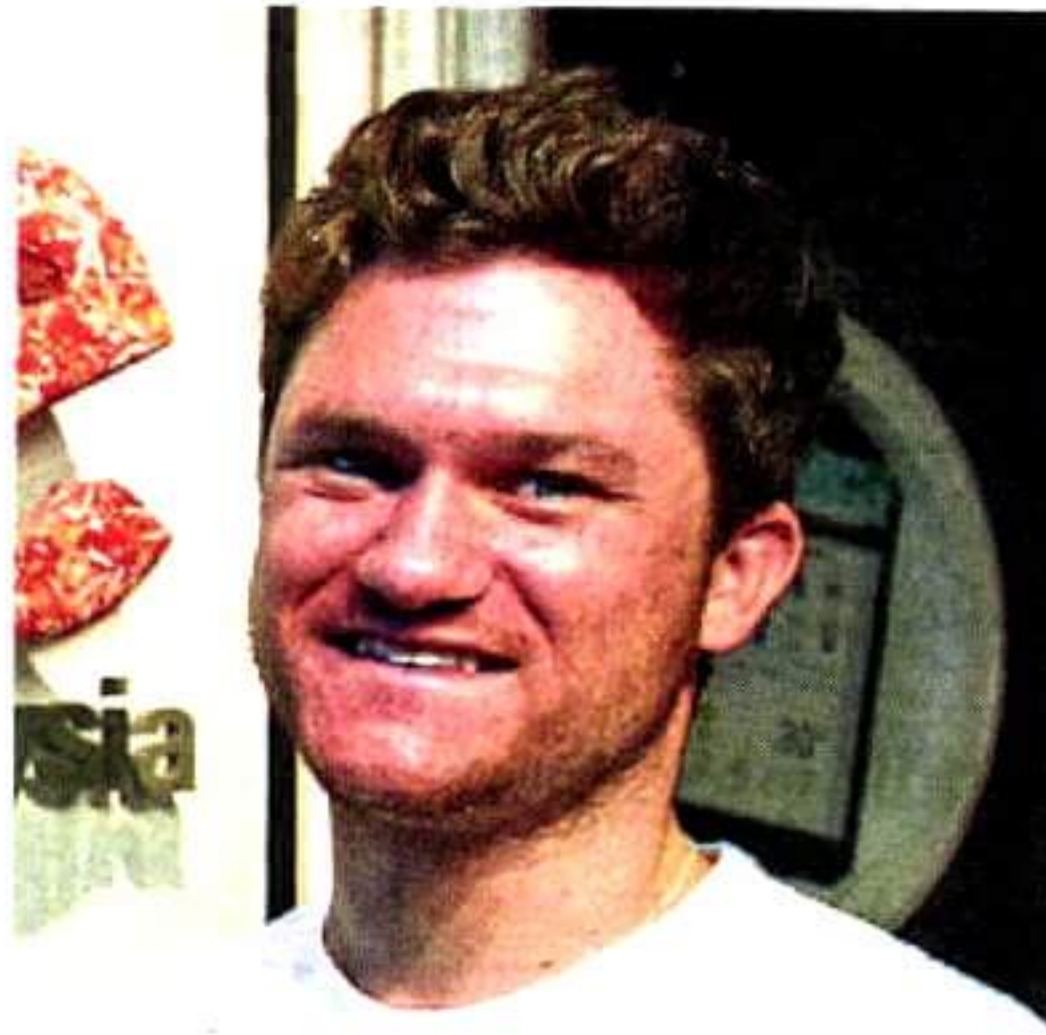
Google Malaysia head of marketing Jon Day said there are three certifications with each progressively more difficult. He said some students may just take one and will still be certified as a qualified marketer in terms of search and digital advertising.

But if they advance all the way, he said, they can get skilled at measuring digital advertising campaigns, understand how to measure Return on Investment and to optimise such campaigns.

Day said this is exactly the same qualification some media agencies within Malaysia train their personnel on.

MAA president Margaret Au-Yong said certified candidates would get a short at interning with major local and international companies. Job-matching and interviews for these (internship) positions, she said, would take place during the Google Ignite Job Fair later this year.

“So it depends on the students’ criteria and their talents, we can match them with companies,” she



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said.

