



FCT SPOTLIGHT

**Roman Arias, Presales Engineer
at Exclusive Networks Australia,
Discusses his Recent Accreditation
as a Fortinet Certified Trainer**



Fortinet accredits Authorized Training Centers (ATCs) around the world to deliver Fortinet NSE Certification Program training with the same top-quality instruction one would receive from Fortinet directly. Assessed and certified ATCs meet stringent requirements to ensure their Fortinet Certified Trainers (FCTs) demonstrate expertise and proficiency with Fortinet products and solutions combined with proven instructional training skills.

Roman Arias, presales engineer at Exclusive Networks Australia has worked and supported Fortinet products for many years in his various roles working at Managed Security Service Providers, System Integrators and Distributors. Roman holds NSE 4 and NSE 7 certifications as well as a Fast Track instructor designation and most recently Roman received his Fortinet Certified Trainer accreditation. At the time of publication, Roman had just taught his first NSE 4 class for Exclusive Networks Australia, a value-added distributor and Fortinet Premier ATC accredited to deliver Fortinet NSE 4 training courses in Australia.

Roman met with us to discuss the breadth of his experiences that led him to becoming an FCT, a day in the life of a presales engineer, the most valued skills of being a good cybersecurity trainer and his future career plans.

You recently became a Fortinet Certified Trainer. Tell us about why you made that decision.

Yes, I recently became a Fortinet Certified Trainer two months ago. However, I have been working in cybersecurity and with Fortinet products for many years as cybersecurity is one of my passions. The fact that it evolves continuously makes it incredibly interesting as there is always something new to learn.

It is because of this changing nature that good quality and constant training is crucial for our partners. One of my roles is to help our partners to become knowledgeable and proficient on the Fortinet solutions. This involves regularly organizing groups of engineers to train them and ensure they are proficient on topics ranging from how to size and choose the right Fortinet solution all the way to doing a deep technical dive in a particular topic like Web Filtering or Advanced Troubleshooting. During these engagements, I discovered that the interaction and the whole teaching / learning process is something I really enjoyed.

When it was suggested that I should consider becoming a Fortinet Certified Trainer, it was clear to me that it was a great opportunity to combine two passions (cybersecurity knowledge + teaching) and take my career to the next level. In addition, due to the fact there is a large gap in cybersecurity skills and knowledge in the market, it is a personal way to have a positive impact in society.

Describe your career pathway to becoming an FCT?

I have been working in multiple roles in the Network Security area for approximately 16 years at Managed Security Services Providers, Systems Integrators and within the Cybersecurity Distribution Industry. My exposure to different Network Security technologies has been



considerable and varied over the years. However, the one item that has remained constant is that Fortinet has been the one vendor that has always been part of my toolbox. Hands on experience in pre-sales, installation and support has definitely helped me to become a Fortinet Certified Trainer but I would say that it is the well-structured training programs available from Fortinet that has helped me the most.

What's the difference between Fortinet's Certification Program and other vendor's programs?

I would say that the best feature of the Fortinet program is that it's very well structured. It grows from the very basics all the way to very complex skill development, scenarios, and troubleshooting. The other benefit I see is access to the labs. The recorded videos of instructors conducting the labs are very helpful.

What's your favorite NSE course to teach? Why?

It is NSE 4 Fortigate Security. The reasons are that it provides the technical foundations required to understand and secure the network and it introduces the concepts and configurations related to the Fortinet Security Fabric. It teaches a student to take a brand new Fortigate, configure the basic parameters and grow the configuration to include the most frequent challenges that engineers will face on a regular day-to-day basis.

As part of that training, the module I probably enjoy the most is SSL VPN because it is one of those features that we've always implemented but now it is very timely as more people work from home. It is very important that the engineers know how to deploy this feature in the FortiGate device. This is really great functionality and it's also a good selling point that Fortinet has consolidated so many features into the same appliance which lowers the total cost of ownership for end-users.

What's your best advice to learners taking one of your classes?

I always encourage the attendees to ask for clarification whenever they don't understand something; elaborating on topics that are not 100% clear helps the whole class to reinforce the knowledge.

Describe a day in the life of working in cybersecurity for Exclusive Networks?

My days vary considerably, but generally speaking a common day can involve:

- Enabling our partners on the Fortinet solutions, this can be both formal or informal.
- Attending meetings to provide technical presales support and architectural advice for opportunities where Fortinet is being considered.
- Sometimes taking 90 minutes to gather people and discuss the different Fortinet solutions via webinars.
- Helping our partners during presentations to their end-users.

What skills do you value the most to be a successful trainer?

Willingness to constantly learn is an important part of being a successful trainer. As a trainer you need to investigate and master a topic in order to successfully explain it from different angles and in the most feasible way.

The ability to motivate people is another important skill. Motivation is crucial to keep the class engaged and trigger curiosity and interest in attendees.

Sharing real world implementation experience and use cases helps to clarify the concepts and reinforce the knowledge too.

What are your future plans?

I am already training myself on the NSE 5 content as Exclusive Networks Australia wants to provide NSE 5 training to support our partners. And when the time comes, I will be looking into expanding to NSE 6 as well.

We also want to increase our offer of webinars and the frequency on which we provide the Fortinet Fast Track Workshops, which I will be spearheading for Exclusive Networks in Australia's Northern Region.



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