MAA Council Member (training) Jean Loh added these candidates will be more marketable as they can hit the ground running once they graduate and enter the industry.

“They will be equipped with the skills and knowledge. And when they enter job market they can go faster,” she said.

Loh added the association was serious in developing new talent for the industry because more companies were creating digital departments.

“Clients are spending more in digital and with this we need more talent. Programmes such as this combines training and digital experience,” she said.

Day said they were leaving it to the higher education institutions to decide how the Google Ignite training modules are integrated into the university syllabus. It may be for their business, marketing, commu-

nications or even their IT programmes, he said.

“We are leaving it to the university to decide what student base is going to be most relevant or most interested. They come back and propose to us on a per school basis where they like this to be integrated,” he said. Students can still take part by registering online for the training.

Day said there would be more self study involved but these students probably won’t have the support of university professors to guide them.

“So it might be slightly more difficult but it’s open to students who want to do this online,” he said.

With a pass rate of 30%, Day said, their target this year is to get 1,000 certified out of the 3,000 who are expected to register for the training.

Over 6,000 students have taken the certification exams in the last two years but just over 1,800 had been Google certified.

Day said some may have signed up but dropped out because the training may not be relevant to their studies while others may have failed because the certification is not easy. “We are less focused on the training number but more on those who are certified and the number of internships that we fill,” he said, adding the recruitment for the programme is underway at selected universities.

The six universities providing the training are Universiti Teknologi Mara, INTI International University, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Monash University Malaysia, Multimedia University and Tunku Abdul Rahman University College.

# Developing digital marketing skills

ZULITA MUSTAFA  
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**G**OOGLE Ignite, a digital marketing training-to-internship programme for Malaysian undergraduates is back for the third year in a row.

Brought by Google Malaysia, the Malaysia Advertisers Association (MAA) and JobStreet.com, the programme focuses on the development of digital marketing skills on Google platforms including Google AdWords certification.

The programme kicked off last week and will culminate in a job fair in October co-organised by the MAA and JobStreet.com.

The job fair is expected to place at least 270 of the highest performing students and graduates in internship positions with some of the largest digital agencies and brands in Malaysia.

This year's partnerships will be with six institutions of higher learning — Universiti Teknologi MARA (Shah Alam), INTI International University (Subang, Nilai, KL, Penang and Sabah), Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Sg Long, Kampar), Sunway Monash University, Multimedia University (Cyberjaya) and Tunku Abdul Rahman University College (Setapak).

The decision was made to improve the quality



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**JON DAY**  
Google Malaysia head of marketing

of the participants and certification candidates, with the training modules integrated into the university syllabus itself.

“We’ve learned a lot over the first two years of the programme and worked closely with our university partners to optimise our approach and the experience for students,” said Google Malaysia head of marketing Jon Day.

Students who don’t manage to secure internships will still be equipped with a Google certification that should go a long way in making them desirable for digital agencies and brands to hire.

“As we all know, each online search is an intent — whether for more information or for purchase consideration and comparison. Google’s platforms are there to satisfy these queries. Every day, millions of searches are conducted on google.com.my.

“Today’s consumers inform their decisions in micro-moments when decisions are being made or preferences being shaped. There are many moments, but the ones that matter to brands are those I-want-to-know, I-want-to-go, I-want-to-do and I-want-to-buy moments. These micro-moments reveal not just who consumers are, but more valuably, what their intent and needs are,” he said.

Google Malaysia is keen to help move the digital ecosystem forward by helping students jumpstart their career in digital marketing and at the same time help grow the pool of digital talent in Malaysia.

The company hopes this programme will help produce more digitised fresh graduates in the Malaysian job market.

Throughout the programme, Google is providing the universities with online learning resources for self-study and on campus training on Google AdWords in order to certify students and ensure their eligibility for internship opportunities with top employers in Malaysia.

This arrangement allows university students to pursue new learning above and beyond what is offered in their faculties, get valuable training that they would otherwise only get as an employee, and take advantage of internship opportunities Google has created along with its partners MAA and JobStreet.com as part of this end-to-end programme.

*Jon Day with Malaysian Advertisers Association Council Member (training) Jean Loh.*